

**EDUCAȚIA-PLUS  
JOURNAL PLUS EDUCATION**

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**Volumul VII, Nr. 2/ 2011**

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# JOURNAL PLUS EDUCATION

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Volume VII, No. 2/ 2011

QUARTERLY JOURNAL, PUBLISHED BY  
“AUREL VLAICU” UNIVERSITY, ARAD

VOLUME VII, No.2 OCTOBER 2011

**Journal Plus Education (JPE)** is an official peer-review quarterly journal, issued by the Faculty of Educational Sciences, Psychology and Social Work, “AUREL VLAICU” UNIVERSITY, ARAD, which is also published online.

## *Coverage*

- *CNCSIS classification B+ category*
- *Ulrich's*
- *IndexCopernicus*
- *EBSCO*
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**ISSN: 1842-077X**  
**E- ISSN (online) 2068 – 1151**  
**Editura Universității “AUREL VLAICU”**  
**Arad, 2011**



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## **PRESCHOOL AND PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' ROLE IN DETECTING AND REPORTING CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT CASES**

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**Abstract:** Any professional working with children is obliged by law to report suspected child abuse. However, teachers face several difficulties in recognizing and reporting abuse and neglect cases.

Using methods similar to those of international studies in this domain (qualitative analysis of open questions questionnaire) this paper analyses the responses given by a sample of teachers working in mainstream preschool and primary school establishments in Cluj, highlighting the issues linked to their knowledge of child abuse and neglect indicators and their reporting attitudes.

The results highlight that, although the respondents are aware of possible signs of child abuse and neglect, there is a lack of thorough knowledge of child abuse indicators on an individual basis. The results also emphasize on lack of training in this area and on reporting not being directed to social services, leaving possible abuse cases outside of special intervention area.

**Keywords:** child abuse and neglect, child abuse reporting, child abuse indicators

### **Introduction**

Although there are specialized child protection services and professionals, child protection is not their responsibility only. Teachers have an essential role in protecting children. As Buckley and McGarry (2011) concluded, children attending preschool or primary school share a special bond with their teachers and teachers are privileged in knowing detailed aspects of children attending their units, as they are witnesses to many contacts between children and their parents. "No other professional has such daily and continuum contact with children as teachers do." (Briggs and Hawkins, 1997, p. 17, apud Goldman 2010, p 283). Once attending preschool, children are part of this relationship

that continues with a different teacher in primary school. For school age children, this relationship is probably the most appropriate context for taking the first step in risk assessment and thereafter in child protection case management.

### **Teachers' Role in Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect**

A large number of teachers encounter difficulties in the process of recognizing and reporting child abuse (Hinson și Fossey, 2000). Several factors are acknowledged as barriers in knowing exactly how many child abuse and neglect cases there are, such as: teachers failing to identify bruises and to recognize abuse signs as well as failing to report suspected cases (Giovannoni 1989, apud Cates 1995 p 6.). Once in the educational system, children are seen on a daily basis for a significant period of time of the day and therefore teachers may find it useful to have a tool that enables them to more easily recognize abuse cases (Cates 1995). Recognizing abuse however remains a difficult task as there are no rules that may indicate a child is being abused or neglected (Hawtin & Wyse, 1998). A child may be the victim of abuse and show no visible signs of abuse, or on the contrary, abuse signs may also be signs of different events in a child's life. Despite all difficulties, child abuse indicators have been drawn and they are a helpful tool in recognizing abuse. Adding family and environmental knowledge available to teachers to these abuse indicators, a decision of whether to report or not is more easily reached.

Several authors tackling abuse indicators conclude that in order to assess a risk, knowledge of both physical and behavioural child abuse indicators is needed. Analysing the two categories of abuse signs equals to questioning if an abuse is taking place. For instance, when questioning a physical abuse case, one teacher may observe bruises on a child – this may be one physical indicator of physical abuse or may simply be the sign of an accidental bruise. If the teacher questions the behavioural indicators (such as: the child is concealing the bruises, the child gives different explanations for the same bruise to different people or the child is being aggressive or on the contrary is unusually quiet and withdrawn) a clearer situation is being drawn and that is helping the teacher to decide to report.

The difference between facts and fiction regarding recognising abuse is highlighted as early as 1988 (Keiser și Berry 1988). Further down the time line, authors stress how important is to differentiate

between abuse indicators and abuse risk factors. (Lau et al, 2009, p.58). The latter are factors that indicate that an abuse may happen when child abuse indicators are indicating that an abuse is happening or has happened. Therefore, to be able to report an abuse or neglect, one needs to have knowledge of child abuse indicators, but also to have the ability to analyse these indicators according to the risk factors that may be present in the child's life. A thorough multidisciplinary assessment is the only tool that can confirm that the observed indicators are indeed indicators of an abuse or that they are alarm bells of a medical condition for example. However, the child abuse and neglect indicators importance in detecting abuse must not be minimised as child protection and child abuse forms knowledge contributes to teacher's skills in recognising and reporting abuse.

### **Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting**

Mandatory reporting was brought to discussion as a result of increased numbers of child abuse and neglect cases. California was the first American state to adopt the mandatory reporting legislation in 1963 and by 1967 all 50 American states embrace the same legislation (Pence and Wilson 1996, apud Hinson and Fossey 2000). 21 of those states include every adult citizen in the category of those obliged by law to report child abuse (Institute of Medicine 2002). Most countries adopted the mandatory reporting of child abuse in their legislation or working procedures, Romania being one of them. Mandatory reporting laws ask of professionals such as physicians, medics, teachers, and other professionals, to report any suspected child abuse case to child protection services. In few other countries (Cameroon, China, Germany, India, Holland, New Zealand, Pakistan, Santa Lucia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Togo) child abuse reporting is voluntarily (Mathews & Kenny 2008). In Australia for instance, child abuse mandatory reporting refers to the laws that indicate whom by law is obliged to report child abuse and neglect (Goldman, 2010, p.285). This mandatory duty is not only a duty of teachers, but also a duty of medics, police officers, school counsellors, dental care medics, medical staff, nursery nurses. What is expected of these professionals and also of teachers is that they, following specialized training in this domain, can reach to a reasonable suspicion of a child being abused before sending the referral to child protection services.

Mandatory child abuse and reporting in the case of teachers probably has the roots in research outcomes that indicate that all school age abused children, although they have different backgrounds, they have in common the fact that they attend a form of education (Hinson and Fossey, 2010, p251). Not only that the law requires mandatory reporting, in some countries, the law also enables for accusations to be made to those teachers that fail to report. (Cates et al 1995). Further then that, judges also take action against school teachers that delay the reporting. (McCarthy & Cambron-McCabe, 1992 apud Cates et al 1995).

In Romania the 272/2004 act, in article 9, specifies what mandatory reporting means: Any person that by the nature of their profession of job, works directly with children and has suspicions that an abuse or neglect may occur, is obliged to refer to the Public Social Assistance Services or to the General Social Assistance and Child Protection Directorate where that abuse case has been identified (272/2004 Act Regarding Protection of Children's Rights).

### **Why do Teachers Fail to Report Child Abuse and Neglect**

"A teacher is concerned with the child's education. Teachers teach, they are not social workers. Teacher cannot be responsible for what goes on outside school. Teachers are overstretched enough as it is without adding to their responsibilities. Teachers are not experts in this area. There is a wealth of well trained people to deal with these issues. Talking to children about abuse destroys their innocence" (Hawtin & Wyse, 1998, p.16.) These may be only few of the possible answers given by teachers when asked about child abuse. Nevertheless, teachers, possibly more then any other professionals, are vital sources of information in referring child abuse cases and also in child protection assessments. Any profession or job has it's priorities or deadlines. This however does not justify that possible child abuse cases are not recognised and referred to the experts to assess.

Several factors impact upon teachers failing to recognize and report abuse: gender (Kenny, 2001; O'Toole et al., 1999 apud Walsh et al, 2008), work experience (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Kenny, 2001; O'Toole et al., 1999, apud Walsh et al, 2008), teaching context (Beck, Ogloff, & Corbishley, 1994; O'Toole et al., 1999, apud Walsh et al, 2008) access to training (Nightingale & Walker, 1986; Zellman & Bell, 1990, apud Walsh et al, 2008). Interestingly, teachers with higher

education degrees are more likely to fail in recognizing and reporting abuse and neglect cases (O'Toole et al., 1999, apud Walsh et al, 2008) but teachers desire to respect their mandatory responsibilities to report influence upon their detecting and reporting of abuse cases. (Hawkins & McCallum, 2001). How certain they feel regarding their decision to report (Crenshaw et al., 1995; Kenny, 2001, 2004, apud Walsh et al 2008) and past experiences in detecting and reporting also impact upon present attitudes in relation to detecting and reporting abuse (O'Toole et al., 1999 apud Walsh et al 2008). Teachers may also choose not to report due to lack of trust in social services (Rodriguez, 2002). Other studies also focus on the link between teachers and social workers. They conclude that teachers and social workers have difficulties their relationship due to the mandatory reporting legislation. The mandatory reporting causes over-reporting and therefore some cases are ignored by the social services (Zellman, 1990).

Despite being obliged to report, not all teachers succeed in reporting suspected child abuse. Over 50% of child abuse and neglect reported cases are cases of children attending a form of education; however only 10% of the referrals are made by school, ignorance being one of the reasons of failing to report. (McIntyre, 1990, apud Hinson and Fossey, 2000, p.252). In 2009 different outcomes are highlighted in Canada and Australia where teachers are the second largest group of professionals to report child abuse (H. Buckley and K. McGarry 2011). In 2011, a different study in Ireland, that focuses on the fact that teachers have access to clear child protection procedures, highlights several barriers that impact upon reporting child abuse and neglect. These are connected to teachers feeling fearful regarding the not so positive outcomes that a child abuse investigation may have upon the child (Zellman and Bell 1990 apud H. Buckley and K. McGarry 2011). In Ireland, newly qualified teachers are not familiar to the reporting procedures. Knowledge of reporting procedures is however key in reporting abuse. School management have to take on the responsibility of training their staff in this domain (Buckley & Garry, 2009).

Due to mandatory reporting laws and also due to the special relationship that preschool and primary school teachers share with their pupils, it would be expected that a high number of referrals made to the Public Social Assistance Service (PSAS) are coming from schools or pre school units. However, from January 2008 until December 2010, out of 1949 referrals sent to PSAS Cluj-Napoca, only 12 (that is less than

1%) are coming from schools and none is made by a pre school unit. No doubt there are several dilemmas regarding recognizing abuse indicators and where to report suspected cases. Other dilemmas may be linked to teachers' trust in the social services. Where or whom do we turn to when we suspect child abuse? All these dilemmas are connected to the existent/lack of local or national procedures and policies. Lack of knowledge of these procedures leads to confusion regarding what to do when a child abuse case is suspected. Cates tries to encourage school staff to work towards writing up procedures when those are missing. This would be in their best interest as they would have something to rely upon when accusations are made that they failed to report. According to Cates, this may serve as an example, a teacher suspects abuse and reports this to the manager who fails to send referral to the social services (Cates, 1995).

Following their study from 2010, Hinson & Fossey conclude that main reasons for failing to report child abuse cases in schools are: teachers are not clear about child abuse and neglect indicators, teachers have no training in this area, teachers cannot recognize abuse signs, teachers are not informed regarding the reporting procedures, teachers think that reporting a case may bring more bad in the child's life or think that no positive outcomes will be reached if a report is made, other teachers are not aware that if they don't report the law may cause negative outcomes for themselves. In order to support teachers in the process of recognising abuse cases some studies refer to a few questions that a professional must ask themselves when they suspect an abuse is occurring: 1. Where do I report? 2. Should I inform parents or the suspected perpetrator that I have those suspicions? 3. What exactly do I report? (PACER (1989), CYFD (1992), and WCI (1988), apud Cates 1995). In order to have clear answers to these questions training is essential. In his study, aiming to highlight the difficulties linked to child sexual abuse reporting, Goldman reaches to a conclusion that almost all subjects in the survey feel they are not sufficiently prepared to address child sexual abuse reporting issues. Both students and professors invited to this study wish they had more training in this domain (Goldman, 2010, p.291). Therefore Goldman believes that training in child protection is needed starting with the period when students study to become teachers. The importance of training in order to detect and report child abuse cases for teachers is also key in the view of Janice and Fossey in 2000.

To sum up, the reviewed literature emphasis on the very important role of teachers in detecting and reporting abuse. In order for this role to be fully accomplished teachers need to be aware of the child abuse and neglect indicators, need to show interest in detecting the very first signs, and also need to have facilitated access to training in this area (Hawtin and Wyse 1998). Following a certain guide that serves as a tool in detecting abuse cases is the very first step before deciding of a referral to social services is made. It is also needed that the answers to questions such as where do i report, what do i report, do i talk to parents about my suspicions, are known prior to making a referral (Cates, Markell și Bettenhausen, 2010).

### **Teachers' Detecting and Reporting Abuse Difficulties in Preschools and Primary Schools in Cluj**

#### ***Objectives***

In this study we aim to explore teachers' knowledge of child abuse and neglect indicators and to analyse how their access to training in child protection may impact upon the wealth of this knowledge and also upon the process of reporting child abuse and neglect. Answers regarding child sexual, physical, emotional abuse and neglect have been given by a sample of teachers working with children in mainstream preschool and primary school units.

#### ***Sample***

Five mainstream preschool and primary school units from Cluj-Napoca and Turda voluntarily agreed to participate to this survey. We choose these five units due to access to the employees. Out of a total of 60 invitees, working in those units, 52 agreed to participate to the survey, including 2 professionals that were working in other schools. Those were invited to participate by some of the staff employed at the 5 units included in the survey. 18 respondents are teachers working in preschool units (or kindergartens) teaching children, aged 3 to 6, 23 are teachers in primary schools, teaching children aged 6 – 10) the rest being other employed professionals in those units such as children day carers, managers, primary school professors, psychologists or economists. 81% have been employed for a period of over 5 years and 19% have been employed for less then 5 years in their job. 32.8% of the professionals have a University and Higher Education Degrees and 18% have a High School degree. The rest of the sample did not provide information regarding their education.

### ***Working Tools***

The professionals have been invited to complete an open and closed questions survey focusing on child abuse indicators and on reporting child abuse and neglect. The questionnaire was the preferred working tool in this case as it ensures the anonymous answers and by this it encourages the sample to give more honest answers. Secondly, the questionnaire was preferred as the respondents did not have time to engage in an interview and as some other units refused to participate altogether. The refuse was motivated by lack of time to participate in interviews or surveys and also by the professionals being concerned about having problems with the management of the units, should they engage in this study.

We build the questionnaire following a literature review of similar studies. We used as a guide the child abuse and neglect indicators table which we adapted after Cates (1995), Janice & Fossey (2000), Lau et al 2009, and the questions highlighted by Pacer (1989), CYFD (1992), and WCI (1988). We also considered other variables used in similar research: access to training and training's influence upon detecting and reporting abuse, work experience, the link between training and reporting child abuse. The questions referring to child abuse indicators and child abuse reporting were open, in order to enable the qualitative analysis of the received answers.

### ***Design***

One professional of each of the 5 units has been contacted and given information regarding the objectives of this study and its anonymous and confidential feature. Thereafter, we organized meetings at each unit and we distributed the questionnaire. Answers were then collected after 1 or 2 weeks, depending on the unit and the teachers time to engage in the study. At collection time the professional who was initially contacted gave information regarding why some of the invitees refused to participate. The reasons were: they were on leave, they do not want to participate, they do not have time to participate. However, 52 of the 60 invitees completed the questionnaire showing great interest in this area of research.

Two studies formed the basis of the qualitative analysis of received answers. Firstly Goldman's study from 2010, when he grouped the answers of 81 Australian respondents in types of information received and secondly the study conducted by Hinson & Fossey in 2000 which results in a qualitative analysis of answers by the use of a table



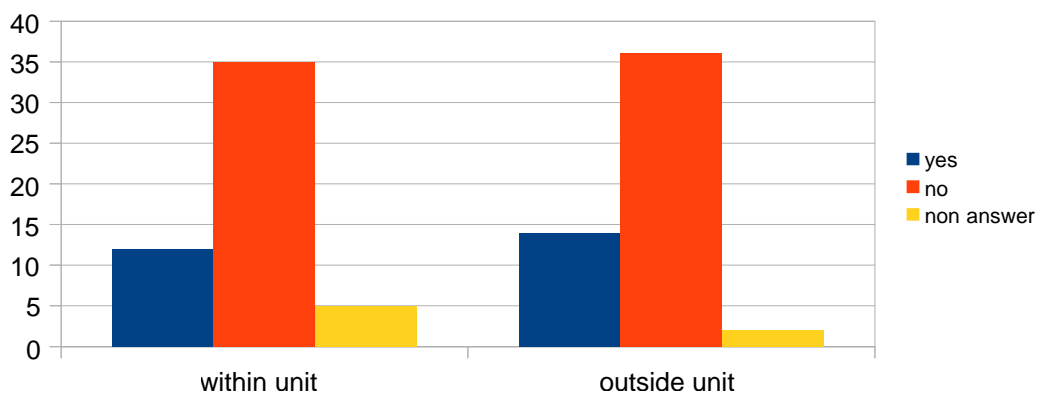
for abuse indicators. Both studies conduct a qualitative analysis of the questionnaires. The data we analysed are: professionals' access to child abuse and neglect training, professionals' knowledge of child abuse and neglect indicators, professionals level of certainty in respect of their ability to recognize abuse signs and their attitude regarding child abuse and neglect reporting.

### **Results**

#### *Access to Child Abuse and Neglect Training*

12 respondents out of the 52 attended training in child protection domain facilitated by the unit they work in and 14 accessed training outside the unit. More than 50% of those questioned did not attend any training in child protection. Those who did attend training, they have accessed it both in and outside the work unit.

Figure 1. Professionals' Access to Child Abuse and Neglect Training



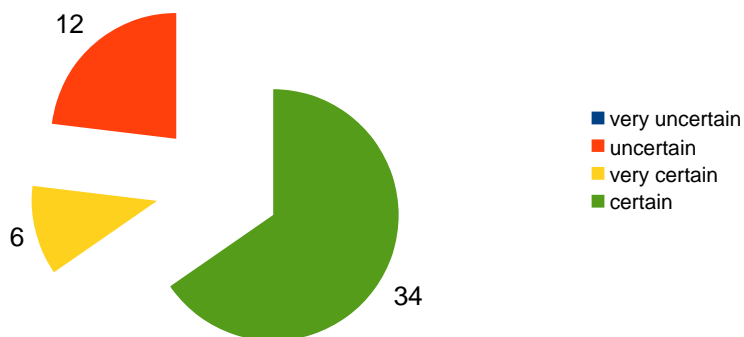
#### *Access to Training and Professionals' Certainty About Their Ability to Recognize Abuse and Neglect Indicators*

Respondents were invited to indicate how certain they were about their ability to recognise abuse signs, using the following scale: very uncertain, uncertain, certain, very certain. 12 respondents answer that they feel uncertain about their ability to recognize abuse signs; three of those uncertain had access to training in child protection. 6 professionals are very certain they can recognize abuse, 2 of which had accessed training in this area. 34 of the respondents are certain they can detect abuse cases, 15 of those having had training in this domain and

20 having a certainty about detecting abuse based on knowledge that they probably acquired somewhere else but during organised child protection training.

Out of the six that feel very certain about recognizing abuse, only one names more than 3 child abuse and neglect indicators for all four abuse forms (physical, sexual, emotional, neglect) and also in his/her answers is visible that she/he has the knowledge of both physical and behavioural child abuse indicators. Other 2 of the respondents that choose the answer very certain do not give any answer to the question related to sexual abuse indicators. However, they name a few of the physical, emotional abuse and neglect but no more than 2 different indicators for each of the three forms of abuse; they also fail to distinguish between physical indicators and behavioural indicators, referring to either one or the other of the indicators.

Figure 2. Professionals' Certainty About to Their Ability to Recognize Abuse&Neglect Signs



*Professionals' Certainty About Recognizing Abuse&Neglect Signs and Their Knowledge of Child Abuse&Neglect Indicators*

34 respondents declared that they felt certain they could recognize abuse signs. 6 of those did not give answers for all forms of abuse indicators and were selective when naming abuse and neglect signs.

When comparing **physical abuse indicators** answers, all 34 respondents certain about being able to recognize abuse gave an answer,

10 of them indicate only the physical visible signs of a possible physical abuse (for example, they mention the sign bruises without indicating that the bruises are unexplained by the child or that they are rather non accidental bruises etc). The rest of the 24 answers refer to both physical and behavioural signs of physical abuse. Out of all 34 answers for physical abuse signs 24 indicate more than 2 indicators of physical abuse and 10 give specific answers regarding physical abuse such as: the child is hiding the bruising, the child gives different explanations to different people for the same bruise, the child behaves differently than usual etc. Out of those 10 respondents that are aware of the behavioural signs of physical abuse, the majority is also referring to those indicators that are easily detected in school such as: aggressive behaviour during break time when the child thinks he is not supervised or extreme fear when the child is spoken to in a firm manner.

If we look at **sexual abuse signs** and the answers given by our respondents, 9 of the 34 respondents fail to indicate at least one sign of sexual abuse. 8 respondents indicate just one sign which is not necessarily specific to sexual abuse but to all forms of abuse (for instance withdrawn, lack of communication, lack of engagement in group activities). Only 4 professionals are able to show more specific knowledge for this form of abuse and name the following indicators: inappropriate sexual discussions, sexual knowledge, sexual behaviour outside norms, prostitution, sexuality denial, talks about sex. Other answers include the behavioural indicators of sexual abuse: depression, aggressive behaviour, lack of communication, etc – indicators that may suggest that a sexual abuse is occurring but may also indicate other forms of abuse or simply they can indicate a different life situation.

Two professionals out of our sample of respondents that feel certain about recognizing abuse do not give any answers regarding **emotional abuse signs**. The rest of 32 respondents indicate one or two signs, most of them answering that the signs for emotional abuse are: withdrawn, isolated, cries easily, emotional. Only one respondent identifies physical indicators of this form of abuse such as lack of sleep, nightmares, tiredness.

Five respondents indicate more than three signs of emotional abuse and only one answer is specific in saying that behavioural problems that are not similar to the general trend in the child's behaviour may indicate an emotional abuse.

When looking at **neglect signs**, we observed that 4 of the 34 respondents fail to give an answer regarding neglect indicators. The rest of 31 are mainly indicating the physical signs of neglect (poor hygiene, poor general appearance), only 4 being able to indicate the behavioural signs of neglect (aggressive or on the contrary very affectionate, attention seeking, shy, low self esteem) and only 7 making reference to the educational neglect (homework not being done, missing classes, parents not getting involved).

In general, if we look at the answers of those 40 professionals who are either *very certain or certain* about recognizing abuse, we are able to conclude that despite their certainty, our respondents do not always show they have specific knowledge of physical and behavioural signs of all forms of abuse. The rest of the sample that declared they feel uncertain about recognizing abuse signs show however that their knowledge of abuse indicators is competitive with the knowledge of those who feel certain and very certain they can detect abuse.

Below we compare the answers of our sample with the child abuse and neglect indicators that are present in similar studies. In order to compare we selected those signs that were mentioned at least by 2 of our respondents. We had of course other indicators mentioned which we did not include in this comparison as they were indicated by only one of our 52 respondents. Looking at each of the answers individually and trying to establish categories of answers and groups of indicators, it is highlighted how abuse definitions differ from one person to the other. Next to each of the grouped indicators we noted how many answers of that kind we found in our sample.

Table 1. Teachers' Knowledge of Abuse and Neglect Indicators (Cates, 1995, Janice & Fossey, 2000, Lau et al 2009)

Physical Indicators	Behavioural Indicators
EMOTIONAL ABUSE AND NEGLECT	
High and weight below what's average for child age	Begging, stealing food
Inappropriately dressed for weather/season	Aggressive
Poor hygiene	Missing from school
Unpleasant smell	Chronic hunger
Abandoned child	Running away from home
Lack of safe and healthy shelter	The child says that nobody looks after him
	Sudden behavioural changes – extreme behaviour
	Unusually distressed when other child is upset
	Alcohol or drug abuse

<p>Unmet medical needs Developmental delay Unusual habits/change of habits Unexplained injuries Lack of appropriate supervision Drug dependency at birth Malnutrition Bruises Constant, continuous tiredness Apathy</p> <p><u>Respondents</u> <i>Unkempt, physical appearance, poor hygiene, dirty clothing, smell - 35</i> <i>Comes to school with no food, no books -11</i> <i>Lack of shelter - 2</i></p>	<p>Delinquency Excessively reliant on others Depression or passive behaviour Proof that the child is involved in dangerous and/or unsupervised activities</p> <p><u>Respondents</u> <i>Cries easily when spoken to in a firm manner, cries easilym highly emotional - 25</i> <i>Separated from the rest of the group, isolation - 11</i> <i>Parents are not involved in school activities, they don't communicate with school, they refuse to work through the issues that have been communicated to them by school - 11</i> <i>Child is missing school,child is late for school - 9</i> <i>Homework is not done - 9</i> <i>Lack of affection/ need of affection - 5</i> <i>Lack of trust,emotional restlessness - 5</i> <i>Aggressive - 7</i> <i>Child is fearful - 5</i> <i>Child refuses to be isolated from the group or parents -3</i> <i>Depression, Anxiety, Restless, 4</i> <i>Behavioral problems - 4</i> <i>Shy - 3</i> <i>Low self esteem - 3</i> <i>Difficulties in relationships - 2</i> <i>Child feels uncertain - 2</i> <i>Strong attachment to one person - 2</i> <i>Hyperactivity - 2</i> <i>Inappropriate language 2</i></p>
<p>Frequent injuries cuts, burns, bruises Child wears long sleeves on hot weather Child complains of pain despite lack of visible injury Unable to complete tasks that require fine abilities due to pain to fingers, hands Difficulties in walking or sitting</p>	<p><b>PHYSICAL ABUSE</b></p> <p>Missing from school Refusal to change for sport classes The child finds reasons to stay in school and not go home, is afraid to go home Fear of adults or overly cautious in their presence The child frequently complains that parents are treating him very harsh The child is unusually unsettled when another child is upset Fear of own parents Drug and/or alcohol abuse</p>

<p>Unexplained injuries, fractures, or unexplained fractures, burns of different forms and ages that appear after missing from school Bites Induced illness</p> <p><u>Respondents</u> <i>Injuries, bruises, cuts, scratches, signs on body -30</i></p>	<p>Delinquency Although hurt, child pretends he feels no pain the child refuses to talk about his injury Social anxiety Aggressive, depressive, suicidal thoughts Running away Self blaming Hiding injuries</p> <p><u>Respondents</u> <i>The child gets scared easily, he is withdrawn when in an environment where people talk loudly, he seems to be afraid of being hit when one's getting close to him - 12</i> <i>Violent behaviour - 11</i> <i>Withdrawn - 6</i> <i>Behavioural problems - 3</i> <i>Attention seeking behaviour- 3</i> <i>Depression, suicidal thoughts - 6</i> <i>Hides injuries - 3</i> <i>Not communicative or not playing with others -5</i> <i>Child's emotional state - 3</i> <i>Fear - 2</i> <i>Child's reaction – 2</i> <i>Emotional -2</i> <i>Shy, scared when with persons of opposite sex, - 2</i></p>
<b>SEXUAL ABUSE</b>	
<p>Incontinence, enuresis Stained underwear blood stains on underwear Sexually transmitted diseases Anal or genital pain, bruising, itching Genital bleeding or genital fluids Difficulties in walking or sitting Teenage pregnancy Complains of pain without visible cause for it Frequent urinary infection Oral injuries</p>	<p>Excessive fear, over-reliant others Cautious with adults Unusual advanced sophisticated knowledge of sexual Behavior or of unusual sexual behaviour Rapid change of extreme behaviour Missing from school The child finds reasons to stay in school and not to go home Alcohol or drug abuse Delinquency Withdrawn, infantile behaviour Refuses to get changed for sport classes The child says he/she is sexually abused by those who look after him Sudden withdrawn from school activities Depression Artistic activities in school (drawings, poetry, stories) that have unusual sexual content Seductive behaviour</p>

<p><u>Respondents</u> Apathy - 2</p>	<p>Explicit descriptions Promiscuity, prostitution Child does not want to be left alone with certain adults Sleep problems Child behaves as an adult</p> <p><u>Respondents</u> Withdrawn - 9 Child appears to be uncomfortable when one touches him - 4 Scared when one is getting close to him- 6 Nightmares - 3 Low self esteem - 2 Screams out of the blue - 2 Child does not communicate - 2 Child avoids opposed sex persons - 2 Sexual behavioural problems, prostitution, in denial of own sexuality - 2</p>
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Looking at the above comparison table, we observe that our sample (per total) demonstrates they have the knowledge to detect alarm signs that a child may be abused. What is missing, if we look at individual answers and also at the frequency of indicators present in the answers, is the specific naming of the indicator and that is probably due to the lack of training. However, some of the respondents are aware of the alarm signs when noticed in class or during break times. Only very few respondents demonstrate they have specific knowledge of abuse and neglect indicators by using a more specific language when answering the questions; this demonstrates they are able to detect a possible abuse situation and that they can differentiate between abuse and neglect indicators and signs of a different life situation. For example, when answering the question linked to physical abuse, the majority of the sample referred to bruising, injuries etc., but only one respondent continued to explain this indicator linking it to others such as: *the child refuses to explain the injury or the child hides the injuries*. It is also noticed that when referring to behavioural indicators respondents talk about: *aggressive, emotional or behavioural problems, sadness or shyness*; these indicators however remain unspecific and vague if they are not linked to explanations such as *exaggerated shyness which is not specific to the child's day to day behaviour, sexual related discussions that are present excessively or on the contrary are not present at all*. These in depth explanations are present in our sample in a

very low frequency – one or two of the respondents only demonstrate thorough knowledge of abuse and neglect indicators for all four forms of abuse.

A simple comparison analysis has enabled us to conclude that our total sample demonstrated their ability to detect the following of the abuse and neglect indicators. It is important to mention here that some of the below indicators have been present in answers of only 2 or 3 of the respondents and that they are not always found in the same form amongst the respondents answers, they are similar to the indicators in the reviewed studies, although not always very specific.

Emotional abuse and neglect:

Inappropriately dressed for the weather

Poor hygiene

Unpleasant smell

Lack of safe and healthy shelter

Missing from school

Chronic hunger

Sudden changes in behaviour- extreme behaviour

The child is unusually distressed when another child is upset

Excessively reliant on others

Depression or passive behaviour

Physical abuse:

Frequent injuries cuts, burns, bruises

Social anxiety

Fear of adults or overly cautious in their presence

Aggressive, depressive, suicidal thoughts

Hiding injuries

Sexual abuse:

Sudden withdrawn from school activities

Sleep problems

Sexual abuse signs appear to be the most difficult to indicate, as is shown above. When asked about sexual abuse signs our respondents mention indicators that are not necessarily specific to this form of abuse, or have no answer at all. This concludes that our respondents have the ability to observe that a child is going through something but they have difficulties in being specific about what is wrong with the child and fail to link the observed sign to the general normal day to day behaviour of that child.



*Respondents' Certainty About Their Ability to Detect Abuse and Neglect and Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting*

More than 50% (18) of our sample who feel confident about their ability to recognize abuse (34) declare that there had been situations when they suspected abuse or neglect. Only one of the 18 declares that there had been no further action regarding discussions about his/her suspicions, the rest of them (17) state that they had followed up their suspicions by discussions with the manager, other employees, school psychologists, child's parents, highlighting that the reporting of the case had been done to the unit manager. Three of the remaining 17 state that the report had been sent to Child Protection Services by the management. It is thoroughly highlighted in past studies that suspected abuse should not be discussed with parents (PACER (1989), CYFD (1992), and WCI (1988), apud Cates 1995); by doing this the risk that the child is exposed to is increased. Going back to our sample of 18 respondents who had suspicions of abuse or neglect, 4 of them advise in their answers that there had been situations when they suspected abuse and choose not to report it (not even to the management, as for our sample reporting an abuse case means reporting it to management and not to social services). The reasons for their choice are: own security that the situation can be resolved if they talk to parents and the child, past experience with social workers when social workers did not get involved. Some professionals who state they choose not to report do not indicate why.

If we look at all 52 respondents, 28 declare that there had been situations when they suspected abuse. 25 state that they discussed their suspicions further and reported the case to one or two persons of the following: work colleagues, child's parents, school manager, school psychologist, school mediator. 8 respondents state that there had been situations when although they suspected an abuse was occurring they did not report the case due to: parents are noncooperative, i had no one to talk to about the case, own security, i observed that the child's behaviour was improving. 3 of the 8 do not give a reason for them not reporting. The difficulties regarding the reporting of suspected cases may be attributed to the fact that 17 of our sample do not know if there is a clear procedure in this respect and 10 of them state there are not aware of any clear procedure regarding reporting of those cases. 23 however say that there is a clear procedure in this respect but probably for those the procedure is to report the case to the manager of the unit or

other colleagues. The small sample however does not allow us to statistically test this at this stage.

Child abuse and neglect reporting may mean different things to different people. The open question used to analyse this issue was formulated as such on purpose, as it allows a free answer. Therefore we can conclude that, for our sample, reporting the abuse case means reporting it to the management of the unit. This highlights the supervision process and it is of course in the best interest of the child for discussions to be held within unit. The questions are: is that case sent to the Child Protection Services for a thorough assessment of risks? and what happens to those cases that are not even reported to the management of the unit as professionals may feel secure about not reporting the case.

#### ***Discussions and Study Limitations***

This paper analyses the answers of a small sample. However, most of the answers are linked to the dilemmas highlighted in international similar studies focusing on teachers' difficulties in detecting and reporting child abuse and neglect. The answers received were diverse and most of the abuse and neglect indicators were unfrequent in the answers. This emphasizes the fact that abuse and neglect means different things to different persons and that when looking at possible abuse signs personal experience and background is key. Though the sample's full picture of abuse and neglect indicators is complex, our comparison concludes that there is lack of training in this area. Having said that, our sample is alert to their pupils' well-being but their suspicions remain within the unit and this is not in the best interest of the children as it does not give them access to specialized assessment and services. The lack of constant and continuous training is revealed by the fact that those who did attend training identified just one training course that had been facilitated by their employer. This impacts upon teachers' specific and in-depth knowledge of child protection issues.

The limits of this paper consist of the small sample and also of the fact that our instrument (the questionnaire) did not allow a detailed assessment of some of the answers we received, as an interview probably would have. Nevertheless, this paper highlights that teachers have difficulties in detecting and reporting child abuse and neglect cases, therefore it can serve as a first step towards a detailed and thorough research that may also include medical and police staff.

A more detailed analysis of what was presented in this study will be completed within a focus group discussion and by the use of case studies.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Child protection is everybody's responsibility and risk assessment is multidisciplinary. A good knowledge of child abuse indicators is the key element towards promoting positive outcomes for children. This paper draws into attention that teachers are concerned about children's well-being and that they are reading the signs of possible abuse every day. The results of this study and the PSAS statistics indicate that there are a large number of suspected cases that are not brought to the attention of Child Protection Services due to missing procedures or unclear procedures and lack of training.

A multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary programme, by which access to child protection training is facilitated and also a clear procedure regarding reporting of cases would contribute to diminishing teacher's difficulties in this area, to knowing how many child abuse neglect cases we truly have and at last but not least to protecting children and supporting them through accessing the services they need.

### **Acknowledgement**

This paper has been co-funded by the Social European Fund, the Romanian project POSDRU 88/1.5/S/56949.

The research was conducted with support from Serviciul Public de Asistență Socială, Cluj-Napoca .

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## PEDAGOGY IN POSTMODERNITY

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### **Abstract**

To avoid a conflict between the *mentality* of the society in which we live and the *didactic procedures* that school employs for the education of youngsters represents a fundamental challenge for the institutional authorities. Present day society needs new formulas of public and intellectual adjustment, expecting behaviours that are different from those proposed by the educational institutions.

Modernity is fashioned beyond the outlines that had ensured its virtues, features in which school used to excel being now put under question. “A new (post-modern) world” has carved its place in the very body of modernity. The restless youngsters vehemently dispute the personality traits, behaviours and, most of all, the values of modernity. Post-modernity has no patience to wait respectfully to be invited among the structures of modernity. The new society is no longer satisfied with a shaping of the tree’s branches; it demands a cutting down of the whole crown, a replacement of the entire “plantation.” Post-modernity unscrupulously barges in upon modern institutions, with a mind of changing their functions and behaviours. One such institution is *school*, which today lacks the authority for implementing the “new education.” The generation conflict has exceeded the limits of a natural, progressive and positive contradiction.

Cohabiting at the borderline of different mentalities, the generations (modern and post-modern) embrace a disjunctive attitude. The moderns would like the younger generation to take over at least part of their values, which they had also inherited and which had given them an existential satisfaction; the restless post-modern youngsters, on the other side, challenge the becoming, the options, and even the structure of the formers’ behaviours. They try to occupy “the armchair of authority before the wall-to-wall carpet has been changed,” lecturing on authority and expecting the “grown-ups” to share their temptations. They propose new guiding values, defying old ones either by ignoring them or by altering those that invoke them. The *new world*, with its globalizing ideas and neo-humanistic attitude, with its “wholes” built up of pieces and its disguised stories, needs a *new* kind of *education*. School today seems unable to find solutions to such a contagious and passionate behavioural aggression. We get the impression that educational institutions are desperately looking for solutions to overcome the deadlock in which

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they find themselves. Pedagogy has a new mission: *to offer didactic paradigms and methodological ideas suited for post-modern education*. The dynamism of despairs that can be witnessed in field of education, the social pressure exercised upon the pedagogical epistemology, have urged me to write the present study, even though I am aware that certain issues deserve greater attention, while others require serious reconsideration

**Keywords:** pedagogy, education, didactics, sciences of education.

### **A new mentality**

In contemporary society, didactic undertakings must focus on the formation of a new kind of individual, with new dimensions of his mental, intellectual and moral capacities. Priority is focused on developing creative, innovative and inventive thinking, a shrewd and critical mind, spirit of observation, flexibility and ingenuity of the mind. The basic responsibility for accomplishing this requirement falls on the school system, which represents not only the main factor for the conservation of mankind's spiritual heritage, but also one of the main vectors of social dynamics. Essentially, the training-educational process focuses on the development of highly operational abilities, aimed at engaging and fostering the levels of thinking: analysis, synthesis, comparison, analogy, various types of reasoning and argumentation.

Due to the need for (individual, group or social) adjustment to unpredictable situations, to new social processes and professional problems, teaching today must focus on developing flexible thinking, as well as abilities, such as that of using the acquired competences with maximum effectiveness, or that of acquiring new ones in accordance with the rapid progress of social life. Formative training targets the acquisition and development of skills of intellectual work: selection and systematisation, establishing new links, making generalizations. Social relations are stimulated; complex mental features are dynamised; qualities – such as independence, originality, curiosity, investigative spirit – are cultivated. In other words, in the age of (post)modernity, school gives precedence to formation, rather than information, to the development of the learner's personality, rather than his intellectual growth, to the improvement of his productive-creative thinking, rather than the development of his memory. This complex issue affects all structural and operational aspects of the training-educational process, challenging teachers to reconsider teaching techniques so as to find new didactic procedures for their classroom work. The postmodern approach

suggests that school can become an organisation focused primarily on a pragmatic kind of education. It needs to develop a space for itself where youngsters can find answers to their questions.

### **Pedagogy on new foundations**

The restructuring of a scientific domain begins with establishing the language used. Knowledge finds its expression in the modality of naming. The aim of describing a scientific reality is to identify the representative outline by which it is set apart from others it may get confused with. The personality of a science does not exclude variations and intersections with other domains of knowledge. The specific concepts and notions that describe a “science” denominate its identity and safeguard its condition. In its status of (young) science of education, *pedagogy* has defined a set of concepts and notions that ascertain its identity, distinguished from psychology, from philosophy or sociology: “*The evolution of **Pedagogy** can be surveyed from the perspective of the effort accumulated in the direction of acquiring the status of autonomous science, a complex and contradictory process that imposes certain limits to be overcome – limits of an etymological nature (in Greek, paid = child, agoge = to lead; paidagoia = to lead the child), historical (in the tradition of Antiquity, the paedagogus was a mere slave whose duty was to lead the child to school), methodological (pedagogy is viewed as an art, rather than a science), epistemological (given the uncontrolled extension of the domain of reference, approached by other sciences also, pedagogy has no sharply delimited object of study, it has no “epistemic object”)* (Noveanu & Potolea, 2007: 835<sup>2</sup>). The present study wishes to rehabilitate the science of pedagogy, on the one hand, and setting it apart from other sciences (such as psychology, sociology, anthropology or philosophy), on the other.

Today, pedagogy is in serious danger of being deprived of its scientific status, a danger fostered by the tendency of educationalists to dilute its character and by the ease with which they assimilate indiscriminately a terminology borrowed from other fields. I shall present arguments to show that pedagogy is a *comprehensive science* of education, that there is only one science of education, called *pedagogy*.

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<sup>2</sup> All translations of the quotations are my own.



### **Is pedagogy still a science?**

Detached from philosophy and sociology, **pedagogy** is considered to be a *science of education*, but the specialists' attempts to endow it with the logical connotations of an authentic science brought about a puzzling situation. Today, pedagogy is not (exactly) a science but, arguably, a sum of "sciences of education;" this situation usurps its status among the "sciences" it had delimited itself of. The most confused by this "theoretical clamor" were the practitioners, i.e. the educators meant to apply the theory to the field of training. The "sciences of education" (i.e. the "actional" components of the educational process, e.g. theory and methodology of the curriculum, theory and methodology of training, theory and methodology of assessment etc.) are thus turned into "practical sciences" (*theory and methodology* or *theory and practice*). With its "scientific" domain thus de-framed and with its structural components multiplied (and labeled as "sciences," with a plural form), the field they stand for is made to appear as less-than-serious and is severely taxed. As a consequence, neither psychologists nor sociologists or philosophers believe in pedagogy any more, because "pedagogicians" themselves have since undermined its unity and coherence.

If we were to accept the opinion of the French educationalist L. Not, we should accept one of two variants, i.e. to be viewed as either retrograde or out of fashion. "Today," he argues, "*it is retrograde to speak of pedagogy; in fashion are the sciences of education.*" (L. Not, 1984: 5). I accept the risk of appearing retrograde, pleading for a *science of education*, named **pedagogy**, with other theoretical preoccupations related to education put together under the umbrella term *pedagogical sciences*. Obviously, an analytical survey of the fundamental pedagogical notions is essential. ***Pedagogy must delimit its nucleus of specific terminology, its "hard core," which should reconsider its integrality and its scientific status.*** Without such clarification a *science of education* will run into serious difficulties, including an essential one: its breaking up into further "sciences of education" and its absorption by those domains of knowledge which promote terminological stabilization in a more determined way.

What arguments can we bring up to support the need to revise the present scientific status of **pedagogy**? The first terminological "Odyssey," perhaps a prejudice, is triggered by the word "**pedagogy**"

itself<sup>3</sup>. “**Pedagogy**” has detached itself of philosophy, of psychology, and later on, of sociology, claiming for itself the status of “*science of education*.” Pedagogy gives a theoretical form to the educational process, establishing its principles, structures and procedures of pragmatic configuration. But, by using the phrase “sciences of education,” “*pedagogists*” have sprayed out its concerns, turning the components into complementary sciences. The parts of the whole have broken up its unity, claiming for themselves the status of “sciences.” The obvious result was not only a degradation of **pedagogy** as a unitary science, but also a draining/a mutation of its content, a fact sustained by semantic incertitude. Due to this terminological vacillation, the “science” of pedagogy is now unable to offer strict theoretical solutions for the restructuring of procedures and the improving of the young generation’s general education. Furthermore, psychologists, sociologists, philosophers, doctors, anthropologists, started issuing doctrines for education from the perspective of their scientific domain, offering solutions for the restructuring of didactic activities. Such an interference looks like “harassment” (S. Cristea, 1996: 201), a harassment that pedagogy is unable to fight back.

The difficulties of educationalists to serve the domain they theorize result from their lack of preoccupation for an authentic terminology. By importing too many terms from other sciences – e.g. *curriculum, training, efficiency, strategy, design, manager, capability, project, goal* etc. – **pedagogy** runs the risk of diluting its “personality” even further. For example, by accepting the term “curriculum” in its corpus, Romanian (and European) **pedagogy** has compromised its status of science. Taken over without a stabilized sense, the word “*curriculum*” puzzles and confuses teachers by its lack of precision, various grammatical forms (in Romanian we have “*curricula*,” “*curricule*,” “*curriculumului*”, etc.). “Training” was imported from the military science, meaning “doing exclusively what the superior says”; “manager” was borrowed from the economic sciences, meaning “to administrate,” “to coordinate” and, perhaps, “to put the kitchen in order” (< Fr. “*ménage*”). Lack of scientific inspiration has led to formulations such as “*învățarea învățării*” (i.e. „learning teaching”), “*formarea formatorilor de formatori*” (i.e. “training trainer trainers”),

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<sup>3</sup> Since pedagogical thinking has long detached itself of the etymological origins of the word “pedagogy,” we view a justification based on the word’s genesis as obsolete.

“evaluarea evaluatorilor” (i.e. “evaluator evaluation”), “construirea competențelor” (i.e. “building competences”).

More than ever before, what is needed is the elaboration of a set of professionally designed specifications regarding the terminology of the science of education. A semantic study is required for the creation of a scientific corpus that should ensure long term structural coherence of the *pedagogical* terminology. We need an inventory of definitions, of representative types of studies, and especially, a critical, perhaps aggressively polemical, attitude aimed at eliminating errors and establishing precise options meant to clarify the basic concepts in the field.

Finally, practitioners (teachers of all levels, from those working in kindergartens to those teaching in high schools) are waiting for a *pedagogical paradigm* to be provided, a paradigm that can offer ideas and practical solutions to continuously deferred expectations of the (so called “post-modern”) present-day society. Scientific pedagogy needs to make order in its own domain before it can expect to become credible. The infrastructure in the pedagogical field for clarifications and delimitations is available: we, in Romania, have numerous Institutes of Pedagogical Sciences, a pedagogical press (incoherent as it may seem in the absence of a *Magazine of Pedagogy*), some twenty Faculties of Educational Sciences, a host of university professors with a Ph.D. in educational science, etc. This does not exclude teamwork with other sciences. The credibility and authority of pedagogy in the domain of the educational practice depends on a clarification of its terminology, of the concepts it operates with, of the systems of thinking it promotes.

National pedagogy, too, is in difficulty both in terms of epistemological delimitation and of pedagogical language: “*The dysfunctions are triggered by the personalized configuration of the educational information, by the confusions, the ambiguities inherent in certain terms and concepts, by the over-diminished or over-amplified significances of concepts, by the overindulgence in verbal clichés and in « super-concentrated » notions, removed by content and form from the educational requirements*” (Ionescu & Bocoș, 2009: 13). We share the opinion regarding the essential vice identified by the authors quoted above, a vice pertaining to the language, the linguistic invention, the strange codes employed – codes that fail to denote clearly enough the procedural field of education. The same risk results from the

“overindulgence” in a kind of pedagogical discourse that carries insufficient informational charge.

I am aware that, by operating exclusively at the level of language, logicians can easily refute my plea for a reconsideration of the scientific nature of pedagogy. I know only too well that language is the vehicle by which theories, laws and principles (which provide theoretical content to a science) take on the form of definitions, notions and explanations. A language that is vague and dominated by semantic fluidity indicates (and induces) vulnerability in the perception of the reality described. A fact is known only if language gives it a voice, e.g. a *theory* “represents a set of descriptive and explanatory pieces of knowledge regarding a domain”; or “explanatory mental constructions” (Șt. Bârsănescu, 1976: 350). A theory, a law<sup>4</sup>, a principle (or norm) is defined and explained by means of notions and concepts. Uncertain language betrays incoherent thinking.

### **Pedagogy and/or didactics**

There is a tendency to dilute the epistemology of *general pedagogy* into *didactics* by extending didactics (in definition, at least) so as to include non-formal education, self-education and the education of adults. In a wider conceptualization, *didactics* intersects with *pedagogy*, by which process the two words used for describing the same educational reality become redundant<sup>5</sup>. A “generative explanatory model” for the concept has also been proposed, i.e. “the system of educational sciences,” which excludes altogether the word “pedagogy” and thus totally ignores the reality it ought to represent. In my opinion, *pedagogy* is the science of general education, while *didactics* is a descriptive and an applied science pertaining to the training process, a science that employs the conceptual apparatus of general pedagogy. In other words, *pedagogy* is the science of education, while *didactics* is the art of education.

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<sup>4</sup> “Scientific laws in education must not be confused with educational norms or rules; a law establishes what exists, while the rule prescribes what needs to be done.” (Șt. Bârsănescu, 1976: 355).

<sup>5</sup> “Formal training (i.e. training viewed as a process) is not the exclusive subject of didactics, even if this is the aspect that has been studied most thoroughly. Today, the concept « didactics » has a very wide scope, its concerns extending far beyond school walls, to include teaching and self-education in informal and non-formal frameworks, as well as the systems of continuing education and of adult lifelong learning.” (M. Ionescu, M. Bocoș, 2009: 31).

With the title of his book published in 1995, *Arta și știința educației* (*The Art and Science of Education*), Cezar Bârzea triggered confusion, reflection and attitude. Art operates according to its inner, somewhat subjective rules, while scientific rules are entirely objective and rational. The author himself asserts this, when he says that “*a subject cannot be simultaneously science and art, as we are talking here of two modalities of knowledge that are fundamentally different.*” (C. Bârzea, 1995: 7). A copulative “and” placed between systematic reflections and esthetic impressions in the case of the educational phenomenon represents no more than an innocent challenge. **General pedagogy** is a speculative science since, as C. Cucoș (2002: 17) asserts, it has won for itself “an epistemic dignity” by fulfilling certain conditions:

It has an object of investigation (“the educational phenomenon”);

- It has its own tools for methodological investigation;
- It has a set of methodological research instruments
- It possesses principles, regularities and norms typical for the domain;
- It develops reflections into consistent theories.

Supporter of many theoretical mistakes (S. Cristea, C. Bârzea, E. Planchard, D. Popovici, 1998: passim) regarding “the leap from pedagogy to the sciences of education,” educationalist Ioan Negret asserts, with arguments borrowed from the field of logic, that pedagogy has acquired the status of an objective science, being today “*a normative and prescriptive scientific subject*” that has reached its “*full maturity*” (D. Popovici, 1998: 46). The same consensus is reached by M. Bocoș and D. Juncan (Bocoș & Juncan, 2008: 80-81), who argue that **pedagogy** is “*the integrative science of education*” and that “*contemporary pedagogy, as a form of reflection on education, places itself in an axiological-normative perspective and, simultaneously, has both a theoretical-explanatory character and a practical-applied one.*” F. Ortan makes a clear distinction between traditional pedagogy and the new pedagogy, which further complicates the concept’s ambiguity and status. For example, studying the problem from a certain perspective, he asserts that “*while traditional pedagogy focused on ideals, values and methods for achieving them, new pedagogy foregrounds elements of management, as well as decision and control evaluation.*” (F. Ortan, 2007: 105). Pedagogy is pedagogy, beyond time and space. Finally, but without considering his opinions as sufficient, M. Momanu argues that

**pedagogy** is a fundamental science, one that projects upon education an interdisciplinary vision; “*today, such an interdisciplinary vision on education is provided by pedagogy, which thus continues to remain the fundamental science of education*”<sup>6</sup>, a science that can integrate all reflections and results of scientific research on education” (M. Momanu, 2008: 80-81). The following definition by G.G. Antonescu also supports of the concept of **pedagogy**, when he asserts that “*pedagogy is the science which, based on knowledge of the human nature and taking into account the ideals towards which mankind should strive, establishes a system of principles that guide the educator’s intentional influence of the educated*” (G. G. Antonescu, 1930: 14). To avoid sounding outdated, I shall refrain from quoting the words of an outstanding Romanian educationalist from the previous century; let me, therefore, conclude by quoting the definition proposed by C. Cucuș: “*pedagogy studies the essence and the features of the educational phenomenon, the goal and tasks of education, its values and limits, its content, principles, methods and procedures of paideutic processes*” (C. Cucuș, 2002: 20). While acknowledging the “*epistemological maturity*” of contemporary pedagogy, as well as its status of “*integrative educational science,*” Bocoș argues that contemporary pedagogy alters “its bone structure”, its “disciplinary scientific matrix” by dividing concerns into “*macropedagogy/a pedagogy of systems, and micropedagogy/a pedagogy of teaching/learning and of self-directed learning*” (M. Bocoș, 2007: 13-17).

### **Pedagogy as a science**

Numerous other opinions can be identified in the Romanian pedagogical literature, reflections of the European or American thinking. Unfortunately, no sooner had **pedagogy** consolidated its place among sciences than educationalists themselves set out to usurp it by replacing the concept defined with the *proximal genus* of the logical definition. It is disagreeable to notice the tendency to not only leave out the word “*pedagogy*” (and the reality thus named) from the system of educational sciences, but even to contest its very ability to be a speculative science (after the models “*philology,*” “*psychology,*” “*sociology,*” “*anthropology,*” “*biology*”). *Pedagogy is the science of education, a science whose function is to explain the educational reality*

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<sup>6</sup> Original emphasis.

*on the basis of general norms regarding the appropriate integration of the individual in society.*

(General) **pedagogy** is descriptive and normative, i.e. characteristics which set it apart from **didactics**, defined as an applied discipline that employs principles, norms, models and paradigms in the educational practice. **Pedagogy** cannot be an appendix of the sciences it broke away from (psychology, biology, sociology, anthropology), nor can it be diluted in the impersonal pot of “educational sciences.” The observations above do not exclude the intersection of socio-human sciences with natural sciences. The status of pedagogy in orchestrating sciences that deal with man’s fate in the universe can be neither contested nor claimed. The most fervent supporters of the idea of preserving pedagogy as an autonomous contemporary science should be those whose profession it is to serve the field of education. Take, for example, Dumitru Popovici who, in his analysis of “the avatars” of general pedagogy, questions the scientific status of education vehemently (D. Popovici, 1998: passim). Considering that pedagogy has reached a crossroad in its becoming, the author proposes to “re-elaborate” it, a project too easily overlooked by educationalists themselves. It involves “a processal-organic model” based on the social virtues of education. The individual’s adjustment occurs thanks to his capacity to process the information the social environment provides, an adjustment that leads to a new kind of behavior. The author is even tempted to suggest a new term for pedagogy, i.e. **educology**. Just like the author, I believe that it is essential to reassess the educational terminology calmly, so as to decontaminate the scientific territory of emotive phrasings, trivial ambiguities or metaphysical expressions. All conceptual language is meant to name a reality or experiments made in that reality. If a field of knowledge, e.g. education, claims for itself the status of science, then the logic of language follows the defining path set by scientific logic. A thorough analysis of the pedagogical language must begin by establishing the semantic relation between denominator and denominator, i.e. between *education* and *pedagogy*. A negligent attitude can be observed even in the texts of rigorous psycho-educationalists, where the word “education” is often used instead of “pedagogy” and vice-versa. The confusion results from a personal preference for nuanced expression, the fundamental rigor for logical perception being altogether ignored.

By replacing a relation with a theory of reality and vice-versa, by substituting para-reality with reality itself, theoreticians cause doubt and semantic suspicion. By defining **pedagogy** as a science of education, science is endowed with a propositional, verbal and, simultaneously, cognitive condition. In this position, **pedagogy** can claim for itself the *status of science*<sup>7</sup> and, as a result, it is entitled to call for a *corpus of knowledge* that is well delimited from others that might intersect its way (psychology, anthropology and sociology). As a man of science, the Educationalist emits principled, normative and synthetic propositions on education. They take on the form of directive theories, descriptive principles and prospective norms, valid for a certain sum of realities and experiences analyzed. Pedagogy reinterprets the data supplied by other sciences (philosophy, psychology, sociology, medicine, biology), forming the foundations for a unitary and autonomous science, a science that can provide solutions for an efficient and rational organization of the educational process.

### **Pedagogy and education**

Education is a social process – it engages individuals and communities – meant to improve personal and collective behaviors. Education represents a training ground and a suggestibility space for **pedagogy**. When the educator deals with the current, processal issues of education, he is describing a certain social reality in which language games and sentimental analyses have no restrictions. Such an educator can offer solutions to several components of the educational structure. By suggesting a paradigm or building a doctrine, a true **educator** targets a general speculative theory of education. Such rigor allows no room for either emotional phrases or moralist preferences, nor for logical structure deviations. Starting from the hypothesis according to which “*present-day education does not satisfy*,” the educator will study the scientific field of education and will generate a theory that should change the relationship between the domain’s components. The theory will be valid if “*new education satisfies*”.

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<sup>7</sup> A science consists of the logical expositions of certain truths that function as necessary laws and general principles. As far as we are concerned, they are applied to all identical situations that concern education. Thus, for example, the principles of intuition, of active learning, of an integrated education, of a passage from the concrete to the abstract, from the easy to the difficult, from the analytical to the synthetic, etc., represent stable values in pedagogy, values presented to the educational practice.



Education has been analyzed by numerous sciences, but only one provides a structuring of the ideas into doctrines. The syntagm “sciences of education” is acceptable only if **pedagogy**, as a science of education, acquires a status of integrative science, open to (and receptive of) other sciences it cooperates with for the clarification of numerous aspects of its fundamental domain: education. The difficulties of pedagogy – as a science of education – are triggered by the (justified) apprehension of intersecting with its scientific partners, of which it had scarcely managed to individualize itself. Just like psychology, sociology, philosophy and anthropology, **pedagogy** targets the problems of mankind, those of the human condition. The socio-humanistic sciences mentioned above have failed to provide a clear projection regarding man’s evolution/becoming: “*the human condition defines the inter-connection of the psychological structure with the biological and the social infrastructures*” (Mărgineanu, 1973: 213). Every person is the result of an ethos, and the system of education is enriched by the expressive molds of that ethos. **Education** serves the collective behavior, transmitting its mental and cultural genetics to the new generation. At the same time, **education** suggests and creates facilities meant to enrich the given genetics. A pedagogical model suits only an education based on the representative ethos, all other visions (even if verified as efficient) being excluded.

Let us now turn our attention to philosophers: “*Give educators the configuration of a representative humanistic ethos that should reflect education! Identify the specificity of the profile (social, economic, cultural, behavioral) of the community whose character and thinking we aim to educate!*” Then, and only then, will educators have a reliable landmark for education. School has a general function: to facilitate the integration of youngsters in the society to which they belong. But what happens outside school, in society, triggers an uninterrupted chain of experiences for learning and development. The *social ethos* exerts adjustment “pressures” upon the youngsters, pressures that are too persistent to ignore. The process of education is too complex and too individualized for an *apriori* and *apophthegmatique* formula. And again, pedagogy falls into a new error: is it a science of general education, or a science of institutionalized education?

### **Projective pedagogy**

Consequently, to **pedagogy**, every new social configuration represents an important challenge and idea stimulator. I agree with the assertion of certain ideologists according to whom society relies on school to represent its political interests. School takes on the image and likeness of the community that produces it. When institutionalized education becomes too far removed from the expectations of society, **pedagogy** has the right to step in, providing normalizing paradigms for the relationship between school and society. This is the kind of situation we find ourselves in at present. The individual satisfactions of the child and the social experiences of the community do not provide a secure enough existential comfort. The role of **pedagogy** is to suggest structural theoretical solutions (principles, norms), while that of **didactics** is to put into practice, via its educational activity, the specific procedures for the spiritual development of man. Results will be reflected in education, as a summation of the values that every youngster assimilates so as to become part of the collective spiritual architecture.

Every rigorous theory is based on normativity. **Pedagogy** operates with theories, norms/ principles and causalities, based on an established philosophy which delimits the evolutionary process of the individual's biological forces. The norms assumed ascertain that the child should develop a harmonious (spiritual and biological) personality, a balanced psychological life and moral standards befitting those of society. The entire personality of the educated is made up of pieces, i.e. of cognitive education, esthetic education, moral education, etc. The relationship between these synergetic behaviors is congruent, working together dynamically for the crystallization of the core personality.

On the other hand, culture is a cause of, as well as a goal for education. Through culture, the educational process is activated, becoming in its turn the basic objective of the process: "*Cultural values are causes – from the perspective of collective social life (since they are a given for the children and youngsters in formation) and conscious goals – from the viewpoint of the young generations who get integrated in the rhythm of the culture*" (Todoran, 1946: 92). Consequently, if it is to provide decisional politicians with solutions for improving and correcting education, **pedagogy** must have personality and credibility.

A balanced pedagogical doctrine, thrifty in its ideas, will structure as coherently as possible the capacity of society (institutional and non-institutional) to harmonize with its own requirements the individual's bio-physiological development. Such a doctrine would meet with the individual's aspirations for self assertion, his need to fulfill his social obligations and to keep social relations in good repair by respecting the group's values. A pedagogical doctrine capable of suggesting an educational configuration consistent with the individual's aspirations and the community's requirement should be based on the idea of a balance between mutual duties and personal freedom.

Our age – so complex by its informational globalization (in which every person can identify or differentiate himself whenever he wishes) – requires a new type of pedagogical discourse. The educational theorist exceeds his condition of “didactician,” i.e. of theorist of educational concerns typical for schools. **Didactics** organizes institutionalized education in a programmatic/curricular way. By its speculative attitude, **pedagogy** generates a system of global education, aimed at man's becoming an integral part of human condition and integratable into it. Thus, its theory will focus on the unified man.

From the perspective of behavioral sciences, the stages represented by “the first seven years at home,” by “school education” and by the “professional activity” have a unitary configuration. Education expects educationalists to provide a guiding principle, and most importantly, a paradigm according to which they should rank their actions. If **pedagogy** wants to remain a science (of education), the only rescue relies in a passage from the descriptive to the projective. Description of what education was and still is, can only represent a support for a viable and credible paradigm. A theory based educational project would unify the idea of a social well being with that of an individual well being. Here are some suggestions for a (so badly needed) organizational model for education:

- Identification, for an educational purpose, of human resources that can alter the perspective regarding man's happiness in the group dynamics;
- Establishing a comprehensive personality profile that should include elements pertaining to character development, as well as factors derived from social normativity;

- A global organization of the educational contents, based on determining the relationship between freedom and constraint, science a dogma;
- Promoting new types of teaching/learning methods that should redeem the viability and dynamism of the educational program;
- Projecting a discourse of social evolution that should allow every person to occupy the place he deserves best, according to his profile and personality.

### **Instead of conclusions, or On human condition**

This leads us to a definition of life itself. Man's life, argues Nicolae Mărgineanu, is "*the individual's process of adjustment to the world, aimed at preservation and development,*" and this process is based on "*an interaction between the individual, society and culture, by which man's existence in the world can be defined*" (N. Mărgineanu, 1973: 17). In the duplicity of his essence, man will bear the dramatic beauty of his existence. Although forced to make numerous concessions, ranging from the mental and natural aspirations of the individual to the aspirations and constraints of the social community, man will always be a happy Sisyphus. Society is the only institution that makes room for authentic manifestation of the human values, but in this way, individual's freedom are restricted and compensated with the community's rigors. **Education** is a form of compression that discriminates the individual's becoming positively. When speaking of *education*, we press forward a good portion of what the curriculum (visible or disguised) involves in terms of significance. Society educates the individual so as to integrate him in his representative logos and ethos. Consequently, a man has no significance except by his contribution to the community's harmony. In his *Republic*, Plato discusses the eternal forms in which Homer's characters would like to be reincarnated. Ajax wishes he were a lion, Orpheus would like to take on the shape of a swan, Agamemnon would rather be a vulture, but Ulysses wants nothing but a human form. He wants to become a man again because his destiny, that of wandering sailor, had given him the opportunity to taste both the satisfaction and the risks of action. He knows that man embodies the idea of evolution because experiences, whatever their nature, renew options and ennoble them.

Since I am in no position to organize *a team* able to bring into being such a doctrine, I shall merely draw attention to the

responsibilities of **pedagogy**, *compelled* by its epistemic status to find solutions that can improve human condition.

Furthermore, the present generation of educationalists must feel responsible regarding the labels stuck on their scientific domain: pedagogy, pedagogical sciences, educational sciences or sciences of education. In its condition of science of education, **pedagogy** is *now* in a position to either bring arguments and thus preserve its scientific *vocation*, or to linger on as mere *aspiration*, occasionally challenged by questions and arguments.

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## THE NEW PARADIGM OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

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**Abstract:** The Bologna Process brings major changes in European higher education, regarding the philosophy of education and scientific research, the mission of universities in the Knowledge Society, the structure and objectives of academic studies. It is the reform of the very concept of education, a new paradigm of academic education and scientific research. It includes such elements as: emphasis from teaching to learning, student-centred education, creativity and innovation, education focused on outcomes, system of transferable credits, easily readable and comparable degrees, mobility for students and didactic staff, quality assurance, European dimensions in higher education, the internalization and globalization of education, new approaches as inter- and transdisciplinarity, education as a free experience of mind, open access, inclusive and responsive universities, diversity, multiculturalism etc. By some of its most significant elements, the new paradigm expresses the tendency of returning to the classic university model, of recovering, in essential data, the “old” philosophy, rather than a radical dissociation of it. The Bologna reform is built, in its main elements, on the Bologna University and some other famous Europe’s universities classic models. It is not a separation, but the valorization of the European academic tradition. It is also a symbolic appeal of the European Union to its roots in a glorious academic past, with powerful and living models, while facing the challenging future.

**Keywords:** paradigm, Knowledge Society, reform, institutional mission, open access, innovation, creativity.

The current changes and developments at European and global level aspire to reshape the world in the spirit of globalization. The New Europe, whose core is formed by the European Union, is facing an unprecedented challenge today: *competition*, in all areas and at all levels, with the world powers, but also with emerging countries,

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especially in Asia, which come with a great human and economic potential. Education plays a vital role in this fierce competition, since education is the basis of knowledge. A simple truth, known since ancient times, and available more than ever today, knowledge is power. Any area of economy and every sector of public and private life is powered by human intelligence, enriched by knowledge power. The leaders in the areas of education, knowledge and research have a fundamental role to play on the contemporary world scene. Starting from these simple, but extremely challenging, premises, the EU leaders concluded that, in order to be globally competitive, Europe must build a knowledge-based society and economy. The university has the fundamental contribution in this genesis, as an elite institution of education, research, training and development. The current era, a time of rapid developments and changes, requires new forms and educational models. The Bologna Reform has proposed a major change in the design, structure and content of university education, towards certain finality: creating the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and of the European Research Area (ERA), forming together the European Knowledge Area (EKA), the space of the knowledge-based society and economy.

### **University and the building of Europe**

By its genesis, the university is a European institution. The first universities in the world, in the full meaning of the term "university", developed during a brilliant academic tradition, were born in Europe: Bologna (1088), Oxford (1167), Paris (1170), Vicenza (1204), Palencia (1208), Cambridge (1209), Arezzo (1215), Padua (1222), etc. If the university is the creation of Europe, Europe as a space of civilization, culture, spiritual and material values is, in turn, the creation of the university, as the elite institution of education. Along with the political and religious power, the university has always played, especially in Western Europe, a key role. European universities have become prestigious schools of knowledge and education in fundamental areas, real power centers of science. The whole development of Europe over the centuries to modern and postmodern era is closely linked to universities and their mission. In today's times, in the context of globalization, the mission of university is again an essential one. Globalization means fierce competition in the economic and financial areas, but also in knowledge. At the same time, knowledge represents

the very purpose of two fundamental processes for the personal and social development: education and scientific research. University is the laboratory in which education and research must be developed to the highest standards of performance and competitiveness. Europe is aware that, in order to participate in the global competition, to remain what it was, the cradle of civilization and the vanguard of the progress of humanity, it must become a global force in knowledge. Medieval and modern Europe was built by the force of knowledge that the great politicians, scientists and artists have acquired in universities. By *university*, they came into *universality*. The new Europe is being built today, in an unprecedented planetary competition, on the university foundation. To meet the challenges of the time, to answer the requirements of the today's world, Europe needs a modern university, an institution that would foster education and research in the service of knowledge at the highest global standards. The European University of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium is the product of a process of profound reform, built on a new educational philosophy and on the reformation of the very concept of education. The process is meant to determine the transformation of the current university, to redefine its mission, structure and content in the knowledge society and to reshape the European higher education whole system. The new metamorphosis is a work of great difficulty, since the battle is on the institutional level, but also psychological, an unprecedented challenge to the higher education. It is a battle with tradition, a glorious academic tradition, with established mentalities strongly linked to a consecrated model, associated with excellence and the prestige of knowledge. The process has started for more than a decade. It is interesting to see how the new university will be and what remains available of the old model of classical university and of its education paradigm. Are we witnessing the separation from a prestigious model which built Europe of knowledge, civilization, culture, science and arts or, on the contrary, the return to the classical paradigm of academic education and the recovery of a philosophy that seemed buried in the ashes of history?

### **The classical university model**

To understand the evolution of the university in time up to the shaping of the contemporary model, we must have an essential picture of the initial model. Knowing it in its fundamental dimensions, we will better understand the metamorphosis of the today's university into the



tomorrow's university by the higher education reforming process that participates in the building of the New Europe.

The first three universities in Europe and worldwide, since the university was born on the old continent, are Bologna, Paris and Oxford. They are the universities of "first generation" and form two academic models. The Bologna model - "universitas magistrorum et scholarium" – promoted the university made up by students, in which they were favored: students chose their own teachers and the rector out of themselves too, they exercised control over teachers in teaching and payment issues. Out of the "Bologna model", the "Paris model", "universitas magistrorum", was born: a university of teachers, divided into several faculties, in which students would have the status of university members only. On the ground of the Paris University philosophy, Oxford and Cambridge universities were founded. In fact, this is the model which formed the foundation of European universities over the years until today.

The second generation university is called "universitas ex privilegio ". Some universities have been established by royal decree, by the decision of a local authority or other official act of government: Salamanca, Naples, Toulouse, Prague, Vienna, Heidelberg, Cologne. Universities in Spain and Portugal were established by royal prerogatives and have been linked to a cathedral or other religious authority, supported by their city. Thus the universities of Huesca, Zaragoza, Alcalá, Coimbra, Lisbon, or the University of Salamanca, called "mother of liberal arts and of all virtues, were founded by the monarch.

In the universities of Europe, the study, conferences, debates were in Latin, and not in local languages. In all universities the same subjects were studied, the four traditional branches of knowledge: philosophy, theology, law, medicine and also the liberal arts ("artes liberales"). The titles obtained from one of them were recognized in all European universities. Such recognition made it possible for students from any country in Europe to study in any university. Those who obtained a Ph.D. or "licentia ubique docendi" had the right to teach at any university. In the fifteenth century, the structuring in faculties of the universities, experienced the first time in Paris, has expanded in Europe. Thus, there took place the evolution from the encyclopedic model of knowledge to the specialization paradigm. The process gave birth to four specialized schools on the four key areas: medicine, theology,

philosophy and law, schools known as "facultates", separated from one another. To achieve the status of "studium generale", the university was not obliged to include all four faculties. It was enough for it to have at least one of them, along with the faculty of arts, which had a mandatory status in the university structure. The faculty of Arts was the school of the seven liberal arts, divided into "trivium" (grammar, rhetoric, logic) and "quadrivium" (arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy), i.e. in philological, philosophical and scientific subjects.

An essential property of the classical university is *the open access* to the various branches of knowledge, practiced to meet the needs and requirements of an open society and a mobile population. The principle of open access would refer both to the students' registration and to the teachers' selection. The application of the principle, however, used to have limitations: the open access in universities regarded only men. Women have been accepted universities beginning with the nineteenth century only. Another characteristic of universities, expressing the philosophy that underpinned this institution in the medieval Europe, was *mobility*, "peregrinatio academica". Student mobility contributed to the establishment of new universities and to the making of an academic culture in Europe. The practice of mobility became a habit, a pilgrimage from one university to another, from which students got their diplomas. Both diplomas and doctorates obtained elsewhere were recognized at the university of origin. "Peregrinatio academica" was a European-wide phenomenon, involving tens of thousands of students and reached the climax in the sixteenth century. Later, with the change of the students' aims in their education process, the pilgrimage turned into an educational trip or in the "Grand Tour", which would not require long studies at any university any longer. The Grand Tour tradition has grown over time and involved universities and academies in Germany, France, Italy, Spain, England and Holland. For example, between 1500 and 1700, at least 20 000 German students studied in Italy.

It should be noted that medieval universities formed the space in which the cultural, ethical, civil values were grown, which, together with the Christian ones, established the foundation of medieval Europe and supported the European civilization to develop during ages until now.

### **From the Bologna University to the Bologna Process**

An important step in reforming higher education in Europe is the Sorbonne Declaration (May 25, 1998) on "harmonization of European higher education system architecture", signed by ministers of education from France, Italy, Britain and Germany. The Declaration is built on several fundamental elements: the recognition of the "positive potential" of the existence of a European area of higher education; the "progressive harmonization" of the general framework of the course of study cycles and of the granting of diplomas by "strengthening the existing experience of united diplomas, of the pilot initiatives and dialogue" initiated by the Lisbon Convention; encouraging mobility of students, academics and researchers by the full use of the increasing support given by the European Union. Declaration calls the European states to participate in creating a European area of higher education, in which "national identities and common interests can interact and strengthen each other for the benefit of Europe, of its students, and more generally of its citizens."

The cornerstone of the higher education reform in Europe is the Bologna Declaration, signed on June 19, 1999 by 29 European education ministers. In the text of the Declaration, there are key passages as: "A Europe of Knowledge is now widely recognized as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship, capable of giving its citizens the necessary competencies to face the challenges of the new millennium, together with an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space."; "We must in particular look at the objective of increasing the international competitiveness of the European system of higher education. The vitality and efficiency of any civilization can be measured by the appeal that its culture has for other countries. We need to ensure that the European higher education system acquires a world-wide degree of attraction equal to our extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions." The Declaration formulates, on the ground of the general principles of the Sorbonne Declaration, a set of objectives "of primary relevance in order to establish the European area of higher education and to promote the European system of higher education world-wide."

The objectives to be achieved in the first decade of the third millennium are the following: adoption of a system of degrees "readable

and comparable”, the implementation of the Diploma supplement; the adoption of a learning system based on two main cycles: undergraduate and graduate – master and/or doctorate degree; establishment of a system of transferable credits (e.g. ECTS) as a means to extend the mobility of students; promotion of mobility for students, with access to study and training opportunities and to related services, for teachers, researchers and administrative staff, with the recognition and valorisation of periods spent in a European context researching, teaching and training, without prejudicing their statutory rights; promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance with a view to developing comparable criteria and methodologies; promotion of the necessary European dimensions in higher education, particularly with regards to curricular development, inter-institutional co-operation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research. The statement adds that achieving these objectives will be made, by “taking full respect of the diversity of cultures, languages, national education systems and of University autonomy”, in order to consolidate the European Higher Education Area.

To reflect the developments, directions and trends in the Bologna Process, we will refer to three of the reform policy documents developed by the European University Association (EUA): *EUA Lisbon Declaration* (2007), *EUA Prague Declaration* (2009) and *EUA Aarhus Declaration* (2011).

*The Lisbon Declaration* (adopted by the EUA Council in April 13, 2007), “Europe’s Universities beyond 2010: Diversity with a Common Purpose”, highlights the ways in which European universities can play a greater role in the development of the 21st century society. The Declaration is built on several basic development directions of the reform: Building the European Higher Education Area, The Internationalisation of the European Higher Education Area, Promoting Research and Innovation, Quality, Autonomy and funding. In this context, the document highlights a number of elements of major importance in the evolution of the reform, on the ground of the Bologna philosophy: Strong Universities for Europe, Universities and the Knowledge Society, A diversified university system, The fundamental importance of university autonomy, Universities and an inclusive society, A stronger student focus, ECTS (European Credit Transfer System), Creating a supportive learning environment, Increasing the employability of graduates, Lifelong learning, The Internationalisation

of the European Higher Education Area and the “Bologna Trademark”, Institutional strategies for internationalization, Promoting Research and Innovation, Linking higher education and research, Embedding high quality doctoral programmes in universities, Developing institutional strategies for research, Promoting innovation capacity, University-enterprise collaboration, Cost accounting of research activities, More flexible legal and regulatory conditions, Open Access, Quality processes and institutional mission, The link to external accountability, The European dimension of quality, Autonomy and funding, Increasing and diversifying funding streams, Private contributions to higher education. All these elements are summarized in a conclusion that expresses the purpose of the whole process of reform of European higher education: *Strong Universities for Europe*. In this chapter, the Lisbon Declaration states that "Europe's universities are a major force in shaping the Europe of Knowledge." But they need the resources to fulfill their mission "not just well, but with excellence and in a way which allows them to compete with the higher education systems of other continents". Because, says the statement, "Not just Europe, but the whole world, is becoming a <Knowledge Society>". Universities live "exciting times" since their mission in the Knowledge Society is to "contribute to innovation through teaching and learning, research and knowledge transfer." In this way, universities have a crucial role: "to shape Europe's future" in the globalizing world.

*The Prague Declaration* (2009), "European Universities – Looking forward with confidence", is structured in two main parts: I. *Message to political leaders – combat the global economic and financial crisis through investment in higher education and research* and II. *10 success factors for European universities in the next decade*. The first part includes a series of principles and action directions: *Universities – crucial for the future of Europe* ('through knowledge creation and by fostering innovation, critical thinking, tolerance and open minds we prepare citizens for their role in society and the economy and respond to their expectations by providing opportunities for individual development and personal growth. Through research-based education at all levels we provide the high-level skills and innovative thinking our modern societies need and on which future economic, social and cultural development depends. We strive for the long-term in addition to assuming new tasks and providing solutions to current problems.');

*Universities – motors for economic recovery* ("by

striving for excellence in teaching, research and innovation, by offering opportunities to diverse groups of learners, and by providing the optimal creative environment for the talented young researchers that Europe needs, universities are increasingly central to future growth and to the consolidation of Europe's knowledge society. With our reservoir of highly trained and flexible citizens able to respond to changing labour markets and with the research skills needed to make Europe more creative and innovative, and thus ultimately more competitive, we are well placed to find answers to the global challenges of the 21st century.”); *Higher education and research needs a European stimulus package; A European stimulus package through higher education and research*. In this context, EUA makes the following recommendations: Investing in the present generation of young researchers; Tapping unused potential; Upgrading universities' facilities and campus infrastructure. The second part comprises 10 requirements for the success of the universities in the next decade. For inclusive and responsive universities pursuing their primary tasks of teaching and research: 1. Widening opportunities for participation in and successful completion of higher education; 2. Improving researcher careers; 3. Providing relevant and innovative study programmes; 4. Developing distinctive institutional research profiles. For strong and flexible universities pursuing excellence in their different missions: 5. Shaping, reinforcing, and implementing autonomy; 6. Increasing and diversifying income; 7. Enhancing quality and improving transparency; 8. Promoting internationalization; 9. Increasing and improving the quality of mobility; 10. Developing partnerships.

*The EUA Aarhus Declaration 2011*, “Investing Today in Talent for Tomorrow”, is also structured into two parts: I. *Combatting the global economic and financial crisis through investment in higher education and research* and II. *Investing today in talent for tomorrow*. The first part emphasizes some axiomatic ideas regarding the status and mission of universities in the third millennium and identifies a number of priorities: *Reiterating EUA's 2009 appeal to political leaders and decision makers*: 1. Universities - crucial for the future of Europe; 2. Universities - motors for economic recovery; *The changed context 2011: Meeting the challenges of the EU 2020 agenda*: 3. Universities – central to the success of the EU2020 agenda; 4. Universities – addressing complex problems that need innovative solutions; 5. Universities - smart people for smart growth requires long-term

commitment;; 6. Universities – need financial sustainability to be able to keep investing in their future academic and research activities, 7. Universities - European commitment and added value. The second part *Investing today in talent for tomorrow* contains an action agenda for universities, structured into three sections: *Continued commitment to the strengthening of autonomy and specific institutional profiles*: 1. Widening access and increasing capacity to respond to the needs of more diverse student populations; 2. Developing distinctive research portfolios; 3. Ensuring that university staff and students identify with the university and its specific mission; *Clear institutional strategies that promote talent from an early stage*: 4. Strengthening the links between teaching and research from an early stage and building research capacity from the undergraduate level; 5. Building attractive and transparent career structures, tracks and opportunities for all staff as well as appropriate and supportive working environments; 6. Placing a special focus on doctoral education and training and prioritising the development of career opportunities for early stage researchers; 7. Developing and promoting the circulation of talent in order to enhance research capacity and bring new knowledge developed through contact with different cultures and ways of thinking; *Crosscutting policies underpinning talent development*: 8. Strong leadership is required; 9. A clear internationalisation strategy; 10. An overall commitment to a quality culture and to transparency; 11. Understanding the importance of partnerships.

### **A new educational paradigm**

All these transformations, which have a complex ideological and administrative framework and evolve under the generic name of "Bologna Process", involve not only formal changes, but also the substance and the background of the higher education. It is a new philosophy, a new vision, towards well-defined finalities, the reformation of the very concept of education. They form the conceptual foundation of the whole process, on which the Bologna reform is built. In this context, it is important to see which the main elements of the new educational paradigm are, constituting the active principle of reshaping European higher education.

A major transformation in the educational philosophy of the higher education today is moving the emphasis from teaching to learning. The didactic process should no longer have in its core the

professor, in the position of an intangible master with absolute scientific authority. The "magister dixit" policy lives its twilight today. The "ex cathedra" lecture also ceases to be the professor's demonstration of scholarship and erudition, in a narcissistic type of academic exercise, devoid of practical purpose. The teaching process in the new vision is student-centered, aiming to deliver knowledge, to form abilities and competencies to the students in order to qualify them in their specialty areas and integrate the graduates into the labour market. In terms of the today conceptual metamorphosis, teaching is based on student involvement, on creative collaboration and emulation, in a kind of intellectual synergy dedicated to the knowledge enhancement and critical valorisation. A major challenge of the new philosophy is to transform teaching and learning in a pragmatic process based on proven results. The purpose of the act of teaching is not the teaching itself, in virtue of an "academic" tradition wrongly understood, but learning, through its results. The fundamental stake of the higher education today is the quality of learning and training, by the academic education and scientific research processes, in view of forming competent, qualified and competitive human resources for the labour market.

In the teaching-learning area developments, the multiplication of the informational sources, the rise of global information and communication technology should be taken into account, as a phenomenon that opens doors to a practically unlimited virtual library, a Library of Alexandria to the power of "n", launching an unprecedented challenge to the knowledge process.

Today's university education focuses on quality of education and not quantity. Assuring quality in the academic education by universities is one of the key principles of European higher education reform. To this end, universities must generate a "quality culture", i.e. a program to enforce and develop the quality of the education act, based on administrative, technological, and epistemological procedures and, of course, on qualified human resources, defined by competence and professionalism.

The "quality culture" also comprises two instruments, which today play a special role in European higher education reform: creativity and innovation. Creativity as an attribute of intelligence fosters innovation, it generates ideas and solutions in the complex process of knowledge. Under today's global competition in academic education and scientific research, creativity, innovation, ability to discover



constitute key elements that differentiate institutions among each other and rank them on the performance scale. In the new paradigm of education, creativity and innovation, expressing the openness of intellect to knowledge, are challenges addressed both to the academic staff and to the students in the teaching and learning process. They develop due to the acceptance of risks, sometimes inherent in such circumstances, an attitude which belongs also to the "quality culture".

The quality of education and learning is assessed in terms of results. To make the teaching and learning act efficient, to open horizons in the academic education and scientific research in terms of innovation and creativity and in view of the linkage of higher education with the labour market, essential strategy changes should occur in the educational process. The new model involves complex inter- and transdisciplinary approaches, in a holistic, fundamental vision, considering the knowledge process from an integrative perspective.

All these elements, quality, creativity, innovation, refer not only to the academic education, but also to the scientific research, both fundamental areas of the university. In these circumstances, the third millennium university aims to be an institution of excellence and performance in education and scientific research, globally competitive in a globalized world.

In the spirit of the Bologna Process, mobility of students and didactic staff, experience exchanges, diversification of the knowledge sources and of the training methods represent other defining elements of the higher education metamorphosis.

The third millennium university, in the context of internationalization and globalization of education, is an institution open to diversity and multiculturalism, which anyone can access. This metamorphosis gave birth to the phrase "Open University", which has become lately the concept of a new philosophy and approach in higher education.

University which is built today for the future is a strong institution, defined by quality, performance, responsibility and autonomy, the core of the European space, which generates fundamental changes and developments, a factor of progress towards the knowledge-based society and economy.

### **The University of the Future versus the Classic University? Antagonic or Complementary paradigms?**

Between the first European universities, of Bologna, Paris and Oxford, and the third millennium university stretch nine centuries of history and evolution. Over time, the university has gone through several metamorphoses imposed by the nature and requirements of societies and historical epochs.

In modern times, especially in the twentieth century, higher education has evolved from holistic approaches of knowledge, on the basis of a comprehensive gnosiology, to strict specializations, to the epistemological isolation of the knowledge branches and subjects, customizing the original meaning of the concept and institution "university".

In the Eastern part of Europe, hit by the scourge of totalitarian ideology, history isolated the university as an institution, cutting its bridges to the West and the world, transforming it into a regional entity, lack of communication, a closed space.

The opening that defines today's European society and globalization determine a new metamorphosis of the university and requires a new educational model. But what is this transformation expressing and how new is "new model"? Analyzing the elements of the institutional reform in European higher education and the new educational paradigm, we find a tendency to return to the classic model of the university, to recover, in essential aspects, the "old" paradigm, and not a radical dissociation, in the spirit of a future launching multiple and complex challenge to us.

Europe, in its various historical situations, was deeply influenced by the educational model generated in the first universities and perpetuated afterwards. The Knowledge society towards which the new Europe is heading constitutes the product of the university, a new and old institution at the same time, adapted to the current requirements. An open university, free, integrated in the European Higher Education Area, a part, in turn, of the international and global circuit.

The Bologna model of higher education reform is built, in its essential elements, on the classic model of the University of Bologna and on the others which followed. It is a symbolic return to the past, but a past always present by the power of a perennial model, looking into the future, that is coming, in every second, impetuously to us.

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## RELATION BETWEEN STUDENTS' SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING AND SCHOOL BURNOUT

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**Abstract:** Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between school burnout and subjective well-being for students in grade of 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>. The methodology of this research was descriptive and correlation. The two questionnaires employed here were The Satisfaction with Life Scale with five items of the Diener et al. (1985) and School-Burnout Inventory with nine items and three component - exhaustion at schoolwork (EXH), cynicism toward the meaning of school (CYN), and sense of inadequacy at School (INAD) - measures of school burnout of the Salmela-Aro et al. (2009). The results showed that the high school students described their subjective well-being in relatively good and also in overall marked high scores (agree) on exhaustion at schoolwork, and they were relatively agree with cynicism toward the meaning of school, and sense of inadequacy at school. There was relatively positive correlation between students' subjective well-being and exhaustion at schoolwork, relatively high negative correlation between students' subjective well-being and cynicism toward the meaning of school, and no any significance correlation between students' subjective well-being and sense of inadequacy at School. There were positive correlation between students' subjective well-being and some components of school burnout e.g. SWB with EXH and in the some components of school burnout and subjective well-being there were negative correlation e.g. SWB with CYN, and there were no significance differences between SWB and some component of school burnout e.g. SWB with INDA.

**Keywords:** Subjective Well-Being; School Burnout; Student

### Introduction

Consideration of research studies show the concept of subjective well-being consists of several aspects such as positive affect, negative affect, and life satisfaction. According to Myers and Diener (1995:11) subjective well-being reflects "a preponderance of positive thoughts and feelings about one's life" and defined subjective well-being as "the relative presence of positive affect, absence of negative affect, and satisfaction with life". Subjective well-

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being is interested in why individuals evaluate their lives in positive ways (Diener, 1984). Yetim (2001) believed that subjective well-being is a field that comprises positive characteristics and measurements. Also, it concentrates on lengthwise affects more than temporary emotional states. The studies show the subjective well-being has two general components: Emotional and cognitive. According to some researchers e.g. Diener, the emotional component consists of positive and negative affects whereas the cognitive component is related with the individual's life satisfaction (Diener, & Larsen, 1993; Diener, & Suh, 1997; Pavot et al., 1991; Schimmack et al., 2002).

In the some resources, the term happiness is commonly operationalized as subjective well-being, which is comprised of three components: frequent positive affect (pleasant feelings and moods), relatively infrequent negative affect - bothersome emotions like guilt and anger-, and high life satisfaction - cognitive, global appraisal of one's contentment with his or her life- (Suldo & Shaffer, 2007). Therefore, subjective well-being is a wellness construct that communicates children's self-appraisal of their own protective factors (e.g., positive emotion, life satisfaction). Empirical studies have uncovered links between students' subjective well-being and their perceptions of academic competence (e.g. Suldo & Shaffer, 2007) as well as satisfaction with their schooling experiences (e.g. Suldo et al., 2008). Given the positive correlations between students' subjective well-being and their attitudes toward teachers and school (e.g. Huebner et al., 2000), enhancing school-based relationships may be an essential way to proactively increase students' social-emotional wellness.

The study of well-being has been divided into two streams of research, respectively: the *hedonic* approach and the *eudaimonic* approach. The *hedonic* approach conceptualizes and defines well-being in terms of happiness and of the presence of pleasure and absence of pain and is reflected in the stream of research on subjective well-being (Bradburn, 1969; Diener, 1984; Diener et al., 1985). The *eudaimonic* approach equates well-being with human potential that, when realized, results in a person's optimal functioning in life (Diener et al., 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2001b) and is reflected in the stream of research on psychological (Ryff, 1989) and social (Keyes, 1998) well-being. One goal of researchers who studied well-being was to define the key features of the well-being construct (Kozma et al., 1991; Kafka & Kozma, 2002) and one issue that they have analyzed was the number of dimensions or components that are needed to characterize people's positive evaluations of their lives. (Negovan, 2010)

The review of the literature on subjective well-being, subjective well-being is defined "as a person's cognitive and affective evaluations of his or her life" (Diener et al 2005:63). Despite the lack of agreement about the number of

dimensions contained by subjective well-being, two main components are generally recognized: a cognitive (satisfaction) and an affective (pleasant affect and low levels of unpleasant affect) component. Leonard (2002:55) defined the quality of school life as “a synthesis of positive experiences, negative experiences, and other feelings related to specific school life domains”. In addition, studies have also investigated the quality of school life among students (Karatzias et al., 2001; Majeedet al., 2002; Mok, & Flynn, 2002; Sari, & Cenkseven, 2008). Seligman (2000) has distinguished between feelings of meaning, pleasure, engagement, and approached subjective well-being in terms of happiness, identifying the following substructure of happiness: “pleasure (or positive emotion); engagement; and meaning” (Seligman et al., 2005:275).

Thus, it can be defined well-being, on the one hand, as school engagement, which refers to a positive, fulfilling, and study-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Vigor refers to a high level of energy and mental resilience while studying; dedication is a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge; and absorption is concentration and happiness in one’s studies (Schaufeli et al., 2002). In contrast, lack of well-being was defined as school burnout, which among students means feeling exhausted because of study demands, having a cynical and detached attitude toward one’s studies, and feeling incompetent as a student (Kiuru et al., 2008; Salmela-Aro et al., 2008; Schaufeli et al., 2002).

It can say also well-being provide a basis for many positive outcomes in individuals’ lives (Feist et al., 1995; Seifert, 2004; Sheldon & Elliot, 1999; Sheldon & Houser-Marko, 2001; Tuominen-Soini et al., 2008). For example, according to Numi and Salmela-Aro (2002) school engagement and absence of school burnout may lay the foundation for successful educational decisions and trajectories – if it is assumed that a high degree of well-being leads to the construction of goals that focus on dealing with the demands of the individual’s subsequent life situation. Students’ subjective well-being is investigated in a variety of contexts. Academic context is an important factor that effect students’ subjective well-being (Suldo et al., 2006). However, there is a little or no study investigated the relationship between subjective well-being and burnout. Freduenberger defines burnout as being -“... in a state of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to a cause, a way of life, or relationship that failed to produce the expected reward.” (Maslach et al., 2001; Seidman & Zager, 1991). Burnout also defined by Yang and Fam (2005) as psychological processes emerged directly from the dual structure work-worker. School burnout also refers to the burnout syndrome that stem from

schools' and educations' excessive demands on students. Student burnout paves the way to absenteeism, low motivation to courses and high rate of drop-out. In learning process, stress resulted from lessons, high workload or other psychological pressure factors may lead to emotional burn-out, tendency to desensitization, and low feeling of success (Yang & Fam, 2005; McCarthy et al., 1990).

According to Salmela-Aro & Näätänen (2005) school-related burnout is defined as consisting of three conceptually distinct but empirically related dimensions: emotional exhaustion due to school demands, cynical and detached attitude toward school, and feelings of inadequacy as a student.

School tries to provide an important developmental context for adolescents (Eccles, 2004). Previous research has shown that adolescents' perceptions and experiences of school are associated with various adjustment outcomes. Dislike of school is related to internal and external problem behaviors, and to reduced quality of life (Kasen et al., 1990). Although many concepts, such as low academic achievement and motivation, poor self-esteem, school stress and tiredness, and internal and external problem behavior (Byrne et al., 2007; Rudolph et al., 2001; Wentzel et al., 2004) have been used to describe maladjustment at school, only a few studies have been carried out, in particular, on school-related burnout and stress. For example, Byrne et al. (2007) recently described school-related stress, and we have previously described school burnout as a new concept (Kiuru et al., 2008; Salmela-Aro et al., 2008). Following the original theory of work burnout (Schaufeli et al., 2002), school-related exhaustion can be defined as school-related feelings of strain, particularly chronic fatigue resulting from overtaxing schoolwork. School-related cynicism, in turn, is manifested in an indifferent or a distal attitude toward schoolwork in general, a loss of interest in one's academic work, and not seeing it as meaningful. Lack of school-related efficacy refers to diminished feelings of competence as well as less successful achievement, and to lack of accomplishment both in one's schoolwork and in school as a whole (Schaufeli et al., 2002). School burnout overlaps with some earlier concepts. For example, exhaustion, measured in terms of feeling overwhelmed, having difficulty sleeping because of worrying and ruminating resembles the concepts of stress, tiredness, and anxiety (Bagley, 1993; Byrne et al., 2007; McNamara, 2000). In turn, cynicism and reduced accomplishment, measured in terms of loss of interest, apathy, and feeling disappointed and inadequate (Spruijt-Metz & Spruijt, 1997), resemble depressive symptoms (Ahola & Hakanen, 2007). However, while stress, tiredness, anxiety, and depressive symptoms do not refer to a specific context, school burnout is a context-specific measure, that is, burnout is measured strictly in the school context. In

the present study, we examined whether the three theoretically-derived dimensions of school burnout i.e., exhaustion because of school demands, cynical and detached attitude toward one's school, and feelings of inadequacy as a student (Salmela-Aro & Näätänen, 2005; Schaufeli et al., 2002) can be described as separate constructs representing a single overall construct of school burnout in the school context. (Salmela-Aro, 2009)

Maslach et al. (2001) believed although burnout has generally been regarded as a work related disorder, it may also be useful in the school context. School is a setting in which students work: Students attend classes and do assignments in order to pass exams and acquire a degree (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Hence, the concept of burnout can reasonably be extended to the school context (Kiuru et al., 2008) and a valid and reliable instrument is needed. Burnout in the work context, Maslach et al. (2001) is defined as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, cynicism or depersonalization, and reduced professional efficacy. Exhaustion refers to feelings of strain, particularly chronic fatigue resulting from overtaxing work. Cynicism consists of an indifferent or a distal attitude toward work, in general, and the people with whom one works; losing interest in one's work; and not seeing work as meaningful. Lack of professional efficacy refers to diminished feelings of competence, as well as less successful achievement and accomplishment both in one's job and in the organization.

In recent years, the number of studies about burnout has increased spectacularly and the study of burnout has been extended to almost every job, and even to non-occupational samples, for example students (Balogun et al., 1996; Chang et al., 2000; Fimian et al., 1989; Gold et al., 1989; McCarthy, Pretty, & Catano, 1990; Schaufeli et al., 2002; Yang, 2004). These studies evaluated "school burnout" in students, using a slightly modified version of the MBI-GS. It is important to determine the sources, reinforcement, and psychological effects over students for both student health and functions of educational system (Grayson & Alvarez, 2008). Student burnout research is usually carried out on university students (Bernhard, 2007; Meier & Schmeck, 1985; Fimian et al., 1989). There are a little or no studies on the burnout syndrome for both primary and secondary school students (Ertugut & Soysekerci, 2010). Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between school burnout and subjective well-being for students in 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>. Next, the researcher further investigated how students' subjective well-being and school burnout differ in terms of students' background, such as sex, age, and grade.



## Research Methodology

The methodology of this research was descriptive and correlation. The two questionnaires employed here were The Satisfaction with Life Scale with five items of the Diener et al. (1985) and School-Burnout Inventory with nine items and three component - exhaustion at schoolwork (EXH), cynicism toward the meaning of school (CYN), and sense of inadequacy at School (INAD) - measures of school burnout of the Salmela-Aro et al. (2009). Internal consistency reliability was estimated by Cronbach's alphas. For "The Satisfaction with Life Scale" an alpha of .87 and for "School-Burnout Inventory" an alpha of .75 was obtained. The population of this study was all high schools students in grade of 9 to 11 at the Zahedan city in Iran. Of 9624 students (boy 5340 and girl 4284) 374 samples (boy 190 and girl 184) aged 14-19 with use of table sample size of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) was selected. Of 374 samples 145 students were in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, 125 students in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, and 103 students in 11<sup>th</sup> grade. SPSS 15 was used to produce mean, standard deviations, Multiple regression, and Pearson product moment correlation (r).

## Results

### 1. Relationship between school burnout and subjective well-being

The figures at table 1 shows that the high school students described their subjective well-being in relatively good ( $M=23.83$ ,  $SD=7.57$ ) and also in overall marked high scores (agree) on exhaustion at schoolwork, and they were relatively agree with cynicism toward the meaning of school, and sense of inadequacy at school.

**Table 1**

Mean and Std. D. of students' subjective well-being and components of school burnout (N=374)

Variables	Mean	Std.D.
Subjective well-being (SWB)	23.8342	7.56876
School burnout (SB):		
Exhaustion at schoolwork (EXH)	17.2941	2.96524
Cynicism toward the meaning of school (CYN)	10.5882	3.04241
Sense of inadequacy at School (INDA)	7.0080	2.17405

There was relatively positive correlation between students' subjective well-being and exhaustion at schoolwork, relatively high negative correlation between students' subjective well-being and cynicism toward the meaning of

school, and no any significance correlation between students' subjective well-being and sense of inadequacy at School.(Table 2)

**Table 2**

Correlation between students' subjective well-being and components of school burnout (N=374)

Variables		Subjective well-being (SWB)
Subjective well-being (SWB)		1
School bumout (SB):		-
	Exhaustion at schoolwork (EXH)	.130(*)
	Cynicism toward the meaning of school (CYN)	-.300(**)
	Sense of inadequacy at School (INDA)	.024

\*P < .05

\*\*P < .001

In addition multiple regression results indicated that the sub-dimensions of the high school bumout scale explained high school student subjective well-being significantly  $R=.378$ ;  $R^2=.143$ ;  $F(3, 370)=20.584$ ;  $p<.001$ ). In the regression equation, first, loss of interest in school explained high school students' subjective well-being positively ( $\beta= .194$ ;  $p<.001$ ). Second, bumout emanated from the cynicism toward the meaning of school also explained high school students' subjective well-being negatively ( $\beta= -.382$ ;  $p<.001$ ), and the third burnout components explained high school students' subjective well-being positively ( $\beta= .144$ ;  $p<.05$ ). Therefore sub-dimensions of high school burnout scale together explained a total of 14.3 % of the variance in the subjective well-being for the students in this study.

2. students' subjective well-being and school bumout of students' background, such as sex, age, and grade

As shown in tables 3 to 5, there were positive correlation between students' subjective well-being and some components of school bumout e.g. SWB with EXH and in the some components of school bumout and subjective well-being there were negative correlation e.g. SWB with CYN, and there were no significance differences between SWB and some component of school burnout e.g. SWB with INDA.

The results also showed that the sub-dimensions of high school burnout scale related to boys together explained a total of 19.5% of the variance in the subjective well-being for the students in this study and this rate for girls was

9%. This result for age groups were 26% for students in ages 14-15, for students in 16-17 age group 14.5%, and for 18-19 age group 45%. The sub-dimensions of high school burnout scale related to 9<sup>th</sup> grade together explained a total of 26% of the variance in the subjective well-being for the students in this study and this rate for 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grades was 29% and 27% respectively.

**Table 3**

Correlation between students' subjective well-being and components of school burnout by gender (N=374)

Variables		Subjective well-being (SWB)	
		Boyn=190	Girln=184
Subjective well-being (SWB)		1	1
School burnout (SB):		-	-
	Exhaustion at schoolwork (EXH)	.183(*)	.046
	Cynicism toward the meaning of school (CYN)	-.353(**)	-.227(**)
	Sense of inadequacy at School (INDA)	.003	.032

\*P < .01    \*\*P < .001

**Table 4**

Correlation between students' subjective well-being and components of school burnout by age (N=374)

Variables		Subjective well-being (SWB)		
		14-15 (n=145)	16-17 (n=200)	18-19 (n=29)
Subjective well-being (SWB)		1	1	1
School burnout (SB):		-	-	-
	Exhaustion at schoolwork (EXH)	.231(**)	.159(*)	-.532(**)
	Cynicism toward the meaning of school (CYN)	-.430(**)	-.197(**)	-.018
	Sense of inadequacy at School (INDA)	.037	.094	-.206

\*P < .01    \*\*P < .001

**Table 5**

Correlation between students' subjective well-being and components of school burnout by grade (N=374)

Variables	Subjective well-being (SWB)		
	9 <sup>th</sup> (n=146)	10 <sup>th</sup> (n= 125)	11 <sup>th</sup> (n=103)
Subjective well-being (SWB)	1	1	1
School burnout (SB):	-	-	-
Exhaustion at schoolwork (EXH)	.225(**)	.106	.051
Cynicism toward the meaning of school (CYN)	-.430(**)	.066	-.335(**)
Sense of inadequacy at School (INDA)	.038	.474(**)	-.206

\*P < .01      \*\*P < .001

### Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study showed that the high school students described their subjective well-being in relatively good and also in overall marked high scores (agree) on exhaustion at schoolwork, and they were relatively agree with cynicism toward the meaning of school, and sense of inadequacy at school. There was relatively positive correlation between students' subjective well-being and exhaustion at schoolwork, relatively high negative correlation between students' subjective well-being and cynicism toward the meaning of school, and no any significance correlation between students' subjective well-being and sense of inadequacy at School. There were positive correlation between students' subjective well-being and some components of school burnout e.g. SWB with EXH and in the some components of school burnout and subjective well-being there were negative correlation e.g. SWB with CYN, and there were no significance differences between SWB and some component of school burnout e.g. SWB with INDA.

In Sum, burnout is a serious academic issue which increases the scope of research in the area of academic and student related stress or burnout. Students stress may be correlated with their socio economic back grounds, familial conditions, teaching styles of teachers, school climate, parental involvement and many other personality characteristics. An intervention program may be developed to reduce increases academic stress to relieve them from severe emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and inefficacy. There is a number of researches in the area of work related burnout, especially on teacher burnout, burnout among nurses, doctors, managers etc. but very few studies were identified on academic burnout of students. Most of the studies on academic

burnout concentrate on college students. It should be extended to high school students also. Students who are in the age of adolescence experience severe stress in industrial societies. Future researches in the area of student stress may be oriented towards the problems of burnout among adolescence (Noushad, 2008). According to Demerouti et al. (2001) Burnout is generally regarded as a work-related disorder, but it may be considered relevant in the school context as well. After all, school is a context in which the students work; they attend classes and complete assignments in order to pass exams and to acquire a degree. As in the work context, high perceived demands and lack of perceived resources form the breeding ground for burnout.

Vasalampi et al. (2009) in the review of previous research revealed gender differences in some variables studied, such as school adjustment and maladjustment. For example, although girls have been found to be more engaged in school (Berndt & Miller, 1990; Ryan, 2001) and attribute greater importance to academic achievement (Murberg & Bru, 2004), they also experience higher level of stress (Ge et al., 1994), internalized symptoms (Leadbeater et al., 1995; Pomerantz et al., 2002), and school burnout (Kiuru et al., 2008; Salmela-Aro et al., 2008). Boys, in turn, show a higher level of external problem behavior (Leadbeater et al., 1995).

In the some research, the results for school burnout showed that among girls goal progress in their achievement-related goal was related to a low level of school burnout. However, goal progress did not contribute to school burnout among boys. These results may be due to the fact that girls are typically more motivated toward achievement of their education-related goals (Dwyer & Johnson, 1997; Pomerantz et al., 2002) and attribute greater importance to academic achievement than do boys (Murberg & Bru, 2004). Girls also fear academic failure more than boys do, and this tendency may lead to their low level of school burnout if the goal is not attained (Sheldon, 2002). The other reason for the result may be that girls experience internalizing problems, like burnout, more often than boys, whereas boys exhibit externalizing problems more than girls (Leadbeater et al., 1995; Nolen-Hoeksema, & Girgus, 1994; Pomerantz et al., 2002). Maslach et al., (1996) conceptualized burnout as a three-dimensional concept consisting of exhaustion, cynicism and reduced personal efficacy. However, the first dimension – exhaustion – was found to be the main dimension of burnout in most studies (Shirom, 1989; Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Pines and Aronson (1981, 1988) defined burnout as physical, mental, and emotional exhaustion. Their unidimensional definition focuses on exhaustion and applies both to work and to non work situations. We too expected that the exhaustion

dimension would take the lead as the most sensitive to change over the short respite that we intended to explore among students (Vasalampi et al., 2009).

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## **FAMILY, CHILD AND EDUCATIVE COMMUNITY OF THE CENTURY XXI**

A Model of Preschool Education:  
**CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY CENTRE.**  
A International Project I.S.P.E.F. – E.C.E.

F. Presutti

### **Fausto Presutti**

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E.C.E. – European Center of Education

### **A Educational Model of EUROPEAN NETWORK PRESCHOOL EDUCATION -**

Quality services for infancy and their families on the education-oriented communities and active citizenship.

In our society is become essential an educational development on “*child scale*” (already theorized by M.Montessori in the first years of '900) and “*families and educators in Educational Community*” (already theorized by J.Dewey on the first years of '900) through the realization of a *Educational Network*, formed by children, families, educators, infancy services management, able to transmit culture and knowledge, by giving identity and common and shared values in the actual Society.

**The *R.E.AL.IN.FO* ( Latin America-Europe Net of Research and Training) ([www.realinfoedu.eu](http://www.realinfoedu.eu)) and *R.E.E.I.* -Infancy Education Europe Net ([www.reei.ue](http://www.reei.ue)) *wants to pay attention to the need of Education of Children-Families-Educators-Managers of infancy to realize the Educational Community in the Society of XXI Century.***

Without *Educational Community* we can't have society, but only people who live in the same place without sharing common values. *R.E.AL.IN.FO. and R.E.E.I. is the first and the most important Educational Community* able to involve infancy , the neo families,

educators, managers in a training project of life and ordinary realization of cultural identity of the social group that one belongs to.

The R.E.AL.IN.FO. and R.E.E.I. is a international space of meeting and comparison, where people share and realize the training project of Educational Community, to improve the quality of educational service and children and families life, in the context where he works.

The realization of R.E.AL.IN.FO and R.E.E.I. allows to realise an international and steady structure that allows to promote, to make projects, to research, to innovate, to experiment and to value good practice, the quality of infancy service and the involvement of families in educational activities with children aged 0-6, with the organizational forms of the European countries and in the Latin American countries involved, which join to the networks.

The R.E.E.I. and the R.E.AL.IN.FO. have the concrete aims of:

- realize Educational Communities for the education of infancy as regard children aged 0-6;
- promote and experiment innovative services for infancy, good practices and new methods of management of the working activity of the better operators;
- research and realize new pedagogic models, and architectonic structures for the education of children aged 0-6;
- increase the educational development of children and guarantee to everyone the same opportunities as regard training and playing in didactics laboratories, centres of interests, libraries, through a personalized path;
- the construction of an Educational Community, the dynamic participation educators-children-families and the involvement of social activities of the context where one works in;
- the involvement of families, of grandparents and social community in services for infancy;
- analysis of Cultural Models of families, Educators and Responsible of services for infancy;
- definition of criterions and indicators of Management Quality: direction, paedriatics, educational psychology coordinator, responsible of services;

- definition of criteria and indicators of Quality of Structure: spaces, furniture, context, security, health, logistic, buildings, functional materials, didactic materials;
- definition of criteria and indicators of Training Quality: didactic paths, educational methodologies with children, communicational techniques with families, planning and valuation of didactic-educational activities, cognitive-relational-sensorial- motor-emotional development;
- to develop the learning of different languages, creativity and artistic ideation, logic for the use of computer and audiovisual instruments, so that children can become active citizens and realize a social identity of XXI Century.

In particular, Networks R.E.AL.IN.FO. and R.E.E.I. wants to develop:

1. Analysis of politics, of good practices and services for the infancy for all the countries that participate and belong to Union European and Latin America and in particular in the Countries partners of R.E.AL.IN.FO. and R.E.E.I.
2. Studying and starting of researches to identify educational-innovative models, dynamics and flexible to the contexts of every territory and every counties;
3. Experimentation, diffusion of good practices in the ambit of organisation of pre-scholastic services.
4. The diffusion and the valorisation of good practices about training of educators, about the quality of training proposal and of children development, about organizational quality of services, about the involvement of social context.

The objectives of the Networks regard mainly:

- the exchange of knowledge and information about laws, politics, programs, statistical data, studies, researches and good practices that regards infancy in their own countries.
- the development and the experimentation of methodologies and good practices to obtain information comparable to experiment new pedagogic methodologies.
- The organisation of comparison and exchange meetings with the involvement of all the people involved in the educational process;

- the realization and diffusion of results about themes that regards infancy.

For realize this objectives, it will be started the process of comparison of good practices that regards the various educational possibilities, which regards the organizational choices of services for infancy from the educational responsible and from direction, to the involvement of family in the educational path, until the relationship between educator and children: essential elements to make the participation successful and to guarantee an innovation as regard the educational offer.

Afterwards will faces the question of services quality for infancy, that is the main theme of the debate about social and educational politics, both in international ambit. There are many researches that have been made many years ago about this theme. This researches regard the analysis of the different social and educational services, the needs of development of children and the need to support parents.

During the latest decade, others services for infancy have been affirmed, this services want to offer moments of playing and socialisation between coetaneous to the children that belong to this age, and support the educational role of their parents.

This services, that are mentioned in the normative as “*integrative services for infancy*”, distinguish social and educational services addressed to families. They are different because of their variability and flexibility, both of organizational model that the specific objectives that every service wants to reach. The valuation of the quality of this services, where the regional and local administration are called because of law, presents some new elements of methods and contents, interesting elements also for the scientific research.

The Networks R.E.AL.IN.FO. and R.E.E.I. wants to analyse this ambit and value the features of the services and their role, by comparing different experiences through the creation of an international network.

In this prospective it will be involved the families in the analysis of the quality of the training path of the educational group and in the aspects of administrative and organizational management is a fundamental elements to make the participation successful and to guarantee an innovation as regard the production of the educational offer. It allows the realization of the EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY.

The variety of innovative and integrative services for infancy regards the kind of service, the kind of management, the educational-didactic development of children, the staff training, the creation of the Educational Community in the context where one works.

In this optic, it's important for the realization of the Networks R.E.AL.IN.FO. and R.E.E.I., the creation of a network of institutions lied to traditional services for infancy, integrative and innovative, where is supposed to be increased the participation of parents during all the phases of the educational path proposed from the services for infancy themselves. Is very important to show off the cooperation parent-institution, by realizing educational practices and promoting the active role of parents, during the educational path of his son. During this years the International National and regional politics, pay more attention to the valorisation of family not even as a person who uses the services, but also active agent which promote them in the territory.

The guide-lines of the programs of good practices in the ambit of preschool services, pay attention to the welfare, the development and the learning of the child, by respecting the activities and the spontaneous learning.

To obtain this, are requested some structure which guarantee and govern the quality of the system and of services ECEC (Early Childhood Education and Care): the guide lines must be applied in all the services and curricular orientations universally shared.

To reach this objectives of pedagogic quality, it must be established the publics and private financings, by paying attention to the children who need specific supports, besides, in the program for all, the resources for children with various rights of learning with tax measures, social and politic of work.

To support the quality of services is necessary to improve the working and professional condition of the people who work and guarantee self-government, resources and support to the infancy services.

R.E.AL.IN.FO. and R.E.E.I. wants to realize the charter of Infancy Rights of ONU and the guide lines of European Commission about the quality in Infancy services (elaborated from may 1992) in an optic of permanent training of infancy educators, by developing partnerships networks between bodies of different nations that work in the territory, national and international.

R.E.AL.IN.FO. and R.E.E.I. aims to the improvement of children quality of life, of their parents, educators, infancy and families services, for the realization of a Educational Community that forms the new citizens for the Society of XXI century.

The results that R.E.AL.IN.FO. and R.E.E.I. wants to reach are:

- \* to realize researches about good practices and analyse their educational- organizational- contextual features
- \* to create a international site and promote a community of practice able to elaborate innovative projects of experimentation;
- \* promote and implement good practices and projects of research and experimentation;
- \* build international dynamics models of innovative and integrative services in the infancy education, that pay attention to peculiarity and contexts of every country,
- \* value the process and the results obtained from the experimentations realized;
- \* validate the services present in the different countries and realize counselling for the certification of training quality.

The activity of infancy service aims to identify and favourite the expression of children “ in different moments of their evolutionary process in a context of continuity and educational coherence, also by considering the different situations and individuality”.

The service for infancy, explained as frame where it develops a network of reception formed by space, time, what the educators do, relationship between equals, the educational climate, wants to assist the parents functions as regard the must to give an answer to some essential needs of children. In this years has come out a social situation that put as essential some points like: the necessity to support the increasing of birth, as regard the demographic ambit characterized by a big decline in the birth rate., a social complex context that requests to the parents more competence as regard their role, the importance to pay attention to the family, in relation to politics.

So, infancy services are, or may be, a space- time to “stop together and think about” the growth of their own children and familiar life, and both to his own social role and his own professional identity.

From this introduction, the Networks R.E.AL.IN.FO. and R.E.E.I are supposed to realize the exchange of learning and news about

laws, politics, programs, statistics data, researches and good practices that regard infancy services from 0 to 6 years old, the diffusion of studies and researches that regard infancy and politics in favour of family based on an interdisciplinary and comparative approach; the exchange of learning about methodologies and indicators to obtain news compatibles; the organisation of meetings and studying days about themes that regard infancy.

In this point of view, R.E.AL.IN.FO. and REEI wants to deepen, through cultural and educational aids from all the persons which work in the educational process, the configuration of infancy services. Through dialog and exchange between different realities, it wants to realize the identity of infancy services, known not only like a concept reached for good, but as an element that develops, that needs to be modified, synthesis between passed history and wish to begin, but also synthesis between contributions and experiences.

The cognitive phase will be realised with the aim to underline the good practices of innovation/improving and the cores of criticism and, at the same time, to identify the possible essential elements in the ambit of politics and of educational projects addressed to infancy in Countries that have partners who take part to Networks R.E.AL.IN.FO. and R.E.E.I. A look into the instruments used in the different Countries, will allow to elaborate proposals and projects for the development of a better organization of infancy services. The comparative analysis between traditional and innovative systems, besides, allow to identify positive and winner aspects, that the experimentation of new services for family underlines in those years in different social realities, as an answer to the new needs of flexibility from families.

From the 90's, the exchange of good practices between different realities that work in infancy services, puts itself in the dimension of the "good design", by having what needs to be preserved and by giving more importance to the positive and winner experiences.

**MAKE NETWORK:** between the different reality that work in the educational sector for infancy, it becomes the restitution of news and experiences at who live daily the service, as operator or as parent, in an optics that valorises the research as essential element of the educator characterized from curiosity, tricky, criticism. So, the research make knowledge increase and develops the ability to experiment, by analysing the directions of societies and cultures.

To favour the knowledge of the different planning and organizations modalities exists in the social realities means, also, an increase of the awareness of his own professional role and the reinforcing of the educator identity and of the service for infancy as regard history, specifics and intentional sphere. The impact of the project, in this point of view, must be considered as sensibility to the educational themes, to the relation with the child, the support to parents.

The most important objective of the Networks is to start an analysis and a critic comparison about the national and international experiences about politics, the services and the research addressed to infancy and to family. In particular it will pay attention on how the services are able to give an answer to the needs of families and the possibility that the parents have to take part in the educational project and, at the same time, to be supported.

Model of Preschool Education:

**CHILDHOOD and FAMILY CENTRE. (CFC)**

*The Model of Preschool Education: CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY CENTRE (CFC)* wants to pay attention to the need to build the *Educational Community* in the social ambient. Without *Educational Community* we can't have society, but only people who live in the same place without sharing common values. That is true in the present Global Society of the XXI Century.

The CFC is a space of meeting, where people share and realize the training project of Educational Community, to improve the quality of educational service and children and families life, in the social context.

The training path of CFC is very useful, because allows the realization of a **Pact of Quality of the Educational Community to develop the welfare of citizens**, by putting together a synergic action between Municipal Administrators, Direction of services for infancy and Families , to obtain the following results:

- **Adapt the Services for infancy to the evaluatives parameters of “quality of services”**, by guarantee criteria, standards and the modalities useful to reach them.



- **Realize the “quality of Services for infancy”** through the result of interaction between all the parts that form the “Educational Community”: children, operators, families, social and politic forces.
- **Promote innovative changes** as regard the organisation of services on the basis of the results of experimentations made in the optic of improvement of the quality of the offered service.

To minimum three years is need to realize a Project for understand and start up the CFC.

In 1<sup>st</sup> year, the Project’s objective is the start up and implementation of research on the best practices that exist in the social context and an analisys about their role and social-educational function, in order to elaborate the workpackage for the realisation of a EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY through the Pact of Quality children-families-educators-managers of services.

In 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>th</sup> year, the objective’s Project is to realize:

1) of CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY CENTRE (CFC) through:

A. The institution of **INFANCY CENTRES** or the modification of structures already alive in conformity to quality and regulation of childhood’s centre, organized into:

- **CHILDHOOD HOUSE for children of 0-3 years**
- **CHILDHOOD SCHOOL for children of 3-6- years**

B. The institution of the **FAMILY’S CENTRE**, typified to education of parents, children-parents relations and to implications of grandparents into childhood centre for the formation of an EDUCATION COMMUNITY;

C. The realization of the **ISPEF certification Quality’s Model** of Pre-school Institution to improve the education quality of: children., families, teachers and directors of the Centre.

2) Of the university formation about the teaching’s professionalism in the Pre-School Education that is articulated in the following educational pathway:

- 1) The *Teaching's Professionalism* features;
- 2) The “*Acclimatization*” Methodology ;
- 3) The *Educational Insertion*;
- 4) The *Communication* and the *Rules* of the children in the classroom;
- 5) The “*Observation- Listening*” technique;
- 6) The *Planning Methodology*;
- 7) The *Profiles* and the *Roles* of the children in the classroom;
- 8) The *Social- Relational Map* and *Project*;
- 9) The *Mental Universe*;
- 10) The *Children Cognitive Style*

Regulation of **INFANCY CENTRE**  
**SERVICES SYSTEM FOR THE INFANCY 0-6 YEARS AGE AND FOR THEIR**  
**FAMILIES: INFANCY CENTRES MANAGEMENT, DEVELOPMENT AND**  
**QUALIFICATION**

Our society is quickly transforming its organization and the human existence, changing individual's lifestyles, needs and expectations; particularly, child's life and social expectations about them are radically changed in the last decades. Further, the society is became multicultural and multi-ethnic.

So, the infancy services function of values, uses, cultural and scientific knowledge of social belonging group transmission is become very important. Further, as is sanctioned in the International Child's Charter of Rights, **child must be considered autonomous individual, with educational right, inalienable to life, education, instruction and to the respect of individual.** Ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious identity, on witch is founded the promotion of a new life quality, considered as a great educational aim in the present time.

So, is very important to promote and support the development and the qualification of services system for the infancy, 0-6 years age, and for their family, with a particular mention to CHILDHOOD AND FAMILY CENTRE (CFC), and to their integrative services, to qualify the general guide-lines for their realization and management, in an institutional place called *Infancy Centre*.

*Infancy Centres* are conceived as trainings **institution of public utility** and so they take social roles and functions in the constructions of news generations, compared to roles and functions of scholastic institutions.

#### Article 1

#### EDUCATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FINALITY OF INFANCY CENTRES

Infancy Centres have an educational and social function of public utility, witch aim is to receive child till 6 years old, effectively concurring with families to their education and training.

Infancy Centres are a part of entire complex at first infancy education and family policy of Local Institutions.

Infancy Centres aim's are:

1. to promote and implement children's right and the defence of their healthy development;
2. to improve child's cognitive, affective, personals and socials potentials, assuring them preventive sanitary and psycho-pedagogic assistance;
3. to realize educational and training services for the infancy of quality, both in organization and realization of daily activities;
4. to cooperate with families to facilitate an harmonious development of infant personality;
5. to sensitize, form and socialize all the community about infancy problematic and about families policy, so as develop parent's awareness, pedagogic professionalism in infancy operators and social consciousness in community;
6. to realize activities made to children, families and social community measure, to support life quality;
7. to promote, project and manage experimentations and researches about educational services and structures that work with infancy and families.

*Infancy Centres* can be realized by the following structures:

1. **Childhood Houses** for children of 0-3 years.
2. **Integrative Services** made of:
  - Child-Families Centres
  - "Ludoteche" (Place Playing)
  - Domiciliary Education.
3. **Childhood School** for children of 3-6- years.

Article 2

INFANCY CENTRE

*Infancy Centre* is the first educational institution that has the task to offer an involving and important educational service both for children till 6 years old and for their family and the community they live in.

*Infancy Centre* is supposed to provide, to elaborate and realize a continuous renovation of families' needs, hopes and activities concerning infancy, about daily children's life quality (educators, baby-sitters, grandparents, etc.), about particular situations of troubles, social risk and alienation, about family and children's dynamics.

*Infancy Centre* is supposed to realize educational and playing activity with 0-3 years old children, promoting, at the same time, social communication of families and the daily life quality of social community, in the prospective of infancy, for the improvement of individual, family and social welfare. These activities are very important for the qualification of infancy service and they give it peculiarities and educational-trainings values.

In this prospective, *Infancy Centres* are social institutions of public utility witch allow children to develop their abilities and personality in order to obtain the following aims:

a. **MATURITY OF IDENTITY:** reinforcement of child personal identity, as regards the aspect of bodily, intellectual and psycho-dynamic development. This causes the promotion of an always more open social life, and the progressive refining of cognitive abilities.

That instructive prospect require and stimulate in children the growth an indispensable behaviour of safety, of himself esteem, of confidence in himself abilities, of motivation to curiosity, of living himself affective conditions in a balanced and positive way.

b. **ACHIEVEMENT OF AUTONOMY:** develop of children ability to orientate himself and to make autonomous choice in different social and normative situations, in the necessary recognition of dependences that are inborn and operative in the reality of natural and social habitat. It's important to improve freedom of thought, also like a form of respect of personal differences and of different points of view.

c. **COMPETENCES DEVELOPMENT:** strengthening of sensorial, perceptive, motor and intellective abilities, committing him to the first forms of reorganization of experience and of exploration and reconstruction of reality.

This is what is also expressed in Regulations of Motherly Schools, regarding 3-6 years old children, deliberated in 1991 from the Italian Ministry of Education. These acquisitions must be extended also to *Infancy Centres*, with children aged from 1 to 6..

*Infancy Centres* main characterises are:

- To give children an instruction, care and socialization place, in the prospective of their psycho-physic health and of their cognitive, affective potentialities develop;
- To let families take care of their children in a outward context than that of family, by leaving them daily and continually to different persons from parents , with a specific professional competences;
- To support and integrate the families' activities of taking care of children and making educational chooses, also to promote the concordance of professional and family chooses of both parents, in a context of equal opportunities between two sexes.

In relation to the educational choices and the social professional conditions of parents and local needs, *Infancy Centre* can predict the organizational modalities and working diversified and flexible both respect to the times of services, both in relation to their receptivity, learning that the elaboration of pedagogic project specifics in relation to the different organizational foms. *Childhood House*, together with the *Childhood School* ( that works with children aged from 3 to 6 years old) should be structured in a training and educational institution for infancy.

### Article 3

#### INTEGRATIVE SERVICES FOR INFANCY

**Integrative Services** are places with educational, playing, cultural and social features, addressed to children, also together with their parents or other adults companions.

This services aim to increase the action of Local Institutions to the Infancy needs, guarantee flexible answers in relation to the needs of family and of children through personalised solutions as regard the structural and organizational plan.

The typologies and the features of the Integrative Service are:

**1. The Centres children – families:** are places of reception of children together with their parents, or adults companions, in a context that guarantees occasions of socialisation and playing for children, also of meeting and communication for adults, in places well organised

from a staff that has specific and professional competences, in a logic of joint responsibility between adults and educators;

**2. “Ludoteche” Playing Centres:** they are specialized structures that allow a daily reception of children aged from 18 months to 6 years age, which are under specialized educators charge, for a maximum time of 5 hours for day, structured in order to allow a flexible and diversified frequency, also in a non- continuative way, in relation to the needs of consumers. This services guarantee a place where they take care of children, organised in order to give them educational opportunities, of socialisation and communication with their coetaneous.

**3. House Education:** the Local Institutions , working with a staff which have professional requirements, are able to realize services in the houses of families with children aged till 3 years old, available to work together and to make the house places available for the educators, in a continuative and steady way, of the taking care of their sons for educators with specific professional features and, that is to say, well trained for this aim. This service can also be realized in the educator’s house.

In the realization of the Childhood House, the Integrative Service and Childhood School, it can be designed and realized combined solutions, in order to predict an increasing of the opportunities offer to the children and to the families in the same structure and allow a totally use of the same.

#### Article 4

#### THE TRAINING OF THE EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY

Infancy Centres form the system of educational services for the primary infancy, known as:

- Territorial educational centres able to guarantee a plurality of offers,
- Places of comparison for parents, of elaboration and of promotion of an infancy culture, also through the involving of the local community.

The aim of the Infancy Centres is to offer places and moments of meeting in order to promote and develop a diffuse psychic and social welfare, in order to realize an educational community where children, families, adults and educational operators, exchange their life experiences and learn to know the others, to live together, to work and to enjoy themselves together.

The relation between educational services and family is essential for the constitutions of an efficacy Educational Community. As the theories of the Motherly School of the Italian Ministry of Public Instruction 1991 affirms: *“the need of education can be reached when the family...and the others training figures cooperate in a relation of integration and continuity”*.

*“The family represents the primary context where the child, learning to order and to distinguish the daily experiences and to give them value and meaning, gradually acquire the abilities to make sense of reality, he structures logic and affective categories, he moves into the valuation of human relationships and he learns to the sharing of rules and of models of interpersonal relationships through the internalization of behaviour rules and their progressive structuring in a system of personal values”*.

*The influence of Infancy Centres on familiar experiences and, vice versa, the actions of parents in the didactics activities with children, allow to make them live these activities as an extension of the familiar and social ambient. By this way, Infancy Centres and Integrative Services are lived as a learning and socialising laboratory, where , the ordinary activities that children do in the familiar and social ambient, are organised.*

Article 5  
COLLABORATION BETWEEN INFANCY INSTITUTIONS  
AND EDUCATIONAL CONTINUITY

The Local Institutions are supposed to realize the functions and the connections with bodies and public and private institutions, to use the human, economic and cultural resources present in the territory, receiving, undertaking and elaborating the essential news of the infancy situation. The learning are periodically compared between the different bodies and social institutions.

As regard the ambit of the largest integration of the actions, the Infancy Centres realize the continuity with the others educational services, in particular with the Primary School, and with the social and sanitary services of the Local Institutions, in a logic connection and interaction between the different competences.

The institutions that organise Infancy Centres try also to prevent every kind of marginalization that comes from a psycho – physical and social disadvantage, defending and guarantee , in particular , the right of the disabled children or in situations of relational and social – cultural discomfort.

Local Institutions research an effective collaboration between the Infancy Centre and the different services for infancy presents in all the territory, for the realization of an high training offer and educational quality to children.

Infancy Centres realize educational and didactics paths in continuity with the familiar and social activities and with the planning of the Primary Schools for the children of the territory.

For this aim, the Local Bodies, through conventions and agreement protocols, can realize the necessary kind of collaborations where, it will be affirmed, further, modalities and operative instruments to guarantee:

- the continuity of the training-educational project between the Infancy Centres and the Primary Schools;
- the coordination of the need and the offer of the educational – training service on the territory;
- the reinforcing of the quality of the didactic and training actions;
- way of communication and connection between the different Infancy Centres on the territory;
- the promotion of activities organised on the training and the professional update of the staff that works in the Infancy Centres.

Article 6  
INFANCY CENTRE: EDUCATIONAL AMBIENT OF DEVELOPMENT AND  
LIFE

The Infancy Centre has to be an ambient of socialisation and a context of individual promotion of:

- **Life experiences** for a social integration in daily activities ( to know how to do);
- **Playing**, to develop the personality in relation to reality (to know how to be);
- **Learning**; for the evolution of the specific abilities of infancy (to be able to know).

The Infancy Centre is a place of learning and a social ambient of daily and playing experience , for the improving of the quality of children's life.

How is said by the theories of the primary school of the Department of Public Instruction of 1991: “ The promotion of the quality of the child’s life is lied with the achievement of a better kind of living of the community in general and of the adults in particular. So, the new educational model is supposed to make the Infancy Centre itself a place of learning, of socialisation, of animation, referring to the needs of social microsystems and of the zones culturally disadvantaged, in an atmosphere of positive affection and playing.

#### Article 7

##### THE BODY MANAGER OF THE INFANCY CENTRE

The Municipal administration can organise the Infancy Centre directly or through firms, societies, associations and/or cooperatives lowest bidder of a contract, as the law says.

The Infancy Centre can be organised also from private bodies.

The body manager guarantees the regular working of the Infancy Centre, by assuring the coordination with the other educational structures and with the remaining services Maternal Nursery, in the ambit of his territory, in relation to the plans of action for the prevention, care and premature diagnosis of handicaps.

For this aims, it provides in particular to:

- 1) approve, in relation to the *Council of the Infancy Centre*, the budget and the final balance of the general purchases of working of infancy centres, that include the modality for the determination and eventual fees;
- 2) approve, in relation to the *Council of the Infancy Centre*, the annual and weekly calendar of the service, the period and the during of eventual suspensions, that doesn’t overcome the solar year, as well as the time and the daily during of it, in relation to the social-economic needs of consumers;
- 3) check the assignment of the available places, by approving the relative classification and the eventual following declines;
- 4) guarantee sanitary assistance, educational psychology and the hygienic-sanitary vigilance, through the relative services of the Local Health Corporation;
- 5) realize an assurance for accidents, permanent and temporary invalidity, death, for all the children of the Infancy Centre and for the whole during of their permanence in the structure;
- 6) assure the annual professional update and the permanent formation of the operators;
- 7) check and control the connection between service quality and needs of the consumers. The body manager is supposed to realize periodic organizational conventions.

#### Article 8

##### THE STAFF OF THE INFANCY CENTRE

The staff of the Infancy Centre is divided in relation to the function it has, in:

- PEDAGOGIC COORDINATOR: a staff who has professional competences as regard the management of the Infancy Centre;
- EDUCATORS: staff with specific educational and professional competences;
- OPERATORS FOR THE GENERAL SERVICES: staff of administration and who is supposed to cook, custody, cleanliness, laundry service, etc.

The staff activity of the Infancy Centre works in relation to the principles of the project sharing, of collegiality, and of the methodology of working group, in order to improve the value the professional contribute and the productive use of human resources of everyone. This activity must be realized in collaboration with families, in order to guarantee the continuity of educational actions.

If there is an indirect management, it will be communicated to the competent department the list of the staff with specific professionalism and duties, as it's established from the laws in force and from the national and regional referring contracts.

The staff have to respect the hygienic-sanitary laws in force and is supposed not to have possible infections.

#### Article 9

#### ORGANISMS OF MANAGEMENT

The subjects managers of the Infancy Centres improve to value the role of families as active subjects; assuring to them the higher information about the management of services and the wider participation, as instrument of sharing of the educational choices and of testing of the activities, also through the institution of special organisms, assuring articulated modalities and flexibility of meeting and collaboration.

The social management and the working of every Infancy Centre, is expressed through the following organs:

- 1) Family Assembly
- 2) Educational Council
- 3) The Council of the Infancy Centre.

#### Article 10

#### FAMILIES ASSEMBLY

Families Assembly is the main expression of the needs and the expectations of the parents who have sons aged from 0 to 6 years old and the quality of life of the social community.

Families Assembly has also the task to take decisions about activities and initiatives to undertake, to promote and develop the awareness of the tasks and of the parents functions and of the social communities as regard the children rights and the families quality of life.

Families Assembly meet at least 3 times for year:

- On September, at the beginning of the activity of the Infancy Centre to take vision of the Educational Project - Plane of the Training offer of every Infancy Centre that comprehends also the Educational Project that characterises every single Infancy structure, to talk and to take decisions about the organization and the management of the service;

- During the year to verify the quality service and to propose improvements, changes or new initiatives;

- On June, at the end of the year, to check the training path of children, to value the realization of the educational and didactic project and to verify the validity and the efficacy of the organization and of the management of the Infancy Centre.

- The Assembly is summoned and charged from the President and/or Director or pedagogic coordinator of the Infancy Centre or from one parent delegated from him.



If is requested the convocation of the Assembly, it must be summoned by 15 days. In case of inertia, the Assembly is summoned from the pedagogic Coordinator.

The convocation is realized through written advices to the families that must be put on the entrance of the Infancy Centre not less of 15 days before the date of thereunion.

In the Infancy Centre, where is present the council of nursery, the Assembly establishes the President of the Council of nursery and the 3 parents who represent the needs and the requests from the families of the council itself.

#### Article 11

#### EDUCATIONAL COUNCIL

The Educational Council is formed by all the educators of the Infancy Centre and from the Pedagogic Coordinator who presides.

The Educational Council is a advisory - propositional - decisional organism, that values the quality of the educational and didactic system of the Infancy Centre.

Educational Council meets periodically, at least 4 times for year, for the planning and the collegial verification of the atmosphere of the Infancy Centre, of the management of the educational project, the whole working of the Infancy Centre, the relations with families, the working of the didactics activities, the initiatives to undertake.

The educational council, in particular, regards:

- Value the quality of the educational system of the Infancy Centre and of the training path of children, in relation to their welfare and to their abilities of socialisation and of learning developed;
- Elaborate the Educational Project and the relative Didactics Planning, plan the modalities of the working of the service in the Infancy Centre;
- Realize groups of educators who work together in the same Infancy Centre and who collaborate to the realization of a didactic common planning;
- Decide the study and the work commission of educators about the different themes of Educational Project, about the elaboration of didactic Projects and about the organization and the management of the Infancy Centre;
- Document and diffuse the educational and didactic activities realized in the Infancy Centres;
- Communicate to the Families Assembly and eventually to the Council of the Infancy Centre the objectives and the progress of the educational project and signal opportunely the difficulties in the realization of the project and the working of the service;
- Decide about the organization of the Infancy Centre in relation to the times and the modalities of the placement of the children, the planning and the verification of the didactics activities;
- Elect 3 representatives in the Council of the Infancy Centre;
- Express proposals about the professional update and the training in the service of the educational staff, and initiatives of didactic experimentation and of educational researches lied to it.

To establish initiatives and common actions in the social-cultural ambit or in single sections or with children who have specific problems, the Educational Council can invite

experts of the primary infancy service of Local Health Corporation, specialized operators and collaborators external to the reunions.

#### Article 12

#### THE COUNCIL OF THE INFANCY CENTRE

*The council of the Infancy Centre* is the organ of promotion, of counselling and of management as regards the organisation of the Infancy Centres.

*The council of the Infancy Centre* has the task to value the quality of the organisation and of the management of the Infancy Centre, while the Educational Council has the task to value the quality of the educational system.

*The Council of the Infancy Centre* has the following tasks :

- approve the annual plan of the activities established from the Educational group, acquired opinions and suggestions about the Families Assembly;
- propose and organise initiatives of involving of the families to the life of the Infancy Centre, inform and sensitise the families about educational problems, about themes of infancy development and psycho – social dynamics in the relation parents-sons;
- coordinate the activities of relationships between educators and families, by informing and collaborating in the organizational part to the individual colloquies and to the meetings between educators and parents;
- manage, with educators and the pedagogic coordinator, a fund for the purchase of didactic material for the daily activities of the Infancy Centre and for the educational-training activities;
- realize every task of management of the Infancy Centre, except the management and the administration of the staff who works in the Infancy Centre.

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**SEVERAL MALTREATMENT FORMS  
OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL  
NEEDS;  
qualitative approach in inclusive schools**

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**Abstract:** The inclusion of children with special educational needs in mainstream schools is based on positive values such as acceptance of differences, respect for diversity, human solidarity, the fight against exclusion and marginalisation but it also involves a change in school policy. Through a qualitative approach, semi-structured interviews applied to the relevant actors, the article examines the forms of maltreatment that may appear in the case of children with special education needs when schools and social actors are insufficiently prepared to adapt to this change. The article identifies some solutions adopted by the school staff and proposes several measures to prevent the phenomenon of victimisation of children with special educational needs in inclusive schools.

**Keywords:** *educational inclusion, children with special educational needs, maltreatment, inclusive schools*

### **Introduction**

The inclusion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in mainstream schools is a matter of international concern, while promoting the principles of education for all and the normalisation of the life of people with special needs. In an attempt to receive all the students, even those with disabilities, the emphasis is laid on changing

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the school to meet the needs of children with SEN. The inclusive school is the "requirement of maximum flexibility and tolerance in terms of physical, socio-cultural, linguistic and psychological differences between children/pupils, the school mission being that of giving everyone the opportunity to learn according to the pace, the skills and the personal needs and to express themselves according to the individual personality traits" (Gherguț, 2006, p. 57). So that a school can become inclusive, it should form attitudes, values, beliefs, adequate behaviour of teachers, other students, parents of children with SEN, of the working team members and the community. Given the insufficient preparation of schools to receive pupils with SEN, different forms of ill-treatment may appear.

Maltreatment or child abuse is defined as physical or mental injury or careless treatment. It can take place both actively, situation that can occur through a hostile, deliberate and aggressive attitude, with the purpose of injury or harm, and passively, through lack of interest and neglect (Zamfir, Vlăsceanu, 2003, p. 13). In school, violence can occur either as aggression against persons or property, which is called „bullying”, either in the form of marginalisation attitudes, isolation, rejection, distrust, hostility affecting school climate (Pain, 2002). These subtle and repetitive types of violence influence victims from the psychosocial point of view (Debarbieux, 2010).

Defrance (1994) distinguishes between school violence and violence in school as an institution, respectively non-institutional violence. The author understands institutional violence as the use of force and coercion by the school to achieve its objectives: training, education and professional qualifications of students. Thus, by means of school regulations, of the authority exerted by teachers on students a hidden violence can be determined because the boundary between authority and abuse of authority is difficult to detect. According to Defrance, the second form, non-institutional violence, includes violent types of behaviour among pupils. Although non-institutional violence is apparently unrelated to the teacher and the educational context, it can be enhanced by institutional violence (Neamțu, 2001, p. 40).

Victimisation determines depression, sadness, a negative self-image and may increase violent behavior. These are the conclusions of a meta-analysis of the studies published during 1978-1997 on the violent behaviour occurring between classmates (Hawker, Boulton, 2000).

### **Research methods and subjects**

This article aims to analyse the main forms of maltreatment of pupils with SEN, to identify solutions adopted by the staff of the inclusive school and ways to prevent victimisation. Investigation work was conducted in Iași, from May to December 2010. The research methods used were the semi-directive interview, the observation about this and the documentation. Also, 62 people from three different groups of actors were interviewed in the process of school inclusion:

- professionals in the education system: teachers in inclusive schools, managers of inclusive schools, teachers in special education, academics;
- parents of pupils with SEN;
- social care professionals: Complex Evaluation Service (CES) inspectors of the Department for Child Protection (DCP).

The subjects interviewed were selected from the following institutions in Iași: 8 inclusive schools, 2 special schools, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University, DCP. The aim proposed was that the sample should be diverse and include people involved in inclusive education from several perspectives, both professionals in the education system and those from DCP and parents.

The interview guide was developed after studying literature and documentation. The interview guide included several questions, but for this article were taken into account only some of them because this study is part of a broader research which aims at the inclusion of children with special educational needs in mainstream education.

Questions addressed to professionals aimed at: the difficulties encountered in their work with pupils with SEN, better solutions regarding inclusion of pupils with SEN. Parents were asked questions related to difficulties concerning the schooling of children, their expectations from class teachers, what should be done to better adapt the child to school.

When conducting interviews, we kept in mind that it is necessary to keep a balance between the position of "scientist" and that of "ignorant" (Gheorghiu, 2005, p. 45), to have patience to listen with respect and curiosity every person, to know to ask the right question at the adequate moment.

Searching for new people stopped when information became redundant (Moscovici, 2007, p. 187), that is nothing new or significant

has appeared. Interviews were transcribed and analysed using the thematic analysis method.

### **Maltreatment forms of children with SEN**

After analysing the interviews, were identified several forms of maltreatment such as: refusal to accept them in school, isolation, marginalisation, neglect concerning education, forcing them to be like other children, verbal abuse, punishments imposed. Hereinafter we will be analyse the following forms of maltreatment:

- the attitude of rejection
- the educational neglect
- forcing children with SEN to be like other children
- punishing students with SEN.

#### ***The attitude of rejection***

The inclusion of pupils with SEN in mainstream schools involves the shaping of positive attitudes such as acceptance of diversity, non-discrimination, flexibility, respect for the relationship of partnership, empathy, responsibility (Vrăsmaș, E., 2007, p. 127). This research shows that these attitudes are difficult to acquire and that negative attitudes persist.

- *"Parents tell us that children are not received at kindergarten or school and we tell them to go to the manager and ask for a proof for not receiving the child on account of (...) I doubt that he is treated well there when he is received in these conditions in school"* (CES specialist interview).

- *"Teachers sometimes seem to easily recommend special schools. They do not think that they are sufficiently trained to bring SEN children into the class. I think there are not enough courses to show them how to work with children with SEN, to understand the problems of children with mental or motor deficiencies (...) I thing that in this way there is a shift of responsibility from one specialist to another, they want only good children in their class, children with whom they should not work very much and then, children who have a problem or several problems should go to a special school, they should not be in our class. I dealt with such cases and I did not expect to find something similar in the city schools* (CES specialist interview).

- *"When an autistic child was in class, even the teacher aroused parents. He/She came into the teachers' room and said that*



*he/she could no longer stand the child, that they should take him from the class” (support teacher interview).*

Following a research conducted in 2008 by Bethany Social Services Foundation on the school integration of children with disabilities in rural areas, it resulted that 20.7% of the parents surveyed have experienced difficulty in child enrollment in schools in the department of Iasi. In other cases, the pupil with SEN is enrolled in a school but parents prefer bringing him /her to school as seldom as possible in order not to create problems:

- *”The child is often accepted in class only theoretically. In reality the child stays at home. They tell the mother to keep the child home and he will pass the class. (...). Parents bring children to school from time to time, they walk with him/her around the school, they keep the child two hours instead of four” (CES specialist interview).*

It was reported quite often that parents are required to transfer the child to another school or move him/her to a classroom where students have a lower level:

- *”I had pretty severe cases when the primary teacher put the child out of class on the grounds that he/she is deficient. Simply out of the class (...) case resolved ... by sending the child to another school” (support teacher interview).*

- *”She often threatened us that we should not bring children to school tomorrow, I leave deaf” (parent interview).*

- *”Teachers try to persuade his or her parents to move him/her to another class because there are children with the same level as him/her. If the child gets into a good classroom, the teacher must work with him too ...an instead of ignoring him/her, he can go to the other class where the level suits him/her (inclusive school manager interview).*

Hostile and dismissive attitudes of teachers towards children with SEN are sometimes manifested either by reproaches addressed to parents, either in the form of inappropriate comments that betray these attitudes:

- *”At first they treated her in a very bad manner, that is they did not treat her bad, when I went to school, teachers made reproaches ... why should you bring her here, you should have gone to a school in*

*your neighborhood ... that is why many children go there ... they probably bring the school to an inferior position* (parent interview).

- *"When a parent comes to inquire if the child can be enrolled in the school, the attitude of teachers is ... again these children ...the school is full of them"* (inclusive school manager interview).

- *"Teachers consider them stupid .... they do not even pass the class (...)he/she is considered as another fool"* (support teacher interview).

The exclusion of children with SEN from certain activities, especially the extracurricular activities whose role is socialisation and social skills training, affects both the child and his parents:

- *"At the end of kindergarten a farewell trip was organised. I gave money for me and her because I said I would not cause you problems, I go with her and kindergarten teachers agreed to take her, but Mrs. Principal refused to take her, she said: who takes Petronela? and those words really hurt me"* (parent interview)

The attitude of rejecting children with SEN in mainstream schools are based on at least two reasons. Firstly, emphasis has been laid for a long time on segregative special education and the students with disabilities or those with social or behavioural problems and who did not adapt to regular schools were directed towards special schools (Manea, 2006, p.48). This habit, called *habitus* by Pierre Bourdieu (2000), has the capacity to be constant over time and difficult to change because it works like a internal law which rejects data that are different from the capital accumulated by individuals or institutions. Habitus is based on past experience and tends to perpetuate in history and traditions. Secondly, the prestige of a school or of a teacher is greater if they are oriented towards performance and students get high marks on entrance exams for other forms of education, prizes or awards. As a result, teachers reject these children because it is very difficult to achieve performance given that "the focus is on quality, competence" while inclusive education involves individual work (Țăranu, 2009, p. 162).

*Michel Foucault* (1999, p. 56-58) describes two different models by which society exercises social control over everything that is abnormal. The first model, that of the "exclusion of the leper" implies a distancing and marginalisation reaction. The second model is that of the "inclusion of the plague victim" and is based on an activity of

observation, organisation and intervention. The second model is more appreciated because it requires action and commitment to find appropriate solutions.

### ***Educational neglect***

The main task of integrating children with SEN in mainstream schools is assigned to class teachers. They must design the teaching strategy and organise the students in the class so that everybody acquires a minimum level of knowledge. There should also be a stage in each lesson devoted to children with SEN when they should be the centre of teacher's attention while other students should carry out individual tasks (Bolea, 2007, p. 251-252). In inclusive schools, there are educational services that support the learning process: the services offered by the support teacher, speech therapy, school counselling. In the field research which has been conducted, the following forms of maltreatment were frequent:

Firstly, there is a deficiency in the number of specialists in comparison with the number of children who have learning disabilities and school adjustment problems. As the school has only one support teacher, in this programme primary children go before the others according to the principle of early intervention. For example, the support teacher has the duty to take care of 8-12 children while in school there are several children who have problems:

- *“The assessment made by the special commission service with a view to testing pupils with SEN identified 35 students in middle school. A support teacher has the duty to deal with 8 children. The lack of support teachers is again huge . It is a real situation that I face and fail to ... overcome these barriers and I cannot see why they cannot be removed”* (inclusive school manager interview).

In this sense, the most obvious is the situation that occurs in middle school when some students do not benefit from the support programme. As the school has only one support teacher, in this programme primary children go before the others according to the principle of early intervention:

- *“I could not deal with secondary school students, because in primary school there were children with more serious problems and when you are sure that at least he knows to write and read, then you can say that you did your duty in a way, even if he/she is no longer involved in the programme ... As a colleague said “Fly baby, fly!” We*

*do the same thing when the child graduates primary school. The child will not be able to fend for himself/herself because mental deficiency is still a problem, you do not know how to act”* (support teacher interview).

- *“It seems unnatural for a child to benefit from the tailored programme up to the fourth grade, and in the fifth grade to take our hands off him/here, to say stop, he/she is well now, he/she does not need support”* (inclusive school manager interview).

Experts from SEC who conduct educational orientation of children with SEN are facing some problems such as:

- in rural areas there is a shortage of support teachers;
- for children with sensory impairments there is not specialised staff to carry out specific therapies to recover and compensate for these shortcomings such as mobility and orientation in space, the auditory-perceptual compensatory education, the orthophony, the labial lecture, the augmentative and alternative communication systems (sign language, Braille, etc.);
- many schools have no access ramps and the toilets and furniture are not suitable for children with motor disabilities.

Moreover, these are also the conclusions of the research conducted by Bethany Foundation in Iasi and Timisoara. For this reason, we believe that the right to education in a mainstream school of the pupils with SEN in rural areas is restricted and they are oriented towards special schools.

Secondly, some specialists (speech therapist, school counsellor) withdraw from working with children with SEN and focuses their activity on other categories of students:

- *“I have five children with speech problems, and the speech therapist told me that because of the large number of children, those with SEN she might not be taken this year. She said that as long as they benefit from the adapted curriculum and teacher support, she would focus only on specific problems of speech”* (inclusive school teacher).

- *“I have identified several children with emotional problems and I reported these cases to the school counsellor. He said that he had already formed some groups of students and cannot take the others too”* (support teacher interview).

One of the reasons is that these specialists do not register a too high satisfaction when working with these students:

- „Pupils with SEN generally have mental deficiency or have this background and the problems of pronunciation, in fact, may be some problems that are secondary to mental deficiency and not dislalia. Even when he is not diagnosed with mental deficiency, you see from the way he responds to therapy and thus you can say with enough accuracy that there is more to language disorder... You do not have much contentment if you work with these kids, you work but your work is not seen” (speech therapist interview).

Thirdly, we do not work in a different manner with children with special needs included in mainstream schools as it is provided in the adapted curriculum approved by the school inspectorate:

- “I may sometimes forget about them (...) in what sense, asking them a question appropriate for their level. And I remember when it comes to homework (...) I forget to assign them different tasks (inclusive school teacher).

- “Since school started, she did not have any homework, I cannot explain to her radicals and polyhedra because she does not know multiplication” (parent interview).

- “We talk in vain about differentiated treatment, differentiated treatment is only praise. I have not heard very often about creating special worksheets during every lesson (...) Most of the times: you also do these exercises, but there was not a worksheet suitable for their level (inclusive school manager interview).

Moreover, this was also the case of national tests when these children did not receive differentiated subjects and the marks they got were very low which had as a consequence lowering the overall school average:

- “In the eighth grade, the child could participate in the examination if parents wanted this,

and normallyl parents did not know what was going on (...)and they sent him/her, go and take this exam and they got the lowest grade and decreases the school average grade and the prestige of the teacher who taught that subject (inclusive school manager interview).

The fact that these students passed the year just because they had an adequate behavior or because the number of students would decrease and the number of classes per teacher would disappear represents another form of educational neglect. In this sense, teachers are not necessarily awarding passing grades for the knowledge acquired,

but they rather assess other issues such as that they make up portfolios or they complete the notebook:

- *"I had a girl, she passed the fourth grade although she could not read and write. I tried to send her to a special school but she continued school and now she graduates the eighth form. She never repeated the school year (...) And I expected her to repeat the year. On account of the number of pupils in secondary school, she did not repeat years because her behaviour was adequate. Argument..."* (support teacher interview)

- *"She has an orderly notebook, therefore the teacher awards good grades and the average grades are very good for her situation (...) in the first place she graduated. I have also searched all the time various materials for her (...) because teachers require portfolios* (parent interview).

Another form of educational neglect is the fact that the emphasis in their training is laid on the subjects: Romanian and Mathematics where they have adapted programmes. As far as the other subjects are concerned, this aspect is overlooked:

- *"There is an adapted programme only for Romanian and Mathematics, but this kid just does not know more Romanian than the level required for the third grade, how can he/she learn in Physics, Chemistry? ... I do not know... actually, there should be tailored programmes...you are really at the mercy of the teacher* (parent interview).

Educational neglect occurs and is maintained by the belief that these students have a reduced learning capacity, that cannot cope with the curriculum, they are unable to make. This situation leads to a demobilisation of teachers who do not seek appropriate solutions to stimulate the child (Manea, 2006, p. 45). In addition, most teachers perceive work with inclusive classes as *"titanic work"*, *"unpaid work"* but also as a return to *"simultaneous education"* (inclusive school teacher interviews). Few situations were encountered when working with different classes of students was not considered stressful, but it was rather a challenge. This happens because there is a *"de-standardization work"* of the teacher (Beck, 1992) and this involves pressure for flexibility and living under additional stress.

The status of *"tolerated students"* which these students enjoy in mainstream schools determines that they graduate from compulsory education without basic education being provided to them, situation

which leads to an increase in the number of “functional illiterates” (Miroiu, 1998, p.127).

***Forcing children with SEN to be at the level of other children***

Another form of abuse is to treat children with SEN in the same way as their classmates. Thus, the lesson is explained for most of the students in the class, homework and assessments are not different and we do not take into account that these students have a lower level of knowledge. In this case, the little progress these children make are not taken into account. And this discourages them:

- *“She does not allow a longer period of time to put her to write only two verses ...she does not meet the tailored programme (...).it takes a lot of time to do the homework (...).When she is not assigned special homework and I must take the homework from another child, we have to do it like the other children and it takes a lot of time. She often tells me: I am tired of school, I no longer want to go to school... Tired, she writes on the board, fails to complete everything, she is lucky to have a colleague who is close and go to it to fill to fall behind”* (parent interview).

- *“There are many children who have an extremely distorted self-image, they are emotionally abused both in family and at school and by their group of their friends because they are labelled (...).Having this inferiority complex, you realize that, even if he knows, he does not have the courage to answer (...). Many students are ashamed, many of them confess that they are ashamed. They do not trust that they can, they are afraid not to be laughed at”* (support teacher interview).

- *„At the beginning of the school year, I had a little girl in the fourth grade who could not read hundreds figures, she can now make additions and subtractions, multiplications .... The primary teacher says ... is this progress for the fourth grade?”* (support teacher interview).

Pierre Merle (2004) talks about two forms of discouragement produced by teachers: explicit and implicit discouragement. The first form of discouragement is expressed through public action, such as direct criticism addressed to the student. In the second case, the implicit discouragement is anonymous produced in the demobilising context of learning, the teacher does not clearly express the intention of discouraging. This is achieved indirectly by means of the exclusion from certain school activities, indifference, marginalisation. For example, teachers are only interested in good students, capable of

performance, eager for knowledge and they neglect those who need support. The two forms of discouraging produced by teachers do not exclude each other, so that both types teachers can be found in reality.

### **Punishing children with SEN**

A fourth form of maltreatment of children with SEN is considered to be punishment by teachers. This indicates an insufficient understanding of the needs and of the potential of these children as well as of the techniques of classroom management.

- *“My daughter was punished heavily by the kindergarten teacher because she was very restless, she did not speak, she also aroused the other children and the teacher punished her”* (parent interview).

- *“When she was in the second grade, my daughter was more fidgety than she is now and she annoyed the Religion teacher, so that the teacher took a yoghurt and was on the point of pouring it on the head ... such a situation ... she could not accept Alina, could not control her in any way although the class teacher could control her and she had a Music and English teacher, she was not so violent, she could be talked to all the time”* (parent interview).

- *“Children with behavioural disorders (...) feel great when the teacher notices them, ... then they really feel great (...). Primary teachers must learn how to react although it is very difficult. When the child makes something bad (...) the teacher heeds him/her in situations when he shouldn't, when he cries ... and of course when someone heeds him/her, he repeats this so that he may be taken into consideration once again”* (support teacher interview).

It is true that research shows that pupils with SEN have inadequate social skills, a low concentration of attention, exhibit unpredictable reactions and can physically assault other students (Fordin, 1997). However, their punishment by teachers is not always the best solution. It is important to find appropriate methods of classroom management, to engage them in activities appropriate to their level of understanding and training and to create an atmosphere propitious to cooperative learning.

### **Solutions adopted**

From the answers given to the interviews, the following solutions adopted were extracted with a view to decreasing the risk of victimisation of pupils with SEN:



- openness of the school manager and the desire to find solutions to a parent's request to enroll his/her child with SEN in an ordinary school. This is done primarily by listening to the parent's requirement, to his/her views on the problems of the child, to the expectations he/she has from the school.

• *“When a child came from elsewhere to join our school, I had the patience to listen to him/her, what problems do you have, how do they manifest, how did you treat them, how do you want us to act (inclusive school manager interview).*

- preparation and motivation of teachers, raising awareness on children and family issues, ensuring that they will find support from management if they face difficulties.

• *“I think I knew to say, take him/her from here, I pity mother as she is alone, come on, receive him/her in the classroom, we will see how we get around and the teacher did not refuse me. I knew how to choose my people, too. (...) I knew the one who liked to order, to keep the child and the parent under control and if he tried to work with a child with SEN he only did it for appearance's sake” (inclusive school manager interview).*

• *“In order to work with children with SEN, you should have a certain emotional and mental readiness, (...) you must be prepared to accept him/her as he/she is and to understand that is everything he/she can do and not that h/she does not want to do it. There are children with SEN in all classes, which is not correct. Because not all the teachers are spiritually able, they are not willing to work with children with SEN, there is a failure from the start” (inclusive school teacher).*

• *“I understood parents, I understood their family problems, their financial problems even if children failed to acquire a lot of information, it was evident that there was progress from one year to another, anyway they lived in family and the family climate is safer than the one in an orphanage for a child in primary school” (inclusive school teacher).*

- Information on the child's problems, taking on an attitude of continuous training and search for solutions.

• *“There are cases of teachers seeking for help from the School Inspectorate and they are directed to special schools, they are supported and helped and they adapt their curriculum and work with children using the adapted curriculum, approved by the School*

*Inspectorate even if they do not have a support teacher in school” (CES specialist interview).*

- Creating an atmosphere of tolerance and mutual assistance in class.

- *”If the teacher knows how to stop a child who tends to tell him things in a wrong way and not allow him to do it, children say that he can do things alone, he also read and they begin to praise him. But if the primary teacher screams first, it depends very much on the teacher” (support teacher interview).*

- *”Children are helpful, they are like the support teacher, they stay beside that child and help him too. I assigned tasks to children and a child helps him with Romanian, the other with Maths because I could not cope with everything” (inclusive school teacher).*

- *”In the case of children with SEN so that the others accept them, I show them that I pay more attention to them. Children were not allowed to jostle him, to talk nastily to him. (...). My kids already know that, during the lesson, I devote some moments to children with SEN (inclusive school teacher);*

- Using some modern methods of teaching-learning-assessment: group work, pair work, computer assisted instruction, etc.

- *”We work in groups, children with problems were distributed in groups with the best pupils... there was a connection ... differences were wiped out” (inclusive school teacher).*

- *”The biggest strength is that they have reached a certain age and they realize that they do not have enough information in order to cope with this new type of education, almost all the children need other methods. Traditional methods are not effective any longer. The resistance of teachers is here that they do not conceive that their long experience and science (...) do not serve and hence results the strength of the teacher and the degree of acceptance and tolerance ... and age” (support teacher interview).*

- to have realistic expectations regarding the progress of these children. This requires an accurate assessment of the child’s knowledge and a gradual design of the approach of the intervention.

- *”I am worried that every integrated child should acquire a minimum level of knowledge for that class so that he can pass to the other class, so that he can graduate. I work under an individual or group therapy programme, .... a programme that I design after the evaluation, insisting on foreground issues of intervention and I intend solving problems by taking small steps, therefore I do not aim at goals*

*and objectives which can be achieved with difficulty, but I have in mind short to medium-term objectives that can be met exactly, in every semester”* (speech therapist interview).

- writing projects, the collaboration with various institutions in order to receive additional support.

• *“We designed many projects in order to support children and their families, we had school remedial programs, we organised the school of parents”* (inclusive school manager interview).

• *“We had students in training (...), besides the fact that the student could see what was happening, (...) he could also help, he could correct him, divert his attention from work, those classes were very efficient”* (inclusive school manager interview).

Analysing the solutions adopted by teachers, we notice that they can be applied at school and on their professional level. This requires being open to find the appropriate method.

### **Measures to prevent violence against pupils with SEN**

To prevent violence against children with SEN, we consider that it is necessary to adopt the following measures:

a. provide schools with trained and motivated teachers who should have:

- an appropriate attitude towards inclusion

- a realistic vision about integration issues, to know the physical and socio-cultural characteristics of children with special needs, to develop customised intervention projects and educational programs adapted to the needs of each child, to achieve the assessment of pupils' performances, to evaluate their progress;

- the ability to maintain an atmosphere of individual learning in the classroom, the organisation of classroom on areas of interest, focusing on cooperative learning, on extracurricular activities etc.;

b. the existence of a sufficient number of specialists so that all the pupils in need should be included in the program of support, speech therapy or psychosocial support. This can be possibly done by involving NGOs and developing partnerships with parents and attract parents to get involved in school life;

c. the existence of an optimum number of students in the classroom so that all are paid attention to and receive the support they need;

d.the design of another system of valuing schools which should emphasize the progress of children and not performance only.

### **Conclusions**

The inclusion of children with SEN in mainstream schools is undoubtedly a complex phenomenon that is a challenge for schools and society. We cannot deny that in recent years significant progress has been made in terms of the inclusion of pupils with SEN in mainstream schools, especially at the legislative and methodological level. However, present research highlights the fact that in the case of children with SEN included in mainstream schools prevail attitudes of rejection, the neglect of education, forcing them to be like other children, punishing them. The most severe form of rejection that was discovered by means of interviews is the refusal of the admission of these children to school. This means that they are restricting the right to education. To reduce the forms of abuse and to increase the quality of education in inclusive schools it is considered as necessary to take measures such as better training for the staff in schools, an optimum number of children in the classroom, developing partnerships with NGOs and parents and a valuing of inclusive schools by taking into consideration the progress made by children from entering school to graduating from it.

### **Acknowledgments**

This article was supported by European Social Fund in Romania, under the responsibility of the Sectoral Operational Programme Human Resources Development 2007-2013 (POSDRU/88/1.5/S/47646 Project Grant: Doctoral Studies: portal to a career of excellence in research and in the knowledge society, coordinated by prof. Dr. Ovidiu Gabriel Iancu, University "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" Iași).

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## **E -LEARNING TOOLS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING**

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**Abstract:** The impact of IT in real life is translated/moved also in education by “e-learning” that means the use of multimedia technologies and Internet or using the virtual learning environment. The tools for e-learning are very divers and must be known of the educators for using them in a proper way in a teaching and learning process, student-centred, for having at the end a real transformative learning process.

**Keywords:** e-learning, e-learning tools, synchronous tools

In nowadays, teaching and learning ways shift their former significance, under the huge impact of virtual learning technology, from the transmissional, through transactional until transformational way of learning. That means e-learning and its tools have an important role because e-learning leads to transformative learning, taking into consideration the same three phases involved into it, like in transformative learning: critical reflection, reflective discourse, action.

Critical reflection is converted in thinking about what tools, offered by virtual learning environment, could be used more easy and effective for accomplishing the objectives of learning.

Reflective discourse and action, the second and three phases after critical reflection (the first phase), consist in using the e-learning tools, chosen in a previous phase, for a good and efficient learning.

From the long list of e-learning instruments, knowing that everyday new tools get develop, we can select some of them, classified in:

- A. *Synchronous tools*
- B. *Asynchronous tools*

## A. *Synchronous tools*

### 1. *Chat-room*

Online chat may refer to any kind of communication over the Internet that offers an instantaneous transmission of text-based messages from sender to receiver; hence the delay for visual access to the sent message shall not hamper the flow of communications in any of the directions. Online chat may address as well point-to-point communications as well as multicast communications from one sender to many receivers.

One can differentiate two technical forms:

- *Pure online Chat*: Chat rooms are offered completely online, with no need to install any program on the local computer;
- *Instant-Messaging*: After downloading a special program to the local computer (client) the user can integrate his friends and colleagues, which also have access to the same Instant-Messaging client. Instant-Messaging falls under the umbrella term online Chat since it is also text-based communication done in real-time, but is distinct in that it is based on clients that facilitate connections between specified known users (often using contact list, buddy list, or friend list), whereas online “chat” also includes web-based applications that allow communication between (often anonymous) users in a multi-user environment.

Instant messaging (IM) is a set of technologies used for text-based communication between two or more participants over the Internet. Of importance is that online chat and instant messaging differs from other technologies such as email due to the perceived synchronicity of the communications by the users – chat happens in real-time. Some systems permit messages to be sent to users not then “logged on” (offline messages), thus removing some differences between IM and email (often done by sending the message to the associated email account).

It is usually possible to save a text conversation for later reference. Instant messages are often logged in a local message history, making it similar to the persistent nature of emails.

IM allows effective and efficient communication, allowing immediate receipt of acknowledgment or reply. In many cases, instant messaging includes added features which can make it even more popular. For example, users may see each other via webcams, or talk

directly for free over the Internet using a microphone and headphones or loudspeakers. Such Instant-Messaging systems are close to video-conferencing systems. Many client programs also allow file transfers, although they are usually limited in the permissible file-size.

Typical Instant-Messaging Client Programs are:

- ICQ
- MSN-Messenger
- Yahoo!-Messenger
- Skype

Sometimes E-Mail-Providers offer Instant-Messaging ability in their webpages, which can be used in a web browser with no need to download and install the IM client (Examples: Gmail, Yahoo, Hotmail) and two “social” forms:

- *Private Chat*: only among known people;
- *Public Chat*: anonymous users in a multi-user environment.

Sometimes other virtual-learning-tools include a Chat to provide the possibility to communicate, while using the tool. Examples are:

- nearly all learning-platforms
- mind-mapping tools (e.g. the to-pay-versions of MindMeister)
- collaborative-writing tools (e.g. Titanpad)

## 2. *Video-conferencing*

A video-conference (also known as a video teleconference) is a set of interactive telecommunication technologies which allow two or more locations to interact via two-way video and audio transmissions simultaneously.

Video-conferencing differs from videophone calls in that it's designed to serve a conference rather than individuals.

In the context of education, video conferencing can provide a tool for broadcasting lectures to distant students. This is mainly one-way communication but video conferencing can also be used for more interactive ways of learning. It is possible for students to ask questions, comment on different aspects of the lecture or to organize a small-group discussion on some paper.

When using video conferencing it is very important to take care of a few preparations. Besides testing of the technology and the connection well in advance, the organizer should inform the students about technical and other preparations needed before the conference.



Students should receive concrete and clear guidelines on the technology and be aware of its basic features. Furthermore, they should be aware of the good practices of behaviour and communication over a video conference.

Within blended-learning solutions, video conferencing may prove to provide a simple way to get a face-to-face contact with distant students for instance at the beginning, in the middle or in the end of a course. Students may ask questions about the learning process, assignments etc. and the teacher may inquire students' experiences and feelings after a self-study period. Video conferencing can also be used for paper presentations and discussions by the students.

Examples for video-conferencing systems are:

- AdobeConnectPro
- Vyew
- DimDim

Another well-known tool which can be used for simple video-conferences is: Skype

### *3. Live streaming*

Live streaming is a technology that refers to presentation of audio-visual media content live over the Internet. Content is constantly received by and presented to the user while being delivered by a streaming provider. The transmission resembles broadcast television but takes place over the Internet.

A webcast is a media presentation distributed over the Internet using streaming technology to distribute a single content source to many simultaneous listeners/viewers. A webcast may either be distributed live or on demand. Essentially, webcasting is “broadcasting” over the Internet.

Technically, live streaming involves a camera for the media, an encoder to digitize the content, a media publisher where the streams are made available to potential end-users and a content delivery network to distribute and deliver the content. The media can then be viewed by end-users live.

A nice Web 2.0 service for live-streaming is UStream (<http://www.ustream.tv>). The website offers the possibility to live stream from your computers webcam or even your smartphone with a few clicks. There is a free version with advertising and ad-free versions. Parallel to the live-stream you can include a Chat for viewers.

#### *4. Internet Broadcasting*

Internet Broadcasting (formerly Internet Broadcasting Systems), or IB, is a provider of Websites, content and advertising revenue solution to the largest and most successful media companies in the world used also for educate people.

#### *5. Forum*

An Internet Forum is an online discussion site where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages. They differ from Chat rooms in that messages are at least temporarily archived. Also asynchronous interaction is possible. Depending on the access level of a user or the forum set-up, a posted message might need to be approved by a moderator before it becomes visible. A discussion forum is hierarchical or tree-like in structure: a forum can contain a number of sub forums, each of which may have several topics. Within a forum's topic, each new discussion started is called a thread, and can be replied to by as many people as wish to. Depending on the forum's settings, users can be anonymous or have to register with the forum and then subsequently log in in order to post messages. On most forums, users do not have to log in to read existing messages.

In educational settings a Forums can always be used, when discussions are to take place. As it is a typical asynchronous tool sufficient time should be planned for the discussion to take place.

Usually any learning-platform will have its own Forum, but there are also websites providing the possibility to create your own free forums like <http://www.freeforums.org/> (Ad-Free).

#### *6. Second Life*

Second-Life is a Virtual World or, technically speaking, a “multi-user virtual environment”, started in 2003 as a project by “Linden Research, Inc.” doing business as “Linden Lab”. Users need to create an account and download a Viewer, which will enable them to interact with the other users (called “Residents”) through avatars. Residents can explore, meet other residents, socialize, participate in individual and group activities, and create and trade virtual property and services with one another, or travel throughout the world (which residents refer to as “the grid”). There is also a tool based around simple geometric shapes that allows a resident to build virtual objects. A unique feature of learning in Second Life, as in other Multi-User Virtual Environments, is the perception of immersion in an alternate world.

Second Life is considered by many as a promising tool for education and training in general. While Second Life can certainly support the

traditional teacher-centred form of education, it also supports and encourages more student-centred, transformative forms of education. Individuals using Second Life interact in various ways and, even if the interaction is mediated by their avatars, their cultural background is reflected in the interaction.

Second-Life surely has a great potential for education and training but that there are also a number of challenges to overcome:

- a significant time is needed for a newcomer to understand the way Second Life functions (even for someone with very good computer skills and online experience);
- student acceptance of Second Life as an educational tool;
- technical problems;
- a steep learning curve;
- lack of privacy;
- the potential for distraction and disruption caused by avatars unrelated to the class;
- potential exposure to misinformation and pornography.

Thus, the ideal situation which would maximise the potential use of Second Life in education would be:

- a pre-defined tutorial showing only exactly what is necessary for the users to perform the tasks implied by the simulation;
- the possibility to teleport directly at the location where the simulation takes place, avoiding the general entry areas;
- ensuring privacy of the location of the simulation;
- providing appropriate training for the educators/tutors/facilitators of the simulation.

This implies some costs, especially for buying virtual property and for providing the possibility of directly teleporting users to a specified location. Link: <http://secondlife.com/>

Such kind of tools require new training programs which prepare and support educators in shifting from being providers and delivers of subject matter content to moderators and facilitators of learning within student-centred approaching to learning.

Will be continued with *Asynchronous tools*, in the next issue.

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## **THE TEACHING AND THE ROMANIAN SCHOOL, TODAY**

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**Abstract:** The idea that our society is in a crisis with multiple elements - sociological, political, economic, axiological - has a common place in public discourse. For those interested by the phenomenon of education, teachers, students, pupils, parents, first of all, it is important to answer to the question: Is education in a crisis? Clearly, we should not made very complex researches to answer affirmatively to this question. Such an analytical approach generates a new question: Is a beneficial crisis for education? On this second question, an affirmative answer can raise objections, especially about the effects of a crisis of education on the formation of its beneficiaries. However, in a society in crisis, the education is suffering and its recovery involves an extremely complex approach, in which the main mission of the science of education is to build a new teaching. This study aims to present a series of elements of context and some problems-solving to support the redefinition of teaching in the new stage.

**Keywords:** the science of education, teaching, education, society, crisis.

### **1. Teaching and its place in education process**

Where do we start from?

If history of education holds the most of the moments about the history of its reforms, aspect supported by the fact that - spontaneously or intentionally - the main issues with a high degree of novelty that appear periodically in the structure of education systems generate a lot of changes, the theories that are applied to the new paradigm action on a similar route and in a necessary way (C. Bîrzea, 1976, p. 14). The current period is often considered one of the major changes and to detail the analyses of issues that would justify the phrase under discussion here, involves interventions and innovations designed to generate changes in all subsystems of education. Therefore it is necessary to analysis the coordinates of educational action: the beginning of the educational process, its duration, the educational levels and the

modalities of evaluation or of switching over a higher level, making education relevant to young people and adults, the age limits in formal education, the continuing education coordinates.

Not on the background there are in this context of analysis, issues such as: curriculum development documents, redefining and harmonizing the role of the relevant elements in the educational process. Considering as a necessary aspect for the present study the fact that the Romanian education still looks for a suitable course of treatment after radical political change now more than two decades, and that the society has a dynamic fast growing and in this way it determines the need for bringing up again, at more and more limited intervals, a set of issues that can not omitted the issue of educational activities from and outside the classroom, we realize that we confront with a complex situation and the teaching is a key factor in its solve.

What is meant by the term *teaching*? The term teaching is present in all current major dictionaries, with different meanings. Even if the etymology of this word is the Greek word *didasko* (to learn the other) – the entry into the Romanian language was made using the French word *didactique*:

I. Teaching the didactic,-e, adj., sf 1.Adj.By or for education, relative to education. ♦It is meant to instruct. Didactic literature ♦(Peior.) unproductive, dry. 2. sf Part of pedagogy that deals with principles and methods of teaching materials for education and education organization (Explanatory Dictionary of Romanian Language, second edition, 1998).

II. TEACHING 1) belonging to teaching, personal teaching. Literature. Principle. 2) Elements which are involved in education, employed in the training and in the education. Teaching staff; Teacher 3) person who assumes the right to teach, to give lessons, considering himself a mentor. 4) Fig. (About writing) which lacks originality, non-original (New explanatory dictionary of Romanian language, 2002).

III. Teaching I. adj. of and on education ◊ for training. ♦ ~ literature = a genre of literature which aims to instruct, to inform, to educate moral.◊ (peior.) unproductive, dry. II. sf pedagogical subject that studies the principles and methods of education (Great dictionary of neologisms, 2000). IV. TEACHING adj. 1. v. academic. 2. v. pedagogical (Dictionary of Synonyms, 2002)

(<http://dexonline.ro/definitie/didactica>).

From the definitions previous presented, we can easily see that there isn't a common viewpoint of the meaning of this word, the philological analysis proposing a series of approaching that insists on identifying *the teaching* with *the educational instruction* and with *the educational training*.

Pedagogy dictionaries show a broad problematic issue in relation to *teaching* term. This term was considered a "teaching discipline", and today is understood as a part of general pedagogy, whose object of study is formal educational. In previous decades, the teaching's aim was exclusively the organization and the training of school education. This aim belongs today to Educational Management:

*"The teaching study the process of education as a process of knowledge and training; teaching principles [...], teaching content, teaching methods, forms of organization of educational process, teaching technology, the relation teacher-student and the teacher' role in the education, school architecture"* (Dictionary of Pedagogy, 1979, p. 129).

Another analysis of the *teaching* term - proposed by Sorin Cristea - surprises that it is *"an important pedagogical science which defines and examines the main pedagogical principles, epistemic stabilized at a theory of learning which is a part of the theory about education: educational process, teaching objectives, teaching content, teaching methodology, teaching evaluation, teaching design"* (S. Cristea, 2000, p. 98). The same author considers that the general teaching is, together with education theory, a true epistemic core of "science education", enabled to the general pedagogy level and it can be defined as the theory of the training or learning process. Professor Sorin Cristea believes that teaching general education refers to the principles, aims, content, methodology, pedagogical evaluation of the educational process, teaching pedagogical design.

The status of general teaching as the theory of the training is justified by concern for defining the basic concepts of the educational process. The regulatory role of this subject is valued through specific researches, teaching applications and extensions that the teaching knows through each subject, openings which ensure the passing from the general to applied teaching.

## 2. From the Magna teaching to the Modern teaching

The *teaching* term belongs to Greek culture, which meant learning and instruction. Gradually, the meaning of this word has enriched and it is more linked by the generalization of a more ample set of ideas and results from the field of organizing and of proceeding the educational process; its relation with the term *pedagogy* has also known distinct stages. For JA Comenius, *teaching* meant "the universal art of teaching all things all people" and its main teaching ideas were exposed in *Didactica Magna* published in 1632 in Czech and in 1657 in Latin, which "*represents the fundamental work of Comenius and includes his pedagogical theory and his education system*" (M. Ionescu, 2003, p. 5).

The great Czech author does not delimit the scope and content of didactics, in which he admits all that have been related to education and training. It is the period in which the two terms, *pedagogy* and *teaching*, were extremely difficult to be delimited.

This work may be considered the point where the theory of education detached from the philosophy and literature with the aim to gain independence. In this way, "*a genuine educational system is set up and it is exposed in a work dedicated exclusively to education*" (I.Gh. Stanciu, 1997, p. 35). In the content of this work, educational theorists have identified two types of pedagogical rationality: "*a) a normative rationality with the aim to promote some values such as intentions for action, depending on their power and which generate an actuated unit, which Comenius gives them a vast space (as well as in other works): the health, the harmony, the wisdom, the mastery self, the erudition, the piety, the honesty, the respect, the discipline, the temperance, the prudence, the fortitude, the justice; b) a procedural rationality aimed actionably possibilities in terms of utility that they produce, the benefits that govern them to satisfy some cultural or psychological necessities or interests identified for educational action*" (M. Călin, 1996, p.61).

Comenius proposed a public education system and appropriate methods of education of people, a good reason to apply his concepts and he grounded "*the organization of the education system based on classes and lessons*" (M. Ionescu, 2003, p. 182); this system has established itself as a form of organization developed in school education. In this way, it is concerned a more efficient education for all children and the foundations of modern pedagogy and the social dimension of educational system are set up. The education loses its special character and it becomes a mass phenomenon and the main factor for regeneration

and social development. Comenius believed that the education system can be improved as to resemble it with a clock and with a mechanism in which everything takes place very precisely. Clearly, Comenius attempted to give pedagogy a scientific character; therefore, within the pedagogy of his time, he established the links between theory, methods and purpose of education (D. Opreș, 2010, p. 260). It comes out that the development of education after the Reform establishes the need for different theorizing of regarding the educational philosophy and the remodeling of the teaching components according to them.

An important step in establishing a different approach for the two key terms of educational theory and practice was marked by the works of JF Herbart. He limited *teaching* by *pedagogy* and he considered the teaching as part of pedagogy, in a structure that is preserved until today. Herbart insists that education is not possible without instruction, so that he was concerned with the assimilation of knowledge and he considered having an equally important the teaching and the psychological aspects involved in teaching and learning. His great fame has made the psychological concepts related to learning and the new approaches of teaching to become the new paradigm of school practitioners for almost a century, and the teaching to acquire the status of clearly defined area (I. Nicola, 1996, p. 333).

Main trends that marked the teaching in the first part of the 20th century focused on four areas: *active school*, *school work*, *experimental pedagogy*, *free education*. Integrated in the great direction of the new education, *the active school* supported the pedagogical utilization of the students' abilities for activity and personal effort, concern implemented by new methods used in physical education, intellectual and moral development to ensure the conditions of the child' development. *Active School* focused on the principle for own activity, the principle of practical work, the principle of intuition, principle of respect for student individuality. It has developed on three main directions: *intellectualist orientation*, which emphasized the activation intellectual, *the school work* - , which emphasized the introduction of individual work in teaching, and then it developed as a new pedagogic current, the integral orientation that was interwoven the intellectual activities with practical activities and moral and civic education.

The experimental pedagogy is the current that utilizes elements and models of natural science and of social sciences, particularly the experimental method on educational field. *Free education* encouraged



the development of individuality of the child and educational models that do not stop the individuality and hereditary field of the future adult (M. Ionescu, 2001, pp. 26-27).

### **3. General teaching and the stages of its development in Romania**

It is accepted today that the subject of the teaching is the process of education. *"As part of the educational reality, the process of education belongs also to the other sciences. [...] It is necessary to delimit the viewpoint from which it is studied by teaching. The differences of the terms and its tackling by the literature are rooted here."* (I. Nicola, 1996, p. 334). There are delimited analyses that assign to the teaching the intellectual education and the instruction just as for other analyses the teaching or some parts of the learning. For a comprehensive understanding of the educational process, the task of didactics is the relation between teaching and learning, the educational intervention and the possible ways of student's answers, for a much better harmonization of their own.

The role of teaching is to ensure the conditions for the elements of educational process - separately and in an appropriate internal mechanism - to contribute to achieving the aims of teaching.

As a result, any component of the educational process may be in the focus of teaching *"only if it is placed on the relation's field between the two poles, because only in this way, it is possible the capture of the relation between the teacher and students with the aim to ensure a balance between them"* (Ibid).

Clearly, the general teaching provides the main analyses for the educational process but the concrete way in which practitioners are available to value and to develop the theorizing in their current activity is dependent by the knowledge and the compliance with a set of features of learning content specific of a particular area of knowledge. The step is required by the particularity of the learning and personal development of students in a particular sphere of science, and by the needing for utilization in the personal content of the valuable parts of specific formative subjects. The relation of cooperation between general teaching and the teachings of school subjects proves a *bi-univocal* one; the general concepts are not only taken over and used in the school subjects, but also they are enriched or some theoretical aspects are

redefined partially, through the results of educational practice and the researches carried out under these areas.

The modern teaching is concerned with concrete ways in which the student is placed authentically in the focus of teaching field, to become a partner in their own training. Also, the teacher has the mission "*to organize <the education field>. This mission means to design, to lead and to direct the multiple activities in school and partly outside of it, with the aim to train and to conduct the students' intelligence*" (M. Ionescu, I. Radu, 2001, p. 33). Although highly circulated in recent years, the changing role of the learner and the placing him in the heart of his teaching was the subject of the reflection and of educational researchers during the communist period.

In contrast to current reform in the field of teaching, generated by the different expectations of the society, and especially the economic environment, the interest of Romanian pedagogy – from the period of relative liberalization of the communist regime - was attributed to the need to promote the activism in our country through what was called **active school**. Although it was recognized as a broader concern in finding solutions to specific problems of the school, the interest was focused mainly toward "*to put the student in a position to be a greater creator of his own personality (idea) more valuable and effective than traditional image of the student as a <consummator> as a object of education and a container in which it has to put the science. From here numerous formulas has appeared and contemporary pedagogy operates with them: self-development, self-instruction, self-education, self-direction, self-determination, etc... and they are trying to ground them with new dates from psycho-socio-educational field or at least bio-psycho-social field*" (A. Dancsuly, D. Salade, in Education and Contemporaneity, 1972, p. 7).

Even if the model described above seems a slightly archaic for international educational context and developed as a result of constraints caused by the political orientation of the time, we should also noted that the expectations of the society and of the people contributed to mention the pedagogical theory and practice in these frameworks. Clearly, a range of teaching models used in developed capitalist countries could not be applied because the differences in the social and psychological characteristics of the individual structure in our country were different from the Western (generated or supported by the economic capitalist and culture U.S. environment, especially). It is extremely difficult in the current period, more than two decades after

the collapse of the communist regime, to seek answer to the question: *Would the authentic pedagogy activities be hastened the falling of the totalitarian system?* A partial affirmative answer is supported by the marginalization of pedagogy in the '80 years of last century and the returning to strategies more "classic" in the same time with the approaching of the moment of regime change.

#### **4. The teaching and the reform in Romania, today**

Teaching aims explicitly today for the modernization through a better use of educational researches' results and a better connection to the demands of society. Social context is new because a great number of people are interested in the educational process - people were limited to find results until recently. Actually, the education, which has long ceased to be the exclusive responsibility of educators, represents today an area of interest for the press or for the public. It is obvious the episode during the session of the baccalaureate examination from June-July 2011, when a journalist (CTP) from an important newspaper tried to solve the mathematics topics, to show his colleagues that they had a low degree of difficulty and the five mark has been very accessible to candidates.

The directions of reflection and of action belonging to modern teaching from Romania are based on the exploitation of psychology' results and on the experimental research, which are supported partly by methods and tools provided by psychology. This is the reason to include in the educational process the developing methods of critical spirit of American psychology, after '99 year. Clearly, the new concern of the last century continues to add to the explanatory side a normative level, and to give a similar course to the educational process. The tasks of general teaching, knowledge function and praxiological function open the prospects for development of special teaching and they contribute to a better indication of how the dialogue from the interior of the teaching: general - special (particular) can support the development of general and special teaching. Using the knowledge, teaching assumes the school training for which it formulates and periodically reformulates the legitimacy to achieve the educational aims. The praxiological function shows that teaching occurs in educational activities with the aim to clarify its role and to harmonize the relations between the parts of the educational process (M. Ionescu, in M. Ionescu, I. Radu, 2001, p.25).

The necessity of change in current teaching is felt more acutely, especially after the political and economic approaching of Romania to

the capitalist countries. The general context of current world leads undoubtedly to a more accelerated smoothing of education system as a premise for a better and a faster adaptation of young graduates in the labor market. And because the issue concerns especially the most developed countries, we are faced with pressures aimed to bring about major changes in school life and in teaching, too and some new directions have already been stated by the New Education Law.

The first problem is related to the use of the word *reform*. Almost four decades ago, an analysis of education's changes from different countries proposed a definition that reform was considered "*the effect of <some connected blasts> whose results brings the losing of synchronized character between the demand for education done by the masses and by the economy to the education systems, on the one hand and, on the other hand, the offer of education that school systems are able to provide to these numerous and demanding applicants*" (C. Bîrzea, 1976, p. 18). Undoubtedly, the most of the elements of a genuine reform, as they are described in the text cited above, continue to be valid in the current school realities from Romania, indicating that there are pressures from outside Romania now, officially by requests for connection to Community policies after EU accession, but due to large population movements in the last decade, to and from the West.

Another notable feature is linked to the concomitance of educational reforms. Although for the present analysis we are interested mainly by the teaching's reform, the aspects of concomitance of the reforms reported by the work of distinguished and cited above author, are significant in the light of new theoretical and practical education about the process. There may not retain the attention the observation that the efforts to reform the education have, at least in Europe, many similar and simultaneous elements facilitated by the common set of motivations and strategies from which it carries. However, it is necessarily to identify the proper elements even if is necessary to show a creative and dynamic traditionalism; otherwise it will come again in a position to repeat the negative experiences of countries that have tried to take by simply translating foreign systems heavily on social realities, in full motion, in those countries. Researches from this field talk about the situations in which educational policies from some countries were forced to build a new way with the aim to identify the innovations needed for renewal, in the same time with the identifying of the means which they are already integrated into the system (M. Malita, in C. Bîrzea, 1976, p. 12).

### Conclusions

Two conclusions can be drawn, essential for any analysis that aims to contribute to the renewal of didactics: (1) teaching aims to provide the necessary elements of an assembly educational process in accordance with society's expectations teachers, but the ability to achieve this desideratum becomes operational if it requests and uses efficient the results of practical activities and of the researches conducted at the special teaching; (2) it is necessary a careful analysis of the features belonging in Romania to the elements involved in the design and development of education, compared with European models and expectations of society, so the structures - supported by viable models, including cultural aspect, which requires different weights reporting from the subjects of the school curriculum - have the necessary role of key factors in the new structure of the teaching process.

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## **EDUCATION AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

D. Kostadinovic

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**Abstract:** General social demands, tasks and expectations placed upon schools and universities are becoming ever more complex. One of the most current issues in that multitude, placed by the ministers of education of the OECD member countries, refers to the improving quality of learning that can be achieved provided that all students are offered high quality tuition. Bearing in mind numerous differences in education systems in various countries, one particular feature common to all education systems stands out, showing that most countries have developed specialised centres oriented towards teachers' professional development. The quality of teacher education, which relies on the improvement of the selection criteria for teacher education and employment, includes ensuring and improving theoretical and practical preconditions for gaining education, as well as the capacity for its quality transfer to those who it is meant for within the education system

**Keywords:** education, professional development, education policy, education system harmonisation, continuing professional development.

### **Introduction:**

Modern society is characterised by rapid scientific and technological development. Therefore, the question of teacher education and professional development is a key issue in any country, having in mind that the quality of the teaching staff is one of the main factors influencing the level of students' educational achievement. Regarding the improving quality of teacher education, one must bear in mind that this refers not only to teachers' initial university education but, from the perspective of the continuing education concept, to their professional development, too. The demands placed upon schools and teachers are ever more complex and one of the goals set by the ministers of education of the OECD member countries is the improving quality of

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learning that can be achieved provided that all students are offered high quality tuition.

Comparative analysis of teacher education systems in various European countries indicates the existence of numerous differences among those systems with very clearly expressed tendency of European countries towards the harmonisation of education systems.

The key issue of all studies dealing with the improvement of teacher education systems is the question of organising initial and professional development which is necessary for teachers to successfully motivate their students for high education achievements. Regarding the organisation and structure of studies, there are certain differences in the level of centralisation-decentralisation of political responsibility. There are also differences at the institutional level, so that teachers in some countries are educated at vocational colleges whereas in most other countries their education is realised at university level. The issue of retaining and developing quality teachers is also one of the most important questions of national education policies and measures by which to do so include ensuring good social and material conditions, creating a stimulating working environment and the possibility of continuing education.

The question of the purpose of research in the area of learning/teaching and teacher education is important in terms of determining a wide range of variables and empirical verifications of their relationship, with the aim to expand our knowledge about the existence of the cause-effect relationships relevant for the processes and outcomes of learning and teaching. Recent studies point to the need of placing teachers in the foreground, and the need for their education in the area of research logic and methods. Within education policies, the key issue lies in the quality of teachers, which relies on the improvement of the selection criteria for teacher education and employment, constant evaluation throughout the teaching career as well as providing resources and support to teachers in order for them to meet high expectations.

What we find particularly important here is high quality and continuing professional development organised by different institutions in different countries. What they all have in common, however, is the existence of specialised centres for professional teacher development, be it faculty sectors or regional professional development centres. A comparative analysis will help notice that professional development in

different countries is organised in different ways. However, most countries provide professional development at both the level of specialised centres and the level of faculties. Similarly, most European countries provide an opportunity for postgraduate specialisation in the education sphere and another programme being currently considered is that of European doctorate in education. Furthermore, there is a noticeable trend of efforts being made to ensure greater interrelatedness of theoretical and practical aspects of education, the aim of which is harmonisation among teacher education systems. This includes mutual cooperation among university institutions, research centres, school administrators and quality assurance agencies.

### **Teachers in the system of professional development**

Continuing education leads teachers to professional development and enables teachers of the modern “society of knowledge” to take upon themselves new roles and responsibilities. Professional teacher development includes raising teachers’ awareness about what they can improve in the education process and how to do so. Teacher roles and needs have changed through history, enriched over time and adapted to the needs of the society. Traditional approaches to teaching can still be found in modern educational practice, so teachers must show greater openness to and readiness for certain changes in their work (supervision, greater involvement of students in work, application of modern technologies, etc.).

Modern communication technologies and rapid development of informatics have generated the need of adjustment to various teacher requirements. The term “learning in different life contexts” indicates three forms of education in the modern society.<sup>2</sup>:

- *Formal Education* – limited, regular, hierarchically structured, degree/diploma-oriented education in primary and secondary schools or universities;

- *Informal Education* - unplanned, individual, mainly personally initiated education. Gained on the basis of everyday experience through socialising, reading books and literature, communicating with others, watching educational TV programmes;

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<sup>2</sup> Bjekic, D. (1999). Profesionalni razvoj nastavnika. Uzice: Uciteljski fakultet, str. 56.



◦ *Non-formal Education* – organised and planned contents learnt beyond the scope of formal education (seminars, trainings, courses, etc.).

### **System of professional teacher development**

The phases of continuing education and life-long learning lead us towards teacher professionalisation, i.e. towards professional teacher development. Professional teacher development is a long-term process during which learning and practical and research work bring about the improvement of knowledge, skills and capacities. Professional teacher development is defined and based on four components:<sup>3</sup>

- The first phase starts with compulsory education and a period of apprenticeship and ends with the introduction into the job and obtaining working licence. This is a way to officially verify the teacher's proficiency for individual work. According to the CPD (Continuing Professional Development) Rules, at the end of their apprenticeship, the teacher should know and understand the importance of continuing professional development and the ways of their own professional development, be familiar with and participate in various forms of professional development and continuously follow the development of contemporary professional literature.

- The second phase is the phase of professional development which is conducted in compliance with the Rules of continuous professional development and acquisition of the teacher, pre-school teacher or educator's degree. According to the Rulebook, the teacher, pre-school teacher or educator has the right and duty to pursue their professional development, and the institution has the obligation to ensure the realisation of these rights. Compulsory professional development includes realisation of various forms of institutionalised professional development and attendance of accredited programmes.

- The third phase is a system of monitoring and evaluation. The aim of monitoring is modification, development and improvement of the teaching practice. Therefore, what needs to be evaluated is not only the results themselves, but also the process which generated such results. Evaluation is the essence of intervention or action. The conclusions reached after the evaluation serve as correctors for future work.

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<sup>3</sup> Bjekic, D. (1999). Profesionalni razvoj nastavnika. Uzice: Učiteljski fakultet, str. 63.

- The fourth phase is marked by further professional development by means of gaining degrees. The aim is to ensure and support individual teacher's professional development, their active participation in the planning process and realisation of educational and pedagogical work, development of professional independence and enhancing the quality of educational and pedagogical system. Obtaining degrees in schools and institutions is only possible by means of professional development and the application of the gained knowledge in practice.

These forms of teacher development contribute to higher quality of work, increased motivation and establishing a system of evaluation and self-evaluation. Professional teacher development is an open, dynamic and continuous process which also includes the transfer of new knowledge from various professional areas of interest and scientific disciplines into the world of practice, as well as monitoring European trends in terms of improving the quality of education. Teacher's education and professional development must be grounded in the national and regional policies and their respective development plans which, on their part, should also include financial support. The objectives and activities to strengthen teachers' professional development are:

- University education of teachers – all teachers must have a university degree, and those who do not ought to be offered a possibility of additional education. This principle requires from the teachers to possess the following:

- knowledge in the subject that they teach,
- general knowledge in pedagogy,
- skills and capacities necessary for the work with students, and
- an understanding of the social and cultural importance of education;

- Occupation set in the context of lifelong learning – through education and continuous professional development, the teacher becomes a reflective practitioner who plans activities to meet the needs of everyday life and who relies on the use of information and communication technologies;

- Mobile occupation – which means opening up education to the outside world and strengthening European cooperation. Teachers who are mobile are recognised both in the country in which they work and in their home state. There is also a possibility of moving towards other professions;

- Occupation based on partnership – which means strengthening cooperation with other schools, universities, training centres and other institutions dealing with education. Teachers need to strengthen the links between work, research and the entire society.

Problems which, for instance, students of the faculties of education in the Republic of Serbia are faced with are lack of practice and developing practical skills. It is clear that education at faculties must be more efficient and contents at different European universities better harmonised. That is the only way for university education to become more successful.

Integration of various requirements for quality higher education has been offered by the Bologna Declaration (adopted in June 1999). The Declaration requires harmonisation of systems, organisation, duration and contents of academic education, i.e. bringing into concordance the conditions for gaining academic degrees and titles. The Bologna Declaration does not envisage the possibility of additional education for the already functional teaching staff without university degrees. However, it stipulates three levels of higher education: undergraduate academic studies (180 to 240 ECTS) and three-year vocational studies as types of studies of the first degree (180 ECTS); graduate Master studies (at least 60 or 120 ECTS), as well as specialised academic-vocational studies (at least 60 ECTS) as the studies of the second degree. Third level courses are doctoral academic studies (at least 180 ECTS).

For the Declaration to be successfully implemented, it is necessary to dispense with the traditional view of the teacher's vocation, according to which the student is supposed to master the content of a certain subject in the first place and then to start applying the acquired knowledge in practice only when they start working.<sup>4</sup> Important principles which must take an important place through the reform of teacher education are: decision making based on information, achieving consensus, development of professional practice which is based on interrelatedness of all the study areas and which involves students in all kinds of educational and pedagogical activity, professional practice which motivates students towards a self-reflexive, creative and innovative teaching approach.

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<sup>4</sup> Gordon, Tomas: Kako biti uspesan nastavnik, Beograd, Kreativni centar, Grupa Most, 2006, str. 89.

The introduction of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is, among other things, supposed to show the teacher resources literature read as well as seminar papers written. Credits can also be accumulated from extracurricular academic education (permanent education).

Successful realisation of students' education largely depends on the teacher's systematic knowledge, capabilities and skills, i.e. on their professional competences which reflect their capacity for doing the job. Teacher's professional competences or crucial capabilities are divided into three main categories: pedagogical, programme-based and communicative competences.

Teacher's professional competences are defined by the term of standard of the teacher's job, skills and capabilities. Teacher's job standard represents socially expected teacher roles which should provide the basis for facilitating faculties in defining contents of the training necessary for future teachers, and for helping supervisors in their work with apprentices.<sup>5</sup>

Standards can also be helpful to institutions and professional associations engaged in professional development and to teachers in determining their own professional development needs. The aim of professional teacher development is to direct the development of students so as to help them become capable and educated, intellectually independent and socially integrated.

### **Teachers in the INSET**

The system of professional development along with work, the INSET (In-servis Education for Teachers) system of education, is designed as an upgrade of formal education, updating the knowledge acquired during training for the job of teachers, improvement of skills, application of knowledge and practice gained and continuing professional development of teachers. Continuing professional development is included in the INSET. In-service education is a communication system that provides cooperation and contact among teachers and ensures the improvement of skills that will enable them to enhance the quality of work. This definition accentuates the exchange of

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<sup>5</sup> Hebib, Emina: Individualni razvoj nastavnika u školi, *Nastava i vaspitanje* - ISSN 0547-3330 Vol. 56, (2007), str. 176.

experience through learning, practical work and research, which result in complementary knowledge, skills and capabilities.

The most commonly applied methods in various forms of professional development are interactive methods, which enable active participation, teamwork and focus on developing teacher style. They are focused on solving problems through role-playing, simulations and situational approaches. Outcomes of professional teacher development can be seen in increased self-confidence when doing the work. This way, teachers' knowledge, skills and capabilities are complemented and improved, and their need for the exchange of experience is met.

Schools also benefit from professional teacher development. Improved cooperation with students results in their better overall achievement, closer cooperation with the interested parents and colleagues and a higher level of motivation of the teachers who act as course designers and implementers and who do so by applying new methods. All these indicators of change lead to the promotion of the institutions and the results achieved. Professional development of teachers cannot be reduced to occasional seminars and gatherings of colleagues, but represents a long-term and continuous process of learning and applying knowledge<sup>6</sup>. Managing professional development of educators is necessary because the training conducted so far has been done with no systematic monitoring, evaluation or an adequate offer coordinator and primary mediator. As a result, many European countries have established special INSET-oriented institutions. Teachers' awareness of the importance of professional development is becoming increasingly present in their mutual discussions, post-lesson evaluations and in their application of modern teaching methods.

One of the factors of increased presence in informal forms of teacher education is the working license. The important areas of professional development that need to be more prominent include the following:

- practical issues related to problem situations in the class and in the teaching process in general, and improvement of competences connected with specific areas of interest,

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<sup>6</sup> Alibabic, S. (2005). Upravljanje profesionalnim razvojem nastavnika. Beograd: Učiteljski fakultet, str.38.

- improving competences related to specific aspects of children's development (emotional development, disabilities and impairments, motor development etc.),
- improvement of mentor skills, apprentice supervision and preparations for the license exam,
- prevention of violence among students,
- prevention of drug abuse.

Teachers need to be strengthened in the areas of teaching methodologies for certain subjects, the application of new teaching methods and skills and in the ways of monitoring and evaluating student achievements.

A number of teachers are aware that professional development is not just a matter of free choice, but also a professional obligation, as the reform has imposed changes that need to be implemented in work. The only way to achieve this is most likely to be by means of various types of professional development.<sup>7</sup>

### **Conclusion**

With the changes taking place in modern society, new demands are being placed upon education, requiring a wider range of teacher roles and competences. Within the framework of the reform changes in Serbia, initiated in 2001, attempts were made to form a regulatory system that would enable the convergence to contemporary European trends in the area of teacher training and professional development. This area requires immediate action, which will change the situation in schools for the benefit of students.

The teaching process is expected to make of students competent, independent and active people who think, check facts, doubt, seek solutions, ask questions, draw conclusions and use their knowledge effectively. Today's education and its purpose should be a priority of any society. With reference to Serbian education system, some important changes will be achieved through changes in the education of teachers, and some of them will require substantial social intervention in order to ensure promotion of the teaching profession among quality students and to retain the most competent teachers in the profession. The most important changes that should be accelerated are:

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<sup>7</sup> Hebib, Emina: Individualni razvoj nastavnika u školi, *Nastava i vaspitanje*. - ISSN 0547-3330 Vol. 56, (2007), str. 180

- change in the generally low socio-economic status of the teaching profession;
- acknowledgement of teachers as equal partners in educational policy design and their strengthening through education for the role of an autonomous, creative and competent expert;
- wider opportunities for postgraduate specialist and doctoral studies in the teaching profession;
- improvement of continuing professional development by better interrelatedness of professional development and the conditions for professional promotion by harmonising the themes and enriching the contents of professional development and also by stronger engagement and influence of practitioners and professional associations in the design of professional development courses.

Professional teacher development is one of the particularly important factors for the development and efficiency of education itself and education reforms, as stressed in all declarations of international conferences devoted to education. Being successful in any profession under the conditions of major changes, which are typical of our age, is almost impossible without permanent professional development. Given the essence of the teaching profession, teachers should represent the avant-garde in the process of permanent professional development of employees in comparison to other professions.

An effective system of professional teacher development is an imperative requirement in the countries which consider education to lie in the basis of development and progress. The efforts and attempts to have professional teacher development systematically solved have resulted in the establishment of the INSET concept in almost all European countries. In-service teacher education as an informal way of continuing professional development is a broad communication system that provides contact among teachers as well as between teachers and the results of the development.

The seriousness of the problems related to research is also reflected in numerous activities in the field of higher education in the region. Thus, for instance, 11 law faculties in Southeast Europe have formed a kind of consortium to ensure coordination in the context of future EU membership. In cooperation with the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) and the Open Regional Fund for legal reform in Southeast Europe, these faculties have tailored the first regional master's program on EU business law. The aim of the joint

program is to "increase the international competitiveness in European higher education, particularly with reference to curriculum design, inter-institutional cooperation and integrated syllabuses at the regional level." In this way, the context of new quality has clearly been given new dimensions and directions, indicating that the future requires vision, mental effort, great concentration and vast knowledge, undeniably making us address the present time with much more efficacy.

In conclusion, we can say that teacher education, just as any other area of education, imposes a need for the improvement of its quality. This refers to both initial education and professional development, and vast majority of the changes should focus on the design of high quality psychological and pedagogical syllabuses. This would largely reduce the stress of students' transition from study to work, and provide the future teachers with opportunities for acquiring skills and competences much needed in their work with students and school in general.

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## **A PRIMER IN THE ROMANIAN LANGUAGE IN THE CONTEXT OF SCHOOL REFORM IN SERBIA**

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**Abstract:** A complex process of the school reform in Serbia has promoted a whole range of new elements in the teaching in the Romanian language.

Apart from teaching staff training and new program development, new textbooks were published. We are talking about *The Primer* in the Romanian language, a workbook *In the World of Letters* and *The Primer Companion*.

The textbooks are published under the patronage of the Institute for Textbook Publishing, Belgrade, written by Brandusa Zujka and prepared within the Program of the Romanian language as a mother tongue for the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of elementary schools.

The *Primer* suggests a new way of organizing of school activities, revealing the secrets of reading and writing to small children, i.e. pupils.

*The Primer Companion* is created with an aim to provide the teachers who work with 1<sup>st</sup> primary school grade pupils with orienting instructions for teaching reading and writing in better conditions.

The workbook *In the World of Letters* supplementing *The Primer* is outlined and realised in accordance to *The Primer*.

*The Primer*, together with the work book *In the World of Letters* and *The Primer Companion*, published with an aim to introduce the teaching of the Romanian language into the context of contemporary teaching, reveal their real value only in everyday work with pupils.

**Keywords:** teaching in the Romanian language, the primer, school reform, new strategies, reading and writing at beginner’s level.

*“Consider a student a torch you will light  
to later glow in its own gleam”  
(Plutarch)*

A complex process of the school reform in Serbia has promoted a whole range of new elements, appropriate for contemporary teaching demanding a new approach to educational contents.

In accordance to the reform measures initiated by the Ministry of Education and Sport of the Republic of Serbia in the academic school year 2003/2004, the changes were at the same time introduced in the teaching in

the Romanian language. Apart from teaching staff training and new program development, in the spirit of innovative measures, new textbooks as well as operational documents were published to apply the provisions of the school curricula.

In order to identify a moment the teaching in the Romanian language is going through, as well as to constructively participate in completing the innovative picture of lower elementary school grades, an effort will be made at representing concisely and realistically the first textbooks in the Romanian language created in the context of educational reform in Serbia and used in primary schools with teaching in the Romanian language. We are talking about *The Primer* in the Romanian language and a workbook *In the World of Letters*, first edition in 2005 and second edition in 2009 and *The Primer Companion* published in 2007 and again in 2010. The publication and using of these books in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of elementary school have been approved by the Secretariat for Education and Culture of the Province of Vojvodina.

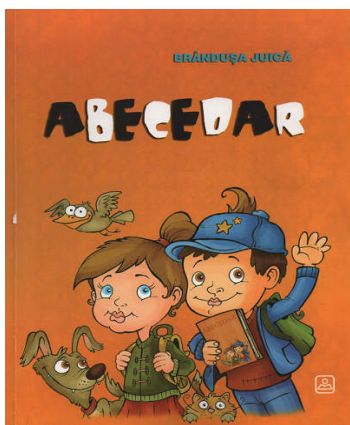
The textbooks are published under the patronage of the Institute for Textbook Publishing, Belgrade, written by Brandusa Zujka and prepared within the Program of the Romanian language as a mother tongue for the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of elementary schools, published in the normative act *Special Grounds of the School Curriculum for the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of primary education and upbringing*, issued by the Ministry of Education and Sport of the Republic of Serbia, in Belgrade in 2003.

In projecting the textbooks, apart from legislative and methodological approach, significant attention has been paid to special conditions of the socio-cultural context in which the teaching in the Romanian language is organized and carried out, preserving and nurturing our mother tongue.

The Romanian language as a mother tongue is acquired spontaneously during the first years of child's life. Afterwards, the improvement is reached through numerous and various contributions, out of which the contribution of the school seem to be the most important and the most efficient. In the school context the Romanian language serves as an instrument of knowledge and communication means and permeates the whole process of education and upbringing. The Romanian language children speak when they enter school starts to develop and their ability to express suitable content of their ideas, thoughts and feelings is increasing.

The teaching of the Romanian language as a mother tongue in the lower grades of primary school is of great importance since its aim is to nurture oral and written language skills of students, as well as to promote accurate, contemporary, aware and expressive manner of expression. During

this period the process of Romanian language acquisition comprises both assimilation of reading, writing and grammar knowledge and formation and development of the skills in these fields.



The new *Primer* represents publishing continuity of a series of primers, written by Prof Dr Trailo Spariousu; at the same time it is a novelty, having in mind that the book suggests rather than imposes a new way of organizing of school activities, revealing the secrets of reading and writing to small children, i.e. pupils.

Prepared according to dialectical coexistence of phonetic method, analytical-synthetic and global method, the current primer provides pupils with an opportunity to acquire in an easier way, as well as

accurately the pronunciation of sounds in a variety of combinations of syllables, to recognize written letters, as well as to transform letters from syllables and words into sounds.

The acquisition of reading and writing is a basis for all school activities, being the instrument of intellectual work. The classes of reading and writing simultaneously contribute to the broadening of knowledge horizons and realization of upbringing aspect of the curriculum.

Apart from opening up possibilities for the acquisition of the skills of accurate and conscious reading and writing, the reading and writing classes encompass the following activated and enriched manner of pupil's expression, from both the aspect of accurate pronunciation of each sound and the aspect of grammar, development of memory, attention, intellectual operations (analysis, synthesis, comparison, generalization), development of creative abilities of children and interest in learning, creating of aware and persistent attitude towards this activity. Furthermore, the classes contribute to reinforcement and elaboration of children knowledge on the nature surrounding us, as well as to the formation of positive character features of pupils.

180 classes a year, i.e. 5 classes a week are anticipated for the acquisition of reading and writing skills by the school curriculum for the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of primary school. The processing of the *Primer* includes two periods: preparatory period of reading and writing and reading and writing at beginner's level.

The duration of the preparatory reading and writing period is determined according to children's abilities, up to 4 weeks, which is the time needed for the acquisition of some knowledge and skills, necessary for reading and writing acquisition. Reading and writing at beginner's level is the longest period, approximately 90 lessons and refers to the processing of letters and groups of letters.

The preparatory reading and writing period (*The Primer* 4-25 page) comprises the lessons aiming at learning about a sound, a word and a sentence, as well as acquisition of a variety of graphic elements. These lessons are considered the basic elements in the realization of aims and tasks stated in the *Primer Companion*.

The contents of *The Primer* helps a teacher in realization of the most important aims and tasks anticipated for the preparatory reading and writing period.

The development of children reception, as a significant reading and writing aim, can be realized according to various pictures presented at the first pages of *The Primer*. In such a way, prior representations of children (fruit, birds, animals, toys, various professions) are reinforced, while the range of these representations can be broadened, starting from the immediate setting: first day at school, classroom, school kits... to more distant settings. These pages will help with the processing of the notions of a sentence, a word, a syllable, a sound.

During this period the preparation for reading is supplemented by the preparation for writing. This aim is reached through play, writing of graphic elements and drawing according to a model.

Reading and writing at beginner's level, the main period of reading and writing skills acquisition, aims at a teacher familiarizing pupils with the sounds and letters of the Romanian language, with linking them into syllables, words and sentences, as well as with writing of letters as components of words and sentences. The pictures from *The Primer* open up possibilities for a teacher to enrich the vocabulary of pupils, to nurture moral features and develop knowledge.

Having in mind that a syllable is the simplest unit for reading acquisition, the period can be divided into three phases in accordance with the level of difficulty involved in the word structure.

The first phase comprises monosyllable and two-syllable words consisting of direct or reversed syllables. *The Primer* pages contribute to the reinforcement of previously acquired syllables, regardless whether the syllable is in the same or is a part of a new word.

During this period children start to read sentences and shorter texts. Respecting the principle of gradual shift from less to more difficult, it is started with the sentences consisting of two words followed by shorter texts consisting of two or three sentences. In order to compose as clear as possible as well as a variety of textual material, drawings are used instead of words when words involve letters that have not been previously processed by children.

Each page of *The Primer* appropriate for this phase provides the teacher with the following material: illustrations (according to which the teacher leads conversation with pupils); word columns (needed for the composition and analysis of words in regard to their reading within the text); the text pupils should read and retell; a model of writing according to written letters at the bottom of the page.

In the end of this phase *The Primer* contains examples for writing of simple sentences using written letters.

Within the period of reading and writing at beginner's level (*The Primer*, pages 26-114) the following types of lessons are carried out: the lessons of getting acquainted with the new sounds and letters; the lessons for dealing with the columns of words and sentences; revision lessons; reinforcement lessons; pupil knowledge evaluation lessons.

*The Primer Companion* also refers to the aims and tasks anticipated for the period of reading and writing at beginner's level.

*The Primer* contents suggest the topics representing natural and social realities. Starting with the first school day and presenting conditions in which pupils will work, it is aimed at reinforcing, arranging and enriching the representations and notions on objective reality (family, games and children's preoccupations, various man's activities, important holidays, animals...). As much as it was possible, efforts were made to represent the topics as a sequence of seasons, opening up possibilities for a teacher to use concrete examples.

*The Primer* contains the first knowledge on grammar and orthography, as well, of course, in its simplest form. The pupils acquire a concept of a sentence, a word, a syllable, a sound, the meaning of question mark or exclamation mark... etc.

*The Primer* has relatively clear pages where children can easily find their way through pictures. The pictures are suggestive, with bright colours, cheerful, appropriate for psychological needs of pupils who are beginners. They guide observations of pupils towards noticing of an idea and its expression in a sentence, forming selective perceptions and contributing to formation of general operations.

*The Primer Companion* is created with an aim to provide the teachers who work with 1<sup>st</sup> primary school grade pupils with orienting instructions for teaching reading and writing in better conditions.



According to its structure, *The Primer Companion* consists of two chapters containing several sub-chapters and *The Final Conclusion*, where the educational standards prescribed for the end of the period for processing *The Primer* are stated. The first chapter – *Teaching Methodology Aspects of The Primer* – the following contents are covered: *The general aims of learning the Romanian language as a mother tongue in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade of elementary education and upbringing, Operational tasks anticipated for the preparatory period of reading and writing and for the period of reading and writing at beginner's level and The types of lessons specific for the preparatory period of reading and writing and for the period of reading and writing at beginner's level.* The second chapter – *Organization and realization of reading and writing lessons* – presents the methods of lessons organization for both preparatory period of reading and writing and for the period of reading and writing at beginner's level.

Even though the current *Primer* is conceived according to dialectic coexistence of phonetic method, analytical-synthetic and global method, which have already been used, the lesson structure is featured by certain changes demanding use of some innovative teaching methods and means, or a new way of their implementation. Both contents and the way of content realization in *The Primer* impose the need for some instructions necessary for each anticipated task to be realized.

Learning activities are realized in a variety of contexts, subjected to everyday pedagogic learning program. The smallest didactic unit is a class, considered a basic unit. A class, i.e. a lesson remains the basic form of didactic activity, through which a teacher organizes learning process in a certain period of time, according to the demands of the curriculum, adjusted to the school timetable. The lessons have to be prepared and their preparation is based on the contents (topics, texts, learning situations), on didactic methods and suitable teaching means. It is recommended that during the same class didactic activities should be used in an alternative way whose

aims is the formation of accurate and aware reading or acquisition of accurate writing, determined by accurate pronunciation.

There are several types of lessons: the lessons of new knowledge acquisition, the lessons of systematization reinforcement, the lessons of forming of knowledge and skills, revision lessons, as well as evaluation lessons, but they do not have determined typology, their structure is not mandatory but orienting.

The course of the Romanian language in the 1<sup>st</sup> grade in primary school can consist of the following parts: activities of recognition of a voice in a word, perception of a printed letter, noticing illustrations, reading of a word column, representation of a written letter, preparatory writing exercising, writing of a written letter and word, if the level of the pupils' abilities in the class is suitable.

In spite of the fact that *The Primer Companion* suggests a model for each lesson comprised by *The Primer*, it is important to mention that the use of the *Companion* is not pattern-like. On the contrary, with the help of these indications, hopefully useful, the teacher will choose the means, methods and procedures that suit the covered contents and the conditions in which a class takes place, with the *Companion* having solely orienting role.

The workbook *In the World of Letters* supplementing *The Primer* is outlined and realised in accordance to *The Primer*. According to the phonetic method, analytically-synthetic and global method, the workbook suggests thorough learning of writing and reading through various exercise, grading of difficulties and training pupils for participation in communication demanding use of constructive thinking. Learning takes place according to direct use of letters, syllables, words, sentences and punctuation marks. Various exercises ensure revealing of similarities, differences, associations and numerous interdisciplinary correlations.

Certain types of exercises open up possibilities for pupils to form their own personal opinion, to learn how to express arguments to support their attitudes, to develop oral and written expression; other exercises attract pupils to the wonderful world of reading, developing interestedness in reading.

All types of exercises ensure an accurate reception of a written message, enrichment of vocabulary, accurate use of the Romanian language in concrete and versatile contexts of communication, stimulating creativity and freedom of choice of children; they are also adjusted to the fields of interests specific for the age of pupils.

The workbook *In the World of Letters* offers opportunity for teachers to choose exercises suitable for the composition of the pupils in the class

they work with (homogeneous, heterogeneous and undivided class). The workbook is an instrument available to parents through which they can have insights into their children school success.

We conclude our presentation underlying that *The Primer*, together with the work book *In the World of Letters* and *The Primer Companion*, published with an aim to introduce the teaching of the Romanian language into the context of contemporary teaching, reveal their real value only in everyday work with pupils.

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## THE DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCES AT FUTURE TEACHERS

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**Abstract:** *In this article, we want to reveal the importance of developing professional competences at future teachers. The students, attending the Programme Pedagogy of Primary and Pre-school Education are of different ages, some of them have already passed the age of an average student and therefore, we want to emphasize that initial training, the one carried on at undergraduate should take into consideration the highest standards, but personalized, according to the level of students` prior education. Mature students come from the educational system, they are pre-school or primary school teachers with psycho-pedagogic training and experience in the didactic career. They want to complete their university education and we want to show the determinant factors for their choice. We also want to emphasize the most viable directions in the training for a didactic career.*

**Keywords:** *foresight, didactic career, competence, education*

### 1. The Education in a society of reforms

The specialists in foresight predict the future of schools as very difficult and in constant change. They also anticipate that it is in our power to create a desirable future, as presented in the vision on higher education from Romania in 2025 “*the society will be centred on the individual and his needs that will become more and more complex and varied. Diversity, equality of chances, creativity, flexibility, the ecological spirit and transparency will persist as important values of the society from the predictable future.*”<sup>2</sup> Education, as main promotor for the development of the society, is asked to search for the best solutions to support the sociocultural progress of humanity. The target is building a better future for the human being. Starting with the strategies

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developed in Lisbon in 2000 and improved in Stockholm, specialists have outlined the perspectives for the development of a knowledge-based society, capable of dynamizing economy in a multidimensional and multicultural society. In this respect, it is necessary for the youngsters that carry on a productive activity in a globalized and multicultural society, to possess certain abilities that make him performant. Only the competitive one can succeed in a knowledge-based society, the ones that can easily adapt to changes, those that possess basic competences for a good professional in a certain field, but also general competences necessary for an easy adjustment to changes. In the past 20 years, the Romanian educational system has undergone major changes; the integration in the European Community has brought about new dimensions for the development and reformation of the educational system. The adherence to the European Community brings profound changes of mentality and vision as far as the educational system, on all its levels, is concerned. The institutional and content reforms try to rally to the requirements of the European education. These reforms create numerous factual and conceptual transformations that lead to a reorganization and restructuring of traditional ways of thinking and acting (that oppose resistance) and to the adoption of new orientations that are not always easily accepted. Reform implies sustained efforts from all involved factors, either subjects or beneficiaries of education. Any change is regarded with reluctance and anxiety because it involves changing a model of thinking and handling.

In Romania, after the adherences to the European Community and after the national educational policies have been rallied to the requirements of European education, the educational reform has brought about big changes. For instance, the higher education has undergone an evaluation process that divided universities into different performance levels: education centred universities (that offer only undergraduate studies), education centred and research universities or education and art centred universities (that offer undergraduate and Master`s degree programmes) and universities of advanced research and education (that offer undergraduate, Master`s degree and Doctoral studies). Each programme of studies has been hierarchized based on European quality standards, released by The Association of European Universities. The evaluations was made *“according to the quality of teaching and learning in universities, scientific research, the relationship between the external environment and universities and the institution`s ability to*

reach its objectives and ability to modernize and change". The evaluation was meant to be a „tool on behalf of the universities, so that they can centre better their activity", as declared by the Ministry of Education, Research, Youth and Sport. According to this evaluation and hierarchization, each university has to revise its mission and offers for the society, so that it put its resources at the disposal of the community. The university`s mission is to create economic, social, spiritual culture. On the other hand, it has to prepare specialists for different social fields; it has to comply with the local and regional labour market demands. The faculties or departments, after the new organization, have to improve their course offer, according to the labour market`s needs, to the European curricular standards and according to the National Qualification Framework from the Higher Education. In this respect, the curriculum has to be compatible with the national qualification framework standards. When revising the curriculum, a special attention should be given to the transfer of knowledge through the equilibrium between core, field-related and internship disciplines.

## **2. Professionalizing the didactic career**

The professionalization of didactic career has become a necessity that demands the reconsideration of certain concepts related to becoming a teacher. In this respect, the concerns of educational policies are oriented towards the way teachers` initial training is performed and then lifelong training. *The Faculty for Educational Sciences, Psychology and Social Assistance* with „Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, through its undergraduate programme *Pedagogy of Primary and Pre-school Education* prepares teachers for primary and pre-school education. An efficient initial training is a primary objective of the faculty`s policy. Initial training cannot stop at undergraduate studies, the three year long undergraduate studies have become insufficient for a good training of future teachers. Therefore, undergraduate studies must be followed by a Master`s Degree that go thoroughly into primary and pre-schools teachers initial training. Students that have chosen at *The Faculty for Educational Sciences, Psychology and Social Assistance*, the study programme *Pedagogy of Primary and Pre-school Education* are of different ages, not just young students. A considerable part of students enrolled in the 1<sup>st</sup> year are already integrated in the educational system, but have only high-school studies. Their desire is to complete their education and obtain a university degree. Social constraints

determine the need for professional training in all fields. The competitiveness on the labour market, determined by different causes like: decrease in the number of school age children, school restructuring, advanced standards at employment bring about a revision of training for didactic career. So, teachers (pre-school and primary school) with length of service (some of them 1<sup>st</sup> degree teachers) feel threatened of loosing their job. Therefore, among our students we have people already part of the educational system and have a long didactic career behind them. They chose to continue their studies in order to obtain a degree in university studies.

### **3. Applied study**

In the study that we have carried on, we have analysed the factors that have determined pre-school and primary school teachers, already working in the educational system, to enrol in a university. We have undergone the experiment on the 1<sup>st</sup> year of study 2008-2011 (100 students) that was composed of 50 % students at the average student age and 50% mature students. We have given the mature students a questionnaire to fill in which we have named *Determinant factors in choosing to continue* studies. The questionnaire is listed below:

1. What has determined you to continue your studies?

Current professional training does not fit to the demands of the job?

I. in very little extend;

II. in little extend;

III. in certain extend;

IV. in high extend;

V. in very high extend.

2. In which of the following fields do you think you should develop your competences?

I. in the field of the speciality;

II. in the field of pedagogy and educational psycho - pedagogy;

III. in the field of didacticism/field didacticism;

IV. in the field of information and communication techniques applied in the educational process;

V. in inter and trans - disciplinary fields aiming at educational alternative strategies;

3. How important is for you to update your professional training?

- I. in very little extend;
- II. in little extend;
- III. in certain extend;
- IV. in high extend;
- V. in very high extend.

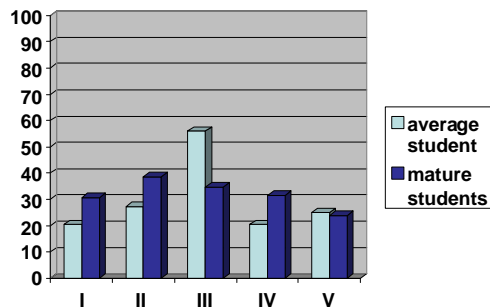
4. Do you give yourselves time for professional training?

- I. in very little extend;
- II. in little extend;
- III. in certain extend;
- IV. in high extend;
- V. in very high extend.

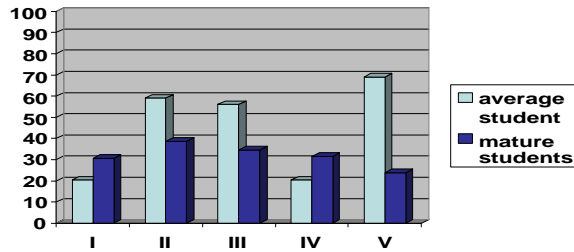
5. What are your expectations from the university courses?

- I. better results in the didactic activity;
- II. performing innovations in the pedagogic field;
- III. elaboration of curricular auxiliaries;
- IV. promotion in a management position;
- V. certification of professional competences.

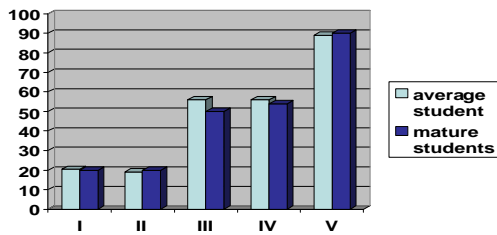
1. What has determined you to continue your studies? Current professional training does not fit to the demands of the job?



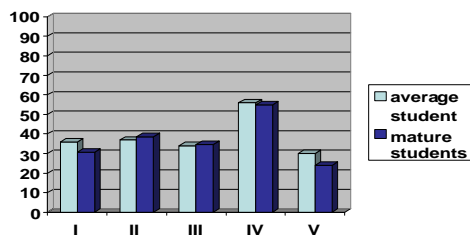
In which of the following fields do you think you should develop your competences?



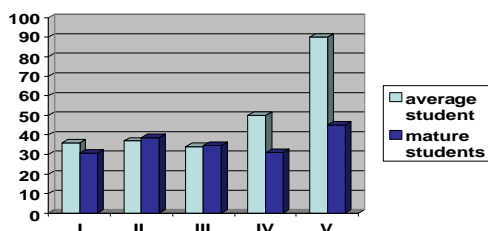
3. How important is for you to update your professional training?



4. Do you give yourselves time for professional training?



### 5. What are your expectations from the university courses?



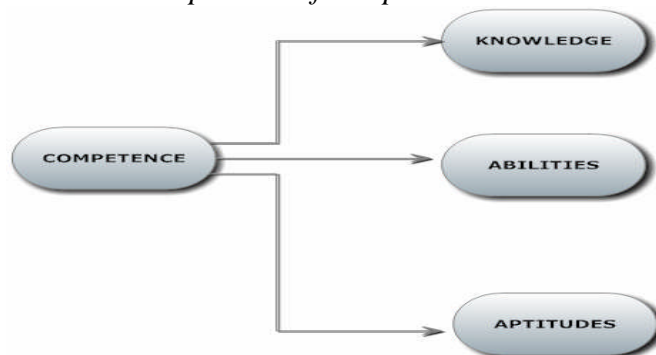
As we saw in the tables behind, the answers are different from item to item, the mature students are more vocational interest, they want to learn more, to become better teachers and there wish are to improve their didactic methodologies, performances and academic results of their students.

#### 4. Discussion

The diversity of students demands a need to personalize the response the university systems gives to their needs. The diversity is determined by real needs for training. Young students that come from different high-schools require a special training, a complex one, while the students that already work in the system (pre-school and primary school teachers) and have initial psycho-pedagogic training, require specific training. The faculty has to respond to the training demands, without insisting on redundant elements. Even if the curriculum is common for all students, the need to personalize learning is a sine qua non condition. Undergraduate studies involve initial training, namely a complex process of building competences that allow the teacher to act flexibly and creatively in the didactic field. For teachers that already work in the educational system, we cannot talk about *initial training*; it is more like a special feature that we call *lifelong learning*. It is actually an integration of initial training and lifelong learning, based on the fact that these students possess psycho-pedagogic training and continue their studies. We observe from the analysis of the responses given by the students from the experimental group, their tendency to train themselves from the perspective of the education's need to be permanent. This

training, the mature students enrol to, is known under the notion of *permanent/lifelong learning*, an activity with pedagogic and social content, which is designed, carried on and developed within the educational process with the aim to develop professional competences at a highly referential level. The competence is *the capacity, the recognized ability of a person to work and decide based on a thorough knowledge in the fields where s/he works.*<sup>3</sup> Competence<sup>4</sup> *sums up an integrated assembly of knowledge, abilities and aptitudes that the subject has to possess in order to successfully deal with a category of situations, which involves adaptability, prompt problem and project handling, correct decision making.* The concept of competence is considered a contextualization of *acquisitions on a performative level* (knowledge, skills and abilities, see Figure no 1), all being used in a certain context, namely a competent person is authorized to carry on a certain activity due to her/his level of performance in a specific field, certified by a competent authority.

Figure no1. *The components of competence*



Competence means performance, namely knowing how to do something properly, designates an applied *savoir-faire*. But competence involves among other characteristics, also a mobilization of heuristic type<sup>5</sup>. Being competent involves the capacity to transfer, which entitles us to state that a competence should be regarded also from a transversal perspective.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.larousse.com/competences>

<sup>4</sup> Bernaerdt, Delory, G. Leroy, Paquay, Rey, Romainville, Wolfs. *A ceux qui s'interrogent sur les compétences et sur leur évaluation. Forum*, mars 1997, 21-27.

<sup>5</sup> Tardif, J. (2006). *L'évaluation des compétences. Documenter le parcours de développement*. Montréal: Chenelière Éducation.

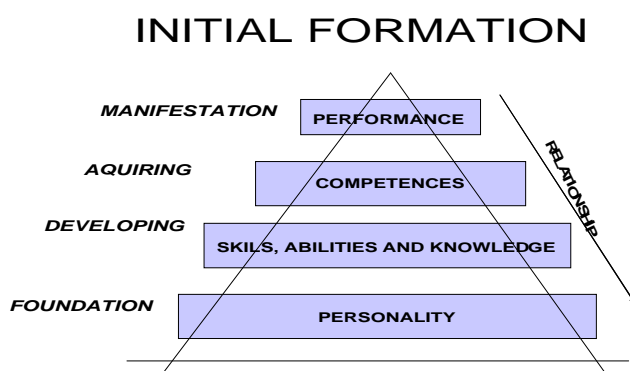


For the profession of teacher for primary school and kindergarten, students should acquire the following:

- ❖ general competences;
- ❖ field-related competences, psycho-pedagogic competences specific for their field of study;
- ❖ methodological competences;
- ❖ communication and relating competences;
- ❖ management competences.

Below, we present a hierarchy of student acquired competences during the initial training.

Figure no 2. *Hierarchy of students` initial acquisitions*



Developing these acquisitions depends on many factors: the level of students` prior training, intellectual level, pedagogic skills of the teaching academic body, but also their attendance at lectures and seminars. Under curricular aspect, psycho-pedagogic competences are assured by a cumulus of field-related disciplines of theoretical and practical training, spread in three years of undergraduate studies, then studied thoroughly at the Master`s Degree, all of them compatible to European systems.

It is therefore required to centre the development of competences suitable for the didactic career on the following directions:

*A. Field of study:*

- up-to-date field-related knowledge;
- cognitive and functional-actioning competences in the field of study;
- the ability to take action/carry on/innovate/research in the field of study;
- the ability to identify and access documentation sources in the field of study
- the ability to use the computer and access communication networks;
- the ability to develop interpersonal and group communication

*B. The field of projection, fulfilment and assessment of the educational process*

- planning, projecting and assessing the pupil centred learning activities;
- optimal fulfilment of learning activities;
- revaluing of digital means available in the classroom;
- implementation of new strategies and modern learning methods;
- promoting the complementary assessment methods.

Training for didactic profession aims at acquiring those competences that assure the teaching staff the possibility to continue the lifelong learning considering the fact that he himself is a trainer for future generations. Therefore, s/he should be able to change constantly according to social changes, but especially to be always fresh in the eyes of the trainees. Thus, his professional activity is an optimal one. From foresight perspective in 2025 „*more and more people will approach their life in a creative manner*” because society will impose various constraints, from changing the job to changing the location (the country) where s/he works. Thus, people will need education more than that have needed ever before. The number of mature students will definitely increase because the border between „*career, personal development and free time will blur*”, in a new social context that promotes the ability to communicate, flexibility, creativity, but also mobility.

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## INTERACTIVE TEACHING METHODS FOR PRE – SCHOOL AND PRIMARY SCHOOL PUPILS

A. Pădurean

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„Aurel Vlaicu” University of Arad, Romania

**Abstract:** In the following study, we have tried to reveal the advantages of using interactive methods in English classes, at pre-school and primary school pupils. We have presented a series of interactive methods, briefly stating their purpose and giving short instructions. We have also presented an experiment that aimed at revealing the benefits of using interactive methods in the English classes.

**Keywords:** interactive method, critical thinking, abilities, primary school pupils.

The successful outcome of integrated content teaching at pre-school pupils very much relies on the structuring of the contents. The teachers have to aim at certain finalities, at the achievement of some skills, at a natural learning on the one hand, and learning according to a rigorous curriculum based structure, on the other hand. The parameters of integrated curricular structure can be: transmitted concepts, developed skills and abilities and applied exercises.

Learning by cooperation is a structured training strategy, where small groups of children work together to achieve a common training goal. The premises of learning by cooperation is that the subjects that work in team are capable of applying and summering up the knowledge in various and complex ways, at the same time learning more thoroughly as an individual. The learning by cooperation techniques involve active role assigning to children. They have to show mutual support within the learning process, to communicate and relate to other classmates. This involves developing each child`s personal competences when he is within a group, namely teaching each child to be a part of the whole *“learning to be and work together”*. “The pedagogic quality of the didactic method involves its change from a teacher proposed way of knowledge into a learning method undergone by pre-school pupil, pupil,

and student within a formal and non-formal training, with opening towards a permanent education”(Sorin Cristea: 97).

The desire to modernize and improve the didactic methodology aim at enriching the *active character of educative methods*, at applying methods with a strong *formative character*, at revaluing new *training technologies* (e-learning), with the purpose of developing the pupil’s whole potential.

“Group learning trains the capacity of decision-making and initiative, assigns a more personal character to work, but also a higher degree of complementarity to abilities and talents, assures a more vivid, a more active participation, sustained by many mutual emulation elements and fruitful cooperation.” (Ioan Cerghit: 54)

Interactivity involves both cooperation – defined as “motivational form of self – affirmation, including the activity of self – promotion where the individual rivals with the others in order to obtain a better social situation or superiority” – and competition, which is “a socially oriented activity, within which the individual collaborates with the others to reach a mutual aim”. They are not antithetic activities; both imply a certain degree of interaction, as opposed to individual behaviour.

The advantages of interaction:

- stimulates effort and individual’s productivity;
- it is important for the self-discovery of one’s own abilities and limitations, for self-assessment
- there is an intergroup dynamics with favourable influences on the personality;
- the subjects that work in team are capable of applying and synthesizing their knowledge in various and complex ways, at the same time learning more thoroughly than at individual work;
- it develops multiple intelligence, *linguistic intelligence* specific abilities (the ability to speak and write; ability to use the language effectively, to use rhetoric and poetic language, the ability to remember information), *logical-mathematic intelligence* (it involves the ability to logically analyse problems, to do mathematical operations and to scientifically investigate the tasks, to make deductions), *spatial intelligence* (refers to the ability, the potential of recognize and use spatial patterns; the ability to create different, not only visual representations), *interpersonal intelligence* (the ability to understand one’s intentions, motivations, and needs, by creating opportunities in

collective work), *intrapersonal intelligence* (the ability of self-understanding, proper self-appreciation of feelings, motivations, fears), *environmental intelligence* (that makes the human being capable of recognizing, classifying and letting himself be inspired by the environment), *moral intelligence* (related to rules, behaviour, attitudes).

Among the most common group methods we would like to mention:

*Group interview* – stimulates critical thinking and is fit for story practice. The method is applied as follows: a child sits on the “interviewee chair” playing the part of a character s/he chooses. The children are “the reporters” and ask him/her questions from the story. Monosyllabic answers of YES/NO type are not taken into consideration.

„*Mind-map*” – is a method that involves identifying logical connections between ideas. It can be used especially for synthesis activities and knowledge evaluation activities. Children are asked to give as many information as possible on the discussed topic. Everything is written down – children draw lines between the images that seem related. Everything is written down, ideas are not judged and the activity stops when we ran out of time. This activity stimulates the creation of new associations and allows the pupils to know their own way of understanding a certain topic. (Oprea Crenguta: 43)

*The cube* – is a method used when we want to find out more information related to a topic. Children “study” the topic and the teacher makes a cube on whose sides draws a topic related aspect. The pupils are asked to describe, compare, analyze, associate, apply, argument. The activity offers the teacher the opportunity to develop competences required for a complex approach of a certain topic.

*ATA* {answer, throw, ask} – is a common method used for consolidation activities. It aims the development of communication ability, pronunciations, creativity and efficiency.

*Thematic project* – is a research method and an efficient way of training and self-training. Once the topic is chosen, children collect information materials and present the information orally. Through this method, children develop their intellectual work abilities, identify problems and look for solutions.

*I know/want to know/have learnt* – it is an extremely easy method, but at the same time relevant and efficient because it can be used as discovery grid for significant information regarding phenomena and situations of high complexity. Pupils sum up what they already

know on a certain topic, in small groups or with the whole class and then questions are asked. The answer should be found in the lesson.

Instructions for this activity:

a) pupils are grouped in pairs in order to increase efficiency in learning activities;

b) the teacher tries to bring about a stimulative climate, favourable for active participation, receptiveness and cooperation;

c) the usage of support-materials: texts, thematic articles, documents, quotations, diaphragms, charts, audio-video cassettes, etc.;

e) drawing a chart with three columns on the blackboard.

In order to use this method, you can undergo the following stages:

At the beginning, children are asked to form pairs and to make a list with everything they know on the topic under discussion. Then, the teacher draws a tabel with the following columns on the blackboard: I know/want to know/have learnt, like the one below:

<b>I KNOW</b>	<b>I WANT TO KNOW</b>	<b>I HAVE LEARNT</b>
WHAT DO WE THINK THAT WE KNOW?	WHAT DO WE WANT TO KNOW?	WHAT HAVE WE LEARNT?

“*Brainstorming* means expressing as many ideas as possible – no matter how unrealistic they might sound – as answer to a given situation, according to the principle quantity generates quality. According to this principle, it is necessary a highly productive creativity, in order to reach viable and original ideas”.

An activity like this involves a series of advantages:

- active involvement of all participants
- the development of the ability to experience certain situations, analyse them, and make the proper decision;

- expressing the personality;

- liberation from prejudices;

- practising creativity and open attitudes within the group;

- the development of interpersonal relations by revaluing each one`s ideas;

- the creation of a fresh and emulative environment.

*The tour of the gallery* – is a specific interactive method, focused on a problem or problem situation, which is materialized in various

solutions, with the aim of stimulating and developing critical thinking. Due to its manner of organization and the way it is carried on, this method aims not only to influence positively the cognitive dimension of the participants, but also the affective “infrastructure”, the attitudes and the uttered opinions.

As any other method applied to dynamic groups, the tour of gallery can be used only if certain conditions are fulfilled:

a) the class is divided into as many heterogeneous and functional groups as possible, each team containing three-four members;

b) each teams is actively involved in the teacher monitored discussion. It materializes the results from various perspectives and argumentatively consolidates its solutions;

c) the teams` report one to the other has a deep critical character, aiming at identifying the weak points of the other team;

d) the teams` activity has a profoundly formative character, but includes also competitive moments.

*The jigsaw* is a method used for learning by cooperation and is based on dividing the class into several working-groups under the coordination of a teacher. With the help of “expert” pupils, the teacher can synthesize the information, having the opportunity to revalue a high degree of knowledge in a short amount of time.

The jigsaw method has a profoundly formative character, because it stimulates pupils` self confidence, it develops argumentative communication abilities, develops logical, critical and independent thinking, educates and stimulates individual and group responsibility.

Apart from these modern methods, we also want to mention other methods often used in the instructional-educative activities: drama, role-play, work in small groups, learning by discovery, case study, problematization, heuristic conversation. All these methods have a deep active-participative character.

The option for a method or the other is closely linked to the teacher`s personality, the level of education, the degree of preparation, mood and learning style of the group s/he works with.

Interactive methods offer the proper framework for an active learning, based on exploration, teamwork and individualized learning.

In order to show that the interactive methods are more efficient than the traditional ones, we have undergone an experiment. The subjects of our experiment are pupils of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade from the Adam Muller Guttenbrunn High-school of Arad.



We have established the following *objectives* for our experiment the usage of different interactive methods, considered a factor of progress;

- significant, noticeable, measurable evolution, the increase of pupils` performance;
- the development of collaboration ability and;
- the increase of study motivation by correlating learning to real life situations;
- exceeding boundaries, learning difficulties through a systematic approach of didactic methods and procedures.

*The premises of the experiment*

We have started from the hypothesis that the usage of interactive methods, involves the pupils more in the learning process than the usage of individual or frontal approaches. Once involved, the pupils want to share with the others what they experience and this leads to new connections

As general hypothesis, we consider that if we rule out the overlaps of concept and the abilities from different fields, we assign the learning process a real context. Using a real context, we increase the pupils` self – confidence, motivation for learning, cooperation with the others, reduction of anxiety and disruptive behaviour.

By promoting integrative teaching/learning strategies we assure a better understanding of the studied phenomena/concepts, by acquiring a global and unitary vision and fulfilling the knowledge transfer.

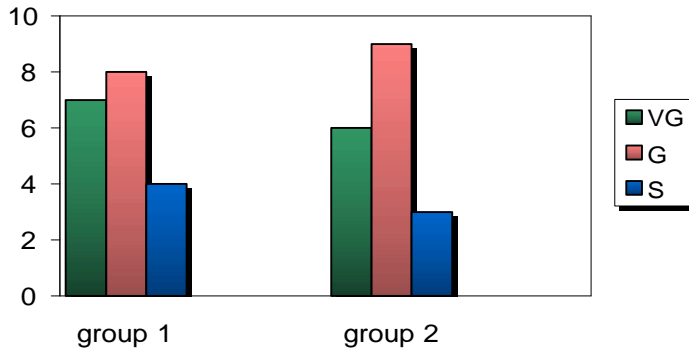
A favourable learning climate aims at achieving a better pupil` socialization and the increase of their autonomy and responsibility level.

*The stages of the experiment*

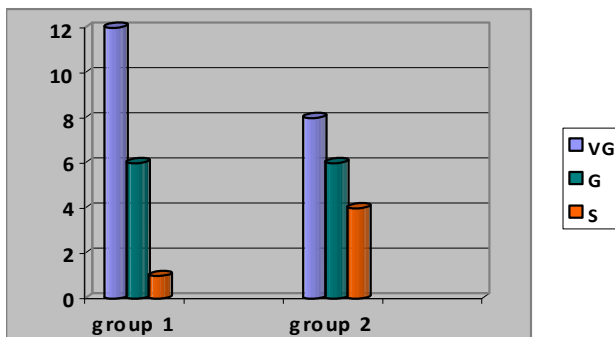
The formative psycho-pedagogic experiment based on the usage of interactive methods at pre-school and primary school pupils was carried out in the following stages:

- *Pretesting stage*, necessary to establish the initial level of knowledge, the usage of knowledge in real life situations, the usage of critical thinking and of learning by collaboration.
- *Formative stage* or how the teaching/learning process is carried out when using interactive methods.
- *Post-testing stage*, necessary to establish the degree of organization and development, registered after the introduction of educational progress factors.

We have used two groups for our experiment. Both groups belong to the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. The first group was taught based on interactive methods, while for the second we have used traditional methods. The results of the initial test were the following:



After using interactive methods, the results of the test group have improved, situation revealed by the following chart:



As shown above, the usage of interactive methods has improved pupils' scores, the number of pupils scoring "very good" increasing from the initial test to the final test, whereas for the other group, the one using traditional methods, the scores improved, but without any spectacular changes. The pupils acquired supplementary knowledge but not all of them obtained the highest mark. As a result of the experiment, of the results and their interpretation we can state that interactive methods, used as main teaching method, are efficient and provide better results than the traditional methods. We have observed that games,

songs, poems and images attract children and help them understand better the vocabulary of the English language. Through interactive methods, we have correlated learning to real life situations, so that test pupils have acquired new vocabulary in a pleasant and interesting way, different from the witness group that was taught using traditional methods. Due to this diversity and interactive exercises, pupils have developed their linguistic abilities and their capacity to work in team or in groups. Their creativity has also increased because they were asked to make connections, to express themselves freely and to get involved in the learning process. All objectives have been fulfilled, proving that interactive methods are efficient for teaching English as a foreign language.

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## **THE FORMATIVE VALENCES' UTILIZATION OF THE LEARNING CONTENT FROM THE RELIGION EDUCATION CURRICULUM**

M. Opriş

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**Abstract:** Defining the purposes of Religious Education is a complex process through the learning content is associated in an explicit way with pedagogical formulations agreed in a particular historical stage. The intention of these actions is to facilitate the utilization of the learning formative character of the religious content in different educational contexts. This study proposes an examination of the Religion syllabus elaborated after 1989, particularly at the content of learning. Formative level of learning content - which in Christianity is a unitary structure and it is centered on the Person and teachings of Jesus Christ - know different stages: some of its components are formative themselves and others become formative through the educational process proceeding with the aim to attain their knowledge and through the intellectual, emotional, volitional and action structures that are developing. Religious living may represent only the result of a set of feelings and personal experiences, possible by covering situations of life by educating the emotional component of students within the meaning of religious feeling superior, by learning and living the word. All this requires a curriculum that includes immutable values of Christianity in a structure as close to life changing experiences of new generations.

**Keywords:** religion, religious education, learning content.

### **1. The contemporary pedagogy and the formative-informative approach**

Defining the purposes of Religious Education is a complex process through the learning content is associated in an explicit way with pedagogical formulations agreed in a particular historical stage. The intention of these actions is to facilitate the utilization of the formative character of the learning content from religious content in different educational contexts.

Formative level of learning content - which in Christianity is a unitary structure and is centered on the Person and teachings of Jesus Christ - know the different stages: some of its components are formative

in themselves and others become formative through the educational process proceeding with the aim to attain their knowledge and through the intellectual, emotional, volitional and action structures that are developing (D. Opriș, M. Opriș, 2006, p. 9).

Periodically, with an intensity depending by the school year's period in which we are, the problem of changing school curriculum, especially in the sense of modernization and simplification, is returned to society through the media. For our part, we consider too convenient and scientifically unsupported the idea that a simplification solves such an important problem.

Since the early 20th century, John Dewey has pointed out the tend to overload the school syllabus with the information provided at the time of development of science. In his sense, the school subjects have a dual approach: one from the perspective of the scientist, the researcher developing field using specific methodology and the other from the perspective of teachers who implement the body of knowledge in a field in the children's life experience, providing opportunity to use their own potentialities for development.

The relation between the two approaches is not antagonistic, but neither a superposition one: *"As he presents to the scientist, the subject has not a direct relation to the children's actual experience. This is besides it. Here the danger is not just theoretical. We are threatened from all directions. The teacher and the pupil's book are competing to present the subject as presented to an expert"* (J. Dewey, 1977, p. 79).

The shortcomings of an approach that does not transpose the learning content in terms of life is reflected in three parts, which are closely related: the formalization of its content and its understanding as something to have to be stored to the prejudice of discovery and understanding, which leads to lack of motivation for study and to the atrophy of child logic (Ibid).

The same situation is found in the present, perhaps more acute, as a reflex to the information's explosion in all areas, actually makes more difficult the selection of learning content in all disciplines. In view of the distinguished professor Miron Ionescu, *"pedagogy of learning must always select the essentials and avoid what is fleeting and perishable in human knowledge, not to immerse the student's physical memory with what is available in public memory, in documentation centers and libraries, printed publications or videos that can be viewed"* (M. Ionescu, 2001, p. 28).

## **2. The relation finalities-contents in the Religion curriculum, after 1989**

If we analyze the content of the curriculum of Religious learning occurred after 1989, we find the same tendency to lead students to become *scholars*, to conversion them into specialists in theology, without a strong and explicit connection to real life and their learning experiences. Among the causes may be, at least for the beginning development of curricula in the post-December period, the lack of experience and the lack of specialists able to overcome the teaching theology in favor of the religion of the speculation and theorizing into the living and skills spiritual. It can also be considered as a *pardonable* activity, that from the beginning of '90s years, in the context of inability's training the teachers of Religion, action brutally interrupted in 1948 by the education reform.

To form a vision of how the religion learning content selection evolved in the next period, we present a brief analysis of school curriculum after 1989 that have changed gradually and simultaneously with the defining of the status of religion.

The syllabus for teaching Religion in school from 1990-1991 (Romanian Patriarchy, 1990) had a temporary character and aimed to familiarize the students from Ist to XIIth classes with the fundamental elements of Christian faith, so almost to every class we found through the contents of learning: the Cross, Prayers (into and out of class, Our Father), contents related by the creation of the world and human being, preparing the chosen people for the coming in the world of the promised Savior, His Birth, His Activity, His Sacrifice on the cross and His Resurrection. Since VIIth grade, we notice the introduction of some specific contents areas of theology.

It is the first syllabus for the entire school; its structure is articulated on the following basis:

a) Familiarize all students with the basics of Orthodox Christian faith in moral and spiritual view to improving our people

b) General data of the Old and New Testament, taught in relation to the possibilities of understanding and perception of students per class

c) Basic data of the Romanian Orthodox Church and the Universal Church History (grades VIIth-VIIIth)

d) Deepening the general truths of the faith (Class IXth)

e) Presenting nuanced truths of Christian morals and standards (grade Xth)

f) The presentation of elements of philosophy and history of Christian religions (classes XIth-XIIth) (Ibid, p. 3).

This curriculum was intended to be - in each class - an introduction to religious content and prepared the following stages in the development of programs with more pronounced degree of differentiation.

The syllabus for the teaching of moral-religious education in primary and secondary school (Romanian Patriarchy, 1991) was the basis for curriculum that was valid until 1999. The differences between the first school syllabus - secondary and high school level - increased in the next analytical programs that reached the deeper themes and increase their theology each of the areas mentioned above, in each class. In Vth class, the learning contents were selected from the Old Testament, in VIth grade, the New Testament, to Class VIIth of the Universal Church History and History of the Romanian Orthodox Church, and the VIIIth grade from the Catechism and Christian morality.

Regarding the study of religion in high school, particularly in vocational education, the curriculum aimed at teaching graduates of pedagogical high schools, colleges and normal schools have subsequently received and approved for teaching religion in the primary school, after an internship and study methodology of teaching religion. Learning contents were prefigured in the Curriculum of 1990 from certain fields.

### **3. The new Religion student books and the relation with the new curricula, in formative approach of contents**

This period is marked by the publication of the first pupil's books of Religion for Ith to IVth classes. Frequent changes in curriculum, although not significant, led to the lack of full concordance between learning content in school curriculum and the content of textbooks used in schools.

A summary of the contents of these programs reveals that they were based on curriculum documents used in the interwar period and the dominance of this curriculum was the focus on content in the fields of theology by takeover model curricular structure of theological education (theological high school and universities): Old Testament, New Testament Church, Christian morality, history of the Romanian Orthodox Church, Universal Church History, Dogmatic. This

curriculum is presented as some lists of topics in these areas, which was proposed in most classes, studying almost exclusively one area. As an exception to the rule above, the primary learning content can be found in the field of Christian morality and Church from all four classes.

Such an approach was very easy for the teacher by presenting content that was familiar during his theological studies, being closer to the meaning content of catechesis learning discipline than religion. Learning contents were represented by symbolic concepts, abstract, less suited to school age which led mainly to a reproductive learning type (Ministry of Education, 1998).

Since school year 1997-1998 has outlined the education reform which necessarily involved curriculum reform, shifting to a defined and focused education on the end, which led to changes in curricula at all grades. For Religious, the curriculum for Ith to VIIIth grades were designed in specialized commissions of creeds, with the support of experts from the National Council for Curriculum and published in the fall of 1999 and in 2000 for the high school.

The purposes followed by the new curriculum have referred to "*the Christian moral formation of character from which to start a new conception of the God-man relationship, man-sow and, last but not least, a moral and objective attitude towards his own person*" (Ministry of Education, 1999). A simple "reading" of the objectives subordinated to the same general aim show a spiritual journey of the students from Ist class to VIIIth / IXth class.<sup>1</sup> The same considerations are valid for specific skills subordinated to the general ones for the Xth - XIIth classes (for IXth - XIIth classes since the school year 2004-2005). Also, the introduction of some general interest topics for students from all grades has been appreciated in a positive manner and it has meant a great step forward towards a curriculum that really "*has to come to meet the desire of students of knowledge and the ideals of our Church in the education of youth in the spirit of the Orthodox faith*" (Ministry of Education, 1999, p. 5).

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<sup>1</sup> IXth and Xth classes had a special status with regard to compulsory membership. Since 1999, ninth grade is part of compulsory education (9 years, according to Law 151/1999) and aims were expressed in terms of objectives (as opposed to Xth - XIIth classes of whose finality were expressed in terms of skills). Since 2003, the tenth grade was included in compulsory education (10 years, according to Law 268/13.06.2003), the time at which classes IX - X are called junior high school, part both of the lower secondary education and compulsory, with finality centered skills.



In the absence of continuous training of teachers (not just religion) on curriculum issues and a broad set of teaching materials that would ensure the achievement the purposes in different educational contexts, it has been imposed the practice to limit the new curriculum approach to learning content perspective. This practice has significantly reduced the qualitative leap that could support this new curriculum approach (G. Holbea, D. Opreș, M. Opreș, G. Jambore, 2010, p. 71-75).

The main limits of these curriculum have been established, as discussed previously, by the structuring and harmonization of the contents, whose approach need professional competence in theological training<sup>2</sup> with obvious effects in religious formation of students, and the lack of a continuity between the more remote areas epistemological theology, studied in a school year, although the new structure of the syllabus provides freedom in choosing the sequence of topics with the aim to achieve the educational purposes, to respect the necessity of liturgical appointment and an internal logic of the education discipline.

Because of the lack of textbooks in most classes, for some teachers - especially debutants or with a small seniority in education – the transfer from the field of theology in the religious one, mainly with formative-educational character, has been proved particularly difficult. This transfer is very important for the notions studied to be perceived and assimilated by students as crucial for their own religious becoming.

#### **4. Outlines for a necessary re-consideration of the formative aspects in the religious education**

The mentioned situation led us to identify a structure to make content more accessible to achieving the aims set. The study of curriculum in countries with tradition of teaching Religion and

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<sup>2</sup> Names of units of learning and learning content subsumed them were taken from works of theology: Getting the catechism, the Old Testament, New Testament, Christian moral notions, notions of liturgy, ministry and mission (Ist - IVth grades), Getting the catechism, the Christian moral concepts, getting liturgical universal Church History, History of the Romanian Orthodox Church, the Apostle and Spirituality (Vth - VIIIth classes ); Getting catechism, the Christian moral notions, notions of liturgical spirituality and mission, Christianity and world religions, Christianity and the youth (IXth grade). The Xth - XIIth classes of the areas were: dogmatic, Christian morality, Christian art, spirituality and mission, Orthodox and national culture, Christianity and the youth. At the level of contents, changes since 2004 have considered changing the names of the fields of religion and redistribution of content learning classes' dogmatic, Christian morality, liturgical and art, spirituality and mission in the history of religions, Orthodoxy and national culture, Christianity and contemporary world issues.

discussions with theologians and with experts in science education, with teachers of religion, teachers, parents and students have opened the prospect of a new approach to content, to facilitate exploitation of a higher level of formative valences of religion as school subject. All these have resulted in a curriculum for use in Sunday parochial schools, for Romanian children of European diaspora, developed in collaboration with pr. univ. lect. dr. Dorin Opriș and implemented since 2007<sup>3</sup> in countries which belong canonically to the two Romanian dioceses, the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan of Western and Southern Europe and the Romanian Orthodox Metropolitan of Germany, Central and North Europe.

Regarding the last significant revision of the curriculum of Religion at the content level, performed as we previously stated in the 2007-2008 school year, the feature element was the decision of the Ministry of Education and Research to eliminate 25-30% of the contents of curricula, leading to changes in the case of religion which led to simplification and renaming certain areas (units of learning)<sup>4</sup>, transfer some content at a lower or higher level than the previous form of the program, steps followed by entry into its plan to use synchronous throughout secondary education, starting with the 2008-2009 school year.

We don't want to realize a punctual analysis of the new forms of curriculum; we just want to remember the learning effects transfer of vertical content and its implementation in the synchronic level, the entire pre-university education: there is no logical continuity in addressing some content, does not provide an informative and formative-educational continuum (the contents transferred to a higher class were treated twice, and the contents transferred to a lower class were omitted in some classes); existing textbooks for Ist - IVth grades,

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<sup>3</sup> The philosophy of writing curriculum, presented at the symposium "religious status and school instruction" held in October 2008 the Orthodox Theological Faculty "Justinian Patriarch" of Bucharest, was considered as an important milestone for the necessary improvement of religion in school curricula country (L. Vasilescu, 2009, p. 11).

<sup>4</sup> Units of learning were renamed to express a less theological position, using identical wording in certain classes or different from one class to another. From the large number of units of learning are some examples: About Christian Faith (Ist to IVth grades), Faith Christian (Vth to VIIIth classes), Foundations of Faith (IXth -XIIth grades), The Prayer, The way to God (Ist class), Models of behavior (IInd grade), Biblical Personalities (IIIth grade), Models of faith in the Old Testament (IVth grade), The saints, children's friends (Ist - IVth grades), etc.

respectively IXth - XIth has remained only partially valid, a situation unprecedented in any discipline of education, where they were operated only some content reductions, the steps in the plan horizontally. Most important positive aspect of this program is related to finding a new way of understanding the necessity of learning content approach to religion, even if his concern that form a limited program to rename their.

Curriculum for grades - the eighth suffered a new adjustment in the autumn of 2009 as a result of the decision to generalize the focus on skills to the all school education system.

From the pedagogical point of view, this new approach would lead curricular changes in all other parts of the curricula, including the learning content, as happened in most curriculum changes after 1999.

Leaving the existing content to fit the purpose of teaching final that gives you Keneth Rochmond expression "*putting the cart before the horse*": "*In planning of the curriculum, the selection of targets have to be performed before selecting content [...] The contents are of course important, but to derive educational purposes derived from a given body of knowledge means to put the cart before the horse. In other words the question "What are the desired results?" Necessarily precedes the question "What do we teach?"*".

### **Conclusions**

The religious living may represent only the result of a set of feelings and personal experiences, possible by covering some certain situations of life, by educating the emotional component of students within the meaning of religious feeling superior, by learning and living the word. All this assumes, however, designed a course on formal curriculum including immutable values of Christianity in a structure as close to life changing experiences of new generations, identified by some studies and a complex research.

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## ABOUT ARITHMETIC

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**Abstract:** Arithmetic is the 1<sup>st</sup> part of mathematics that children from kindergarten and primary school came into contact with. It seems the easiest part of mathematics, but sometimes it is more difficult. The teacher should prepare the pupils for arithmetic, by showing them all its beauty.

**Keywords:** arithmetic, multitude, number, calculation

School is and has to be a path opener for all pupils that enter its gates.

School does not represent just an institution where children come to get information, but a place where everybody has to learn something.

The teacher has the mission to stimulate pupil’s desire for learning, to teach the pupil how to learn. In this way the learning process becomes the pupil’s personal project, supervised by the teacher, and school an overall of different workshops.

The educational ideal of Romanian school deals with the development of autonomous and creative personality, that anticipates the future, develops and solves situations in different ways, collaborating with others.

Mathematics was found due to the people’s practical needs, then it became an open science, capable of permanent progress, a perpetual thoroughness, discovery and creation of new theories.

The fast development of science, the gather of information in an intensive rhythm, imposes the development of Mathematics that should find its place in everybody’s general culture. This is also because Maths is applied not only in the field of Physics, Chemistry, Biology, but also in social sciences.

Therefore, ever since primary school pupils are intellectually and logically stimulated, so that Maths becomes a pleasant and an

attractive subject matter, that influences the rational development, the creativity, the independent work.

Due to its adaptation, Mathematics, belonging to scientific subject matters, has penetrated all research fields, helping at the development of other sciences. In the educational system, Maths is studied as a main subject matter together with other subjects provided in the educational curriculum.

Since primary school, the knowledge of mathematics, through the use of a universal language have the same objectives that are followed on the whole period, on the basis of accessibility and compliance with age and individual peculiarities. Any kind of exaggeration in what concerns pupils capacity of comprehension (make them accept notions that are not suitable for their age), or a minimization of their capacity estranges them from knowledge, from the affective tinting of their whole activity, that participates at the stimulation of the interest for the study of this subject content.

Establishing that in primary school, Arithmetic is one of the main subject matters, the school syllabus for grades 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> mentions that the purpose of teaching Arithmetic is to teach pupils strong knowledge in what concerns the elementary notions, to teach them how to apply these knowledge in everyday life and to contribute to the development of their judgement, memory and attention, to form abilities regarding discipline and punctuality.

It is very clear that the aim of Arithmetic in grades 1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> has three parts: instructive, educational and practical.

The instructive side consists in pupils' acquisition of elementary notions and knowledge of Maths integrated in an harmonious system that should include notions of unity, integral number, fractional number, concrete and abstract numbers, and also knowledge of oral and written numeration with all kind of numbers, the four arithmetic operations with integer and decimal numbers, knowledge about measuring units from the metrical system, about monetary units and time measuring units

*The educational side.* In what concerns the educational point of view, the reason for teaching Arithmetic is to develop pupils' mental faculties, especially logical judgement, memory, attention and also in fortification of will, the develop of some abilities of ordered and conscious work and also the sense of responsibility for fulfilling the tasks.

Because Arithmetic works with objects and concrete notions, it orients pupil's mind to the comprehension of notions, establishing what it is essential among things, contributing in this way to formation of abstract thinking.

The problems' solution, demands pupils' thinking efforts that are focused to a certain aim, it demands the arrangement of judgements in a certain order, determining the formation of a logical and coherent idea.

It has to be mentioned that Arithmetic contributes to the development of pupils' work abilities, discipline and punctuality, by doing daily their homework, by respecting the indications in what concerns the organization of individual work, and also by using rational procedures in calculations.

In primary school, children are at the stage of immediate, mechanic or intuitive reproduction. They reproduce gestures, simple drawings, and games with objects, and especially elements that can be interesting for them. Parents encourage such kind of activities, without a psychological justification, they just want to admire them, to highlight their qualities.

Because the game is an important activity for children, this has to make the passing to a thorough activity, based on judgement, on simple elements of deduction, on a mathematical language. The games will be used with labels, squares, rectangles in different colours, paperboard with identical or different images or the same images in groups of two, three or more elements (birds, soldiers, cars). While the game is taking place notions like "inside", "outside", "in front", "behind" should be clarified.

The teacher has to attract pupils in activities, encouraging, stimulating, making positive appreciations, underling the correct part of the answer, but helping and correcting their mathematics expression.

One of the essential psycho pedagogical premises for the formation of the concept of natural numbers at 6-7 years old children, is the representation of quantity variables ( they are capable of finding correspondence between the elements of two multitudes and to express the result of this activity by comparing: „more”, „less”, „equal”. Using these utterances, even in extra curricular activities, the pupil gets familiarized with the relation of multitudes' equivalence, with the class of equivalence, with objectivity, without being aware of these notions.

An interesting activity, that involves a certain refinement is represented by the realization of some ordering based on criteria given

or found by the pupils; for example to order objects upon their colour, from the darkest to the lightest, to order objects upon their length from the shortest to the longest and reverse, to put in order balls, beads after given criteria or discovered by the pupils. It is obvious that also in these situations pupils can find “intruders” that they will eliminate. During this kind of activities it is important for pupils to communicate, using a proper vocabulary like: before..., after..., bigger..., less..., more..., etc.

An essential activity in the preparation of learning the natural numbers and learning the numeration is made by the comparing sets, through the visual estimation or through the realization of item by item correspondence.

It is obvious that during these activities, pupils use concrete objects; we are having in front of the class a lot of boys and girls, and we are asking their colleagues to estimate who is in a bigger number, then we make pairs making the correspondence item by item.

In this way we make the comparison and establish if there are:

- as many girls as boys
- more girls than boys
- fewer girls than boys
- given each time a motivation for the expression that was

used

So we will have in front of the class a multitude of pupils and of colour pencils, and by making the correspondence item by item (each pupil gets a pencil), we will establish if we have:

- as many pencils as pupils
- more pencils than pupils
- fewer pencils than pupils
- given each time a motivation for the expression that was

used

In this way, pupils can compare a multitude of chestnuts with a multitude of leaves, attaching to each leaf a chestnut and than drawing a proper conclusion.

The teacher has to be preoccupied to develop the capacity of use, in a conscious way, of a proper vocabulary appropriate with the situation and the learning activity that is taking place.

After we are sure that pupils know to compare multitudes of objects, establishing in a correct way the item by item correspondence, they can create themselves multitudes with “as many as”, “more”, “fewer” elements, using, of course objects that they have on the desk. For example we take three pencils and we ask them to lay on the desk



the same number of chestnuts, than to put more chestnuts or fewer chestnuts. The game can be repeated with other objects and other tasks.

The construction of numbers until 10 is made in a progressive way. In the same time with the comprehension of the respective notion, it is established the graphic sign that corresponds (printed, handwritten). Each number has to be studied in two lessons. The formation of numbers until 10 it is focused on the completion of next multitude with another element, so each number is made through the addition of a unit to the previous unit.

To accustom the pupil with the number succession, repeated counting should be made, starting with a rhythm created by the teacher (whole class or individually), but also through different procedures: counting a row of pupils, counting a pupil with teacher (one a number, the next one another number), the emphasis on reading the string of numbers written on the blackboard where there have been removed one by two numbers, etc.

The introduction of calculations with natural numbers can not be made in an isolated way, but as a practice of previously acquired knowledge. First, the addition and the subtraction are introduced, because there are easier to assimilate for the youngest pupils, with a strong intuitive character and correspond with their age possibility. Pupil's mind will operate through abstraction, generalization and analogy.

The definition of fractions has at the base the whole that we share in equal parts. It is necessary for each pupil to understand what the whole is. That is why we will exemplify the whole with the help of an apple, bread, a book, a class of pupil, a circle.

At the beginning of the lesson, the materials that are going to be used should be prepared. The teacher will ask the pupils to bring a part of these materials in order to better understand the notion of the whole and fractions

In 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, pupils study the division in equal parts. If we pay attention, when pupils study the division, they will also hear about fractions. If they pay attention when they learn the division at 2, we will tell them that the division into 2 is called half, the division into 4 is called quarter, the result of the division into 8 is called eighth.

The notion of problem has a larger content, including a various domain of preoccupation and actions in different fields of activity „generally any kind of practical or theoretical thing that claims a solution it is called problem” (I. Neacșu).

One of the four Mathematics' frame objectives is designated to problems: the development of capacity in exploitation- investigation and in solvation of problems.

For the new curriculum, the activity of solving problems helped by explores, attempts, active implication in practical situation, searching solutions behind the strict frame of those that were learnt plays an important part. The same importance is assigned to problem formulation, the analysis of the stages used in solving a problem, the explanation of decisions taken for solving a problem.

Teaching Arithmetic, also involves the formation of ability in oral and written calculation, the solvation and the formulation of problems, the realization of measurements and the use of their result in operations/calculations.

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## **A STUDY ON SELF-OBSERVING THE TEACHING BEHAVIOR OF PRACTITIONERS STUDENTS**

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**Abstract:** The study is part of a larger experimental approach called Optimizing methodological skills training during teaching practice activities, an approach that aims to identify and test ways of developing teaching skills for the profession to university students with educational profile of the "Aurel Vlaicu" University. In this constatativ study, collecting data was possible by the instrumentality of an questionnaire, build by as.

**Keywords:** teaching practice, self-observation, questionnaire, teaching communication.

### **Introduction**

It is important that practitioners have in addition to a theoretical training a practical one and that the two are integrated. For this students must go to schools to observe and practice teaching. For this part of their training to be effective, the training needs to be guided by trained mentors, chosen from the most experienced teachers. So the mentors should know and understand how their students are prepared to practice by the didactical teachers and the didactical teachers must know and understand how practitioners work with their mentors during teaching practice.

The role of teaching practice is to introduce students to the atmosphere of school education by familiarizing themselves with the school programs, the school order and discipline, as well as the organization and operation of schools in general. Also, the students are faced with a situation where they will have to confront the theoretical aspects of pedagogy, psychology, sociology and methodology, with the realities of the classroom and school. These situations are materialized through effective participation in the educational activities taking place throughout the teaching practice. This "stage of initiation, apprenticeship, mediates the introduction to the mechanism of the

teaching and learning act, to the lesson design, to the development and use of training resources, etc.." (Ionescu M, V. Chiş, 1992).

### **Methodology**

The questionnaire handed to the students contains 18 items both open and closed. Regarding its structure, the questionnaire follows three dimensions, including several variables, such as: **dimension A** - *Self-evaluation / self-assessment of teaching capabilities gained after attending compulsory psycho-pedagogical subjects*; **dimension B** - *Self-evaluation / self-assessment of the personality traits involved in teaching behavior* and **dimension C** - *Perception on the initial psycho-pedagogical training and on assuming the role of the teacher*.

In this study we present the data obtained regarding the self-assessment / self-evaluation of the personality traits involved in teaching behavior.

Within this section six items can be assigned. The first item is aimed at identifying the extent to which different aspects of personality, issues that concern both cognitive features and especially the relational features, in relation to self, others and the work done are characteristic for the students. Another four other items are aimed at self-observing the behavior over a communication sequence (including aspects of verbal, nonverbal and paraverbal behavior). The last item refers to identifying the extent to which students were accustomed to observe their own behavior in various situations.

The sample of subjects was composed of 280 students from the third year of study in "Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, students who participate in training courses organized by the Department for Teacher Education. Subjects were aged between 20 and 44 years with an average age  $m = 23.45$  years and standard deviation  $sd = 5.81$ . Of these, 98 are male (representing 38% of the overall tested population), 170 women (representing 60.7% of the overall tested population), and 12 people have not mentioned the answer to this question (representing 4.3% of the total number of subjects) (Bocos, 2003). Participation in psycho-pedagogy course module was mandatory for 71.8% (201 subjects) of the students and optional for 25% of them (71 subjects). A total of 9 subjects not mentioned the compulsory or optional nature of the participation in courses. They represent 3.2% of the overall population included in the study.

### Data Analysis

To assess how the subjects engage in a conversation and how they behave during this conversation, several items were built.

In the first item students were asked to what extent they look directly at the interviewer during a conversation or avoid eye contact. The results shows a big difference between the average behavior indicating the direct look and direct look avoidance, as can be seen below: in the eye - C9A (m = 4.38) overhead - C9B (m = 2, 16); down - C9C (m= 2.03); elsewhere C9D (m = 1.99).

**Table no.1.** Results regarding visual contact in a conversation

	C9A in the eye	C9B overhead	C9C down	C9D elsewhere
N	280	280	280	280
<b>Average</b>	<b>4,38</b>	<b>2,03</b>	<b>1,99</b>	<b>2,16</b>
Median	5,00	2,00	2,00	2,00
Standard deviation	0,76	1,08	1,05	1,33
Minimum	2	0	0	0
Maximum	5	4	5	5

Asked how they behave while listening to someone else, the subjects responded that mostly they listen carefully - C10A (m = 4.47), with patience - C10B (m = 4.24) and enthusiasm - C10C (m = 3.98). In table no. 2. we observe a relatively high average differentiation between these three positive aspects and the next two: fatigue, boredom - C10 E (m = 2.04), lack of interest - C10D (m = 1.87), indicating negative attitudes towards the person heard.

**Table no.2.** Results regarding behavior while listening to someone else

	C10A carefully	C10B patience	C10C enthusiasm	C10D lack of interest	C10E fatigue, boredom
N	280	280	280	280	280
<b>Average</b>	<b>4,47</b>	<b>4,24</b>	<b>3,98</b>	<b>1,87</b>	<b>2,04</b>
Median	4,00	4,00	4,00	2,00	2,00
Standard	,52	,69	,80	,98	1,04

deviation					
Minimum	3	2	2	0	0
Maximum	5	5	5	5	5

In the case of facial expression during a conversation we see a pattern similar to the previous item. Thus, subjects considered that their gestures express in greater proportion positive aspects and to a lesser extent the negative aspects. Thus, mostly, facial expressions during conversation during the trial expressed: sincerity - C11G (m = 4.30), confidence - C11I (m = 4.20), enthusiasm - C11A (m = 4.06), joy - C11H (M = 3.99). At the opposed pole, giving much lower averages, are facial expressions that express such feelings as: superiority - C11C (m = 2.16), fatigue - C11F (m = 2.00), fear - C11D (m = 1.76), contempt - C11B (m = 1.46) and anger - C11E (m = 1.41). These results are summarized in Table no. 3.

**Table no.3.** *Results regarding facial expression during conversation with the students*

	C11A enthusiasm	C11B contempt	C11C superiority	C11D fear	C11E anger	C11F fatigue	C11G sincerity	C11H joy	C11I confidence
N	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280	280
<b>Average</b>	<b>4,06</b>	<b>1,46</b>	<b>2,16</b>	<b>1,76</b>	<b>1,41</b>	<b>2,00</b>	<b>4,30</b>	<b>3,99</b>	<b>4,20</b>
Median	4,00	1,00	2,00	1,00	1,00	2,00	4,00	4,00	4,00
Standard deviation	,76	,86	1,16	,96	,82	1,00	,95	,99	,95
Minimum	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maximum	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	5

A positive evaluation of oneself is found in the subjects of the study regarding their verbal *behavior during a conversation*. We find higher average values (in descending order of averages) for the following characteristics: appropriate voice (m=3,99), good diction (m=3,98), normal speech speed (m=3,97), appropriate breaks (m=3,94).

On the opposing pole, obtaining small averages, stands features such as high speech speed (the meaning is not understood) (m = 1.70), numerous breaks (M = 1.84), low voice (m = 1.97) and poor diction (m = 2.03).

**Table no.4.** Results regarding behavior during a conversation with another person (part 1)

	C12A good diction	C12B poor diction	C12C powerful voice	C12D normal voice	C12E low voice	C12F variable voice	C12G low speech speed
N	280	280	280	280	280	280	280
<b>Average</b>	<b>3,98</b>	<b>2,03</b>	<b>3,20</b>	<b>3,99</b>	<b>1,97</b>	<b>2,97</b>	<b>2,33</b>
Median	4,00	2,00	3,00	4,00	2,00	3,00	2,00
Standard deviation	,93	1,11	1,31	,96	1,03	1,44	1,32
Minimum	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Maximum	5	4	5	5	5	5	5

**Table no.5.** Results regarding behavior during a conversation with another person (part 2)

	C12H normal speech speed	C12I high speech speed (the meaning is not understood)	C12J long breaks	C12K short breaks	C12L numerous breaks	C12M scarce breaks	C12N appropriate breaks
N	280	280	280	280	280	280	280
<b>Average</b>	<b>3,97</b>	<b>1,70</b>	<b>1,85</b>	<b>2,92</b>	<b>1,84</b>	<b>2,86</b>	<b>3,94</b>
Median	4,00	1,00	2,00	3,00	2,00	3,00	4,00
Standard deviation	1,13	1,08	1,07	1,26	,94	1,31	,93
Minimum	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Maximum	5	4	4	5	5	5	5

So we found out interesting results to say the least on the items aimed at student behavior during conversations with pupils or other people. And in this case the average responses reflect a positive assessment of their communicative behavior. We appreciate that although these results may lead to the conclusion that subjects have gained confidence in their communication skills resulting in a confident and relaxed attitude on their part, it is possible that this perception is misleading.

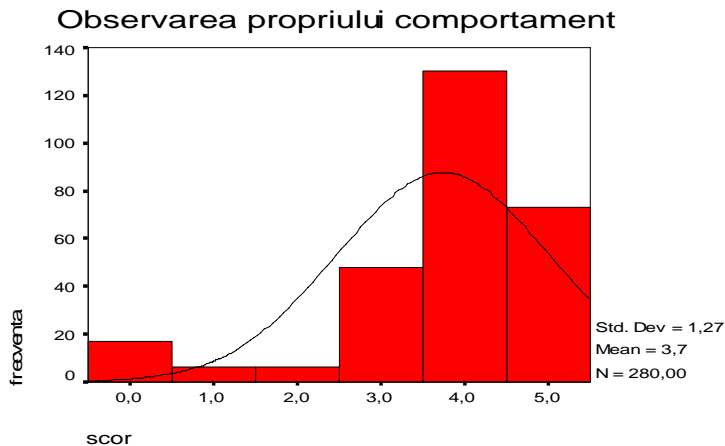
Analyzing the results on the degree to which subjects are used to *observe their own behavior*, we find that we obtain an average m =

3.74 and a median med = 4.00. This means that the most common response was "largely".

**Table no.6. Results on observing their own behavior**

N	280
<b>Average</b>	<b>3,74</b>
Median	4,00
Standard deviation	1,27
Minimum	0
Maximum	5

The tendency to give answers with high values is observed from inspecting the distribution of results on this item. We find, as in Figure 1., a tilt to the right of distribution, which shows that most subjects responded that observe their own behavior : 3 - to a lesser extent, 4 – to a higher extent and 5 - heavily.



*Figure 1. Results distribution on self-observing their behavior*

### **Conclusions**

Student's teaching practice is still following an imitative model, assisting and observing the mentor's teaching behavior, that then the student attempts to reproduce when implemented in real teaching situations. We believe that our intervention is appropriate at this moment, with the goal that in the end the student manages to harness and develop his/her personal qualities during teaching practice, to



critically and constructively analyze the observed teaching behavior, to develop their confidence in their own psycho-pedagogical abilities.

Facing real communication situations in general, but especially teaching communication, we can emphasize that students have difficulty not only on the level of transmitting the didactic message, but in establishing communication relationships with students through content teaching as well. Problems mentioned by students concerns more the relational coordinate: unable to alter the voice tone based on communication situations raised in the lesson; not knowing how to adapt their communication style according to the age peculiarities of the students; although knowing various methods / communication techniques, didactic transposition of content not always influencing affective behavior; reduced valorification of nonverbal language; low capacity of inducing / maintaining / amplifying interest, cooperation, prevention / conflict resolution, etc..

We believe that a solution towards developing a self-observative behavior conduct in students could be the use of the autoscopia method, method which adapted to the teaching needs, comes to help the students to self-assess / self/observe, with the help of colleagues, their own their development, performance / skills. (Tautu, C.M., Tautu, M. G., 2000).

Applied in an organized fashion during the activities with students, the autoscopia technique could mean the fulfillment of some priority educational goals such as:

- encourage confrontation between the student and his/her own teaching behavior manifested in concrete educational situations, an opportunity for critical analysis, reflection and self-reflection in order to improve his/her subsequent teaching activities;
- support the awareness of obstacles to overcome for the efficient execution of educational activities and the techniques of analysis and reflection on their own teaching behavior;
- promote an organized educational dialogue, guided and led by the professor and student oriented.

As a first step, autoscopia could be used as follows: the teacher assigns concrete observation tasks of teaching situations where students presents their own views, followed by an objective and relevant discussion developing from the comments made. In a later stage a video camera could be used to record a student's teaching performance, which

is later reviewed and analyzed, constructively assessed / self-assessed, and hopefully the performance can be improved.

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## **FORMING EVALUATION AND SELF-EVALUATION CAPACITY**

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**Abstract:** This work develops the complex character, the paradigmatic interactions and structural conditionings between the capacity of evaluation and self-evaluation when forming didactic competence, through the analysis of the dimensions, steps of initial forming of these capacities at future trainers. Here, there are presented the conclusions of a study made by implementation of a program of forming evaluation and self-evaluation capacity, having as target-group, students of the Education Science and Social Work Faculty within our University and institutors. It was mainly intended through this program to form a positive attitude towards evaluation and the development of self-evaluation competences through meta-cognition.

**Keywords:** formative evaluation, self-evaluation, initial forming, forming program.

### **Introduction**

A permanent concern of the participants at forming courses, evaluation today takes all the attention, being an interesting field of investigation in the frame of education sciences.

If on the theoretic level evaluation had known new dimensions, it is uncertain that this evolution automatically brings about a progress of the evaluation practice.

The advanced theoretic activity in this field is opposed to a considerable stagnation of mentalities and evaluation strategies. Ideas regarding evaluation are not sufficient to modify the practices in reality. It is necessary to develop a conscious and efficient action of transformation of the evaluation strategies on the basis of reconsideration of the instructive-educational act itself, because *we cannot have a new evaluation project without a new forming project*<sup>[1]</sup>, or we cannot transform the evaluation practices without transforming the concepts on forming. All approaches regarding evaluation have to include a forming project that is coherent, finalized and objective-focused. From this perspective, evaluation has three functions:

- the identification of goals for the trainer and their transformation into criteria for pupils without resorting to summative evaluation which the product and process of forming are explicitly identified for.

- the development of interactions between pupils and the study object through a practice of discovery based on the pupil's activity. The interactions will also be developed at class level, becoming veritable resources to exploit after structuring the teaching approach. This interactive type of evaluation becomes, according to L. Allal, "the motor of measures and sequences of learning"<sup>[2]</sup>.

- creating a dynamic relationship between the study contents and the teaching strategies used in order to accumulate them. The manner of teaching is a component of the accumulated knowledge. This function of the evaluation helps teachers when modelling the curriculum.

### **Dimensions of evaluation and self-evaluation capacity forming at future institutors**

In the process of evaluation and self-evaluation capacity forming we can distinguish formally several phases that are interdependent and inter-conditioned, perfecting themselves by changing the roles of the individual.

#### ***a) Pre-evaluation phase***

The stress is on the individual-subjective level, based on a process of observation, valorisation and self-knowledge<sup>[3]</sup>. This phase begins at the contact with an evaluation system including evaluation criteria, inter-evaluation and controlled self-evaluation.

One tries to become aware intuitively of the effective mechanism of the evaluation process, but not systematically, rigorously and formally. The question one tries to answer is "Why did I" or "did he/she" get a grade? It is the phase of paradigm type models.

We present the concrete examples of evaluation made by the teachers by relating to:

- self-appreciation,
- personal level of knowledge, capacities and skills,
- the modality of checking of these capacities, knowledge, skills, behaviours, attitudes by the evaluator,
- approval or disapproval of the decisional process,

- forming of an affective relation towards evaluation.

### ***b) Evaluation phase***

The stress is on the formal, objective level, based on a process of theoretic knowledge and of identification, awareness of the evaluation practices.

This phase is specific to the initial forming period when the subject tries to become aware of the evaluation and self-evaluation process in a planned, systematic and rigorous manner by theoretically delimiting the concepts, characteristics, types, forms and methods, and also the limits, errors that might occur in the evaluation and/or self-evaluation process.

A critical analysis of this phase marks the fact that the evaluation of the school effectiveness is based on highly general conceptual delimitations, on classifications of forms and modalities of evaluation without significant examples of evaluation practice (and behaviour principles).

One answers to the question “How do I make a concrete evaluation?” by relating the practical examples to the theoretic, formal norms. The importance of examples and counterexamples is determining in this phase, contributing to the fixation of theoretic concepts and to the synthesis of a personal concept regarding the evaluation and self-evaluation process. Permanent guidance realized in this phase contributes to the changing of simplistic concepts, of neglecting attitudes over evaluation behaviour, of use of limited evaluation practices, achieved by presenting alternatives and use of evaluation and self-evaluation indicators of the didactic activity.

### ***c) Self-evaluation phase***

The stress is on the applicative, practical level, based on an elaborated pedagogic concept and proving a personal evaluation manner of the institutor.

This phase is specific to the exercising period of the didactic profession being mainly characterized by self-evaluation with the purpose of self-forming<sup>[4]</sup>. The answered question is “Which are the decisions that have to be taken in order to improve the process in the next step?”

The critics of this phase are: use of less diversified practices of evaluation, fixity of the evaluation appreciations, high degree of

subjectivity in appreciation and grading. In this case, the self-evaluation of the pupils signifies:

- Periodic actions of self-evaluation,
- Reception of the “positive” <sup>[5]</sup> characteristic of the evaluation,
- Use of the inverse connection in an independent, planned and systematic manner,
- Knowledge of the objectives (at all levels) followed by the teacher, of the criteria and standards of evaluation.

The disadvantages of evaluation and self-evaluation can be removed by an effort of continuous professional self-forming, by programs of continuous forming initiated periodically or by practice of inter-assistances in lessons, of didactic activities based on team-work at the level of school institutions.

The complexity of process of evaluation and self-evaluation capacity forming at future institutors consists in the fact that the two formally differentiated phases: the pre-evaluation phase and the evaluation phase are interdependent and inter-influenced in this case because of the simultaneous roles: of student and of institutor that the subjects adopt.

### **The method**

The data used in this study has been collected while implementing the project “Forming evaluation and self-evaluation capacity at future institutors” in 2010-2011. The information sustaining the analysis and conclusions of this text were gathered by applying questionnaires, attitude scales and moderating two group-discussions in 2011. The target-group consisted of trainers from the County of Arad and students at the Education Science Faculty within our University.

The main directions of action in order to improve the process of initial forming of evaluation and self-evaluation capacity at future institutors had the following purposes:

- Awareness of their previous representations regarding evaluation, of their affective positive or negative experiences feelings towards the evaluation process,
- Discovery of the strongest negative feelings and anchoring them in concrete, exemplificative situations in order to overcome them and consolidation of the positive feelings ,
- Spontaneous observation of the evaluation method in the frame of activities taken at Primary School.

- Theoretic delimitation of specific concepts of evaluation and self-evaluation<sup>[6]</sup> and their integration within the teaching process,
- Stressing the self-evaluative dimension at both individual and group level,
- Stimulation of the meta-evaluation as a modality of constant reflection on the evaluative act,
- Knowledge of up-to-date forms, methods and techniques of evaluation,
- Systematic observation of the evaluation method used in activities taken at Primary School level, based on the evaluation chart,
- Elaboration of evaluation indicators (objectives, descriptors) for different evaluation tests,
- Elaboration of evaluation instruments<sup>[7]</sup>,
- Creating evaluation sequences using different methods and techniques in the frame of pedagogic activities developed at Primary School,
- Inter-evaluation and permanent evaluation of the undertaken didactic activities, based on indicators

The activities developed in the frame of the formative program were conceived so that they would favour transfer between theoretic and applicative knowledge, interactive teaching, self-evaluation through meta-cognition, forming of methodological and instrumental capacities in the field of didactic evaluation, forming of competences in inter-relating and in positive, formative communication of results.

The pupils' awareness of previous representations regarding evaluation is an essential sequence when forming the capacity of evaluation and self-evaluation, because the new ideas regarding evaluation achieved while forming are rigid enough to be translated into acts and behaviour, remaining at the level of speech, of the desirable. We enumerate some of the methods applied in order to *diminish the role of previous negative representations* regarding evaluation: *photo-language* (which facilitates group communication based on the photographs and thus contributes in underlining the representations), the technique of *symbolic drawing* (which consists in making a drawing by the pupils and students on a big sheet of paper expressing their representation in regard to the evaluation, another technique of knowledge and awareness of the personal representation and feeling in regard to the evaluation), *autobiographic* approach it determines the pupil or student to search within his/her personal experience a situation of representative, concrete, positive or negative evaluation.

### Conclusions

I believe that by elaborating a formative program based on inter-disciplinary capacities and not on contents or disciplines one has overcome some difficulties faced in the formal process of initial forming in regard to:

- Anachronisms between the phase of theoretic learning of the concepts and notions and the phase of practice,
- Low capacity of intra- and inter-disciplinary transfer of knowledge, skills and abilities,
- Scenarios and prejudices regarding the evaluative act perceived as more subjective, interested and at random,
- Low motivation regarding the perspective of controlled self-evaluation and self-grading,
- Discordances between the evaluation process made by the evaluating person and the self-evaluation process made by the evaluated person,
- Discordances within the inter-evaluation process made by the pupils.

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## **EVALUATIONS OF STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL REPRESENTATIONS. A COMPARATIVE STUDY.**

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**Abstract:** In the polytechnic university environment the field of counseling is in a beginning stage and tries a consolidation of its statute through various promotion and correct information actions aimed at students about the purpose and importance of this type of counseling.

The student today, the engineer of tomorrow needs very exact information regarding the work market, a fact which cannot only be realized through personal resources but also through requesting career counseling services.

In turn, these services prove their quality and utility through external information (available jobs, expectations of employers, etc) as well as internal information (what students want, how well they know themselves personally and professionally: interests, aptitudes, values, etc).

The pertinence of this information is provided by the research realized in the two levels.

The present paper presents the concordance between the expectations of students and those of the employers towards the necessary competencies needed to be employed.

**Keywords:** employer, student, work market, competences, professional selection

### **1. The current context of the labour market**

The worldwide economical changes impact the labor market in Europe, firstly by the growth of the unemployment rate amongst young people that register values between 15,9-21%. European policies (*The Amsterdam Treaty 1997*), *the European Strategy for Labor Occupation and the Lisabona Strategy 2000*, *The Memorandum concerning Continuous Education 2001*) aim to lower the unemployment rate by developing a functional economy, to give everyone access to education through efficient systems of career counseling and orientation and through developing the necessary abilities in young graduates that allow them to be properly employed.

The dynamic of the labor market, the obsolete state of certain professions and the birth of new ones, the current economic conditions, justify the utility of the career counseling and orientation services, through the need for involvement and construction of an individual's profession needing support in understanding the way the labor market works and through identifying the opportunities offered by it.

The labor market represents „the context in which the job offer and request interact in a dynamic way” (Szilagyi, 2008).

The specific concepts of the labor market, that determine its importance in the process of career counseling are: work, occupation, craft, profession, specialization, employer, employee, etc.

### ***1.1. Looking for a job***

Fresh graduates enter the labor market with a series of expectancies, some of them being realistic, pertinent, while others are simple illusions.

In their turn, employers establish certain requirements and have various expectancies from their employees, depending on which some employees remain while others are promoted, while others leave the company.

The labor market is constantly changing and young people must explore it to find an appropriate job. Fresh graduates need to identify those jobs that are adapted to the current context of the labor market and which are compatible at the same time with their aptitudes, competences, abilities and values.

The integration of young people into a profession is realized gradually through the influence of various factors: family, school, mass-media, professional aspirations of the young person, etc.

While looking for a job, the fresh graduate must be correctly informed regarding: labor law, the rapport between their own competencies and the requirements of the employer, the proper way to draft up a C.V and a letter of intention.

The ones that are looking for a job are: students, fresh graduates (high school, university), people who are looking for another job, the unemployed.

### ***1. 2. Applying for a job***

The necessary documents a young or any type of person needs to apply to a job are: a curriculum vitae and a letter of intention.

The aim of these documents is to promote and captivate the interest of the employer in regards to the qualifications and competences of the solicitant. If the documents are considered relevant for the one doing the recruiting, they are selected and the candidate is called for an interview.

When the young person has found certain companies that have interesting job offers from his point of view, the stage of applying with a CV follows. This process requires time, the maximum for finding an adequate job being 2-3 months. A planning of this exploring activity is suggested through keeping a clear file of the already sent applications, which can include the following elements: date of application, the company it was addressed to, the contact person, the type of application (online, by phone, by e-mail, etc) and the final results of the application process.

### ***1.3. The employer***

The essence of the professional selection activity is realized efficiently when two categories of information is compared: the number and the request of vacant jobs and the qualities of the ones looking for work. In the professional selection process the *work capacity expertise*, is concerned, it being represented by identifying the accordance between the individual and the profession, more precisely, between the physical and the psycho-social potential of the individual and the professional requests. The basic criteria in the selection process (apud. Jigău, 2001) are:

- accredited degrees – diplomas;
- experience and seniority;
- the previous function;
- qualities, knowledge, abilities, skills and behaviors.

## **2. Research – results, interpretations, commentaries**

### ***2.1. Purpose, objective***

To identify the differences that exists between the requirements of employers and those of students, at the moment of employment.

### **2.2. Research hypothesis**

Specific hypothesis: We estimate that the professional requirements of employers meet to an average degree the average professional requirements of students.

### **2.3. Research variables:**

Depending on the characteristics of the sample, the following *independent variables* have been selected:

- Educational environment factors – the percentage of fourth year students;
- Individual characteristics – sex.

Dependent variables: The professional requirements of employers and students

### **2.4. Sampling**

#### **Concerned population / target groups**

The action research was undergone in Bucharest at the Politehnica University and at several job fairs in 2010-2011.

1. Fourth year students represent the target group and the most important one for the career counselor since it signifies the passing from being a student to being part of the labor market.

We have chosen final year students to see the degree of difficulty they meet in finding a job, as a consequence of the differences between their and employers' expectancies.

2. The employer is represented by companies activating in the Engineering Industry, which were present at several job fairs and which presented their job offers. We have chosen renowned companies in the field, since they represent an important group where most Politehnica graduates apply to and then work in.

### **Samples**

The research targeted the following independent samples:

#### **Target group 1: Final year students**

Students in the fourth (final) year: the total population in the Politehnica University is 2779 students.

Consequently, for a level of trust of 95% and a margin of error of 3%, the representative sample was formed of 771 final year students.

We have used random, multistage, stratified sampling.

Multistage sampling: the first phase in which the sampling unit was represented by the university, the second stage in which the sampling unit was the faculty.

Stratified sampling: sampling criteria – the sex of participants.

1. Distribution of final year students within the sample, by their faculty

<b>Faculty</b>	<b>Total no. of students</b>	<b>Percentage of the sample</b>	<b>Number of surveyed students</b>
Engineering and Management of Technological Systems	322	<b>11,59</b>	89
Energetic Engineering	322	<b>11,59</b>	89
Industrial Chemistry	158	<b>5,69</b>	44
Transportation Engineering	328	<b>11,80</b>	91
Electronics	448	<b>16,12</b>	124
Automatics	476	<b>17,13</b>	132
Mechanical Engineering	160	<b>5,76</b>	44
Electrical Engineering	179	<b>6,44</b>	50
Biotechnical Systems Engineering	96	<b>3,45</b>	27
Aerospace Engineering	97	<b>3,49</b>	27
Material Science and Engineering	136	<b>4,89</b>	38
Applied Sciences	57	<b>2,05</b>	16

## 2. Distribution of final year students within the sample, by sex

Boys	Faculty	Girls
8%	Engineering and Management of Technological Systems	4%
8%	Energetic Engineering	4%
4%	Industrial Chemistry	2%
11%	Transportation Engineering	1%
11%	Electronics	5%
11%	Automatics	6%
5%	Mechanical Engineering	1%
4%	Electrical Engineering	2%
2%	Biotechnical Systems Engineering	1%
2%	Aerospace Engineering	1%
3%	Material Science and Engineering	2%
1%	Applied Sciences	1%

### Target group 2: The employer

At present there is a high number of engineering companies on the market.

We have considered a representative sample of 50 profile companies, the research being undergone at two job fairs in Bucharest in October 2010 and April 2011.

## 3. Distribution of employers within the sample, by the function of the respondent within the HR Department of the Engineering Company

No.	Function	Percentage
1.	HR Generalist	30%
2.	HR Assistant	20%
3.	HR Manager	40%
4.	Others	10%

One can observe that the companies at job fairs were to a high degree represented by the managers if the human resources department

– 40%, followed by HR generalists and HR assistants. These percentages mean that these were professionals with seniority in the HR field, that know the specifics of the company they represent, a fact which gives increased credibility to our research which regarding the requirements of employers in Engineering companies.

### ***2.5. The methods and instruments used***

**Document analysis**, that meant consulting specific documents of the Career Counseling and Orientation Center at the Politehnica University of Bucharest. According to these documents, we find out that the Politehnica University of Bucharest, a higher education institution with a long tradition in the technical field, offers students since 2007 a Career Counseling and Orientation Center, that offers specialized services of assistance and counseling in knowing the educational offer of the university, as well as developing the specific abilities and competences through identifying the most suitable job.

The mission of the center is to offer students and graduates, assistance and counseling services both for knowing the education offer of the Politehnica University, as well as for knowing one's own abilities and professional interests, in order to properly choose a career in accordance with one's psychological profile, chosen studies, profession exigencies and existing jobs.

The Career Counseling and Orientation Center (C.O.C.C.) of Politehnica University of Bucharest runs the following activities:

- it offers evaluations of individual aptitudes and capacities of students and graduates;
- it informs them on getting professional or competency-based certifications in regards to continuous professional training: post-graduate courses, masters degrees, Phd degrees;
- it prepares students and graduates for finding a job, through specialized assistance given in drafting up a C.V., writing up a letter of intention, familiarizing oneself with techniques and conditions for a job interview;
- it disposes of a database of job and scholarship fairs, available for students and graduates.

In general, the creation of Career Counseling and Orientation Centers has had lawful support since 1998, when the Ministry of Education issued Order no. 3277, which meant the creation of a

department that would inform and council students on choosing a profession in every single higher education institution.

Constituted by Article 11 of Order no. 3235 in 2005 of the Ministry of Education, Career Counseling and Orientation Centers in Universities have the role to support students in taking professional decisions in accordance with their personality profile and their insertion into the labor market. These centers justify their utility in the context of the growth of the entrance rate of students and the decrease of the graduation rate by 40% (apud. Dima, 2009).

### *2.5.1 The Survey-based research*

In order to identify the existing differences between the expectancies of employers and those of students, at their first job, we have used the survey as a research instrument which allowed us to rapidly gather up information, and to extrapolate the results obtained on a sample, to the whole of the population (with a certain error margin), allowing us to obtain a certain „profile”.

The survey is realized „through a scientific modality of investigation, sometimes being the only one available, of the subjective universe of social life – opinions, attitudes, beliefs, knowledge, interests, a.o. on an individual and collective level” (Zamfir, Vlăsceanu, 1993).

The results obtained in processing the survey represent the assumptions for the next step, which is creating a counseling plan through which the student can improve his competences and model his attitude in accordance with the expectancies of the employer.

### *2.5.2 The structure of the instrument used*

The survey was adapted from a survey used by AchieveGlobal in the research „*The expectancies of the employer vs. The expectancies of the student*”.

The items of the survey were the same both for students, and for the Human Resources specialists, these items being divided into three subcategories.

The first subcategory of *10 items*, captures the attitude employers find as desirable versus the attitude students believe the employer finds it as desirable.



The second subcategory of *12 items*, refers to the competences that the employer considers desirable vs. Competences that the students believe that the employer considers desirable.

The third subcategory of *11 items*, refers to the requirements that the employer considers desirable vs. the requirements that the student believe the employer finds desirable.

### **2.6. Results, interpretations, commentaries**

Objective: To identify the differences that exist between the requirements of the employers and students at their first job

#### 4. The attitude subcategory

		<i>Very important</i>		<i>Average importance</i>		<i>Less important</i>	
		Employer	Student	Employer	Student	Employer	Student
1.	<b>Attitudes</b> Ambition	75%	45%	25%	55%	0%	0%
2.	Team Spirit	87,5%	81,8%	12,5%	13,6%	0%	0%
3.	Sense of humour	31,3%	4,5%	37,5%	36,4%	31,5%	54,50%
4.	Enthusiasm	75%	22,7%	25%	50%	0%	8,2%
5.	Adaptability	81,3%	72,7%	12,5%	18,2%	0%	4,5%
6.	Integrity	100%	45,5%	%	55%	0%	0%
7.	Loialty	87,5%	54,5%	12,5%	45%	0%	0%
8.	Flexibility	62,5%	55%	37,5%	40,9%	0%	4,5%
9.	Involvement	87,5%	95,5%	12,5%	0%	0%	0%
10.	Initiative	81,3%	77,3%	12,5%	13,6%	0%	0%

The attitude subcategory, the one that captures the attitude the employer finds as desirable as well as the attitude the student believes the employer considers as appropriate for being employed. Analyzing this we can say the following:

A big difference can be seen in the item that measures ambition. The employer finds ambition as being very important in a percentage of 75%, compared to students who believe it has an average importance (55%).

Team spirit is the item that to an equal degree draws the perception of the student near to the employer's.

The sense of humor is an attitude that employers value in a greater measure compared to students (31% of employers consider it as very important while only 4,5% of students see it that way).

Yet both give close values to the sense of humor when considering it of average importance at the workplace (37% of employers and 36% of students).

The enthusiasm item distances the expectancies of the employer to those of the student: 75% of employers find it as very important compared to 22,7% of students that give it the same importance. Most students (50%) consider enthusiasm as having average importance, 8,2% of them find it as little important.

Adaptability at the workplace is an attitude that shows us a high concordance between the employer and the student. Both parts offer close values, a fact that shows that **there are correlations between the expectancies of both parts.**

Integrity at the workplace is the attitude that is most appreciated by the employer, 100% of the surveyed employers choosing this value. Yet, students are to a little extent aware of the importance of this value to employers, 55% of them appreciating it as an average value, the rest of 45% finding it as very important.

The situation is similar in the case of loyalty where we can observe approximately the same differences in values between the employer and the student that looks for a job.

Items: flexibility, involvement and initiative draw near to a great degree the expectancies of the employer to those of students. The values obtained in the last three items prove this thing.

## 5. The competences subcategory

No.	Competences	Very important		Average importance		Less important	
		Employer	Student	Employer	Student	Employer	Student
1.	Mother tongue communication competences	68,8%	68,2%	25%	27,3%	6,3%	0%
2.	Foreign languages communication competences	62,5%	72,7%	37,5%	27,3%	5%	0%
3.	Digital competences	68,8%	72,7%	31,3%	24,2%	0%	0%
4.	Significant knowledge in the reference domain	68,8%	86,4%	25%	9,1%	0%	0%
5.	Research competences	12,5%	27,3%	43,8%	72,7%	43,8%	0%
6.	Customer relation competences	31,3%	45%	50%	55%	18,8%	0%
7.	Conflict dissolution competences	56,3%	31,8%	25%	54,5%	18,8%	9,1%
8.	Organizational competences	37,3%	72,7%	50%	18,2%	6,3%	0%
9.	Teamwork competences	93,8%	72,7%	6,3%	4,5%	0%	4,5%
10.	Competences in adapting to change	87,5%	55%	12,5%	27,3%	0%	18,2%
11.	Entrepreneurial competences	6,3%	22,7%	50%	63,6%	43,8%	4,5%
12.	Creativity, Innovation	56,3%	72,7%	43,8%	22,7%	0%	0%

The second sub-category refers to competences that the employer considers desirable, respectively competences that the student thinks the employer finds as desirable.

Concerning the communication competences in the mother tongue and in foreign languages, we can observe a high degree of concordance between the expectancies of employers and those of students.

The same concordance can be seen in regards to digital competences, the values being close on both sides. This thing can be justified through the intense informing both on the level of formal education, as well as on the non-formal and informal levels which is connected to the need for knowing how to use a computer and for knowing at least one foreign language for every person that wants to be employed.

Knowledge in the reference domain are appreciated as being more important to students (86,4% consider it very important and 25% give them an average importance) compared to employers that offer them slightly smaller values (68,8% very important and 9,1% average importance).

Research competences indicate a significant difference of perception and expectancies between the employer and the student. While 72,7% of the students give research competencies an average importance, only 43,8% of employers give them the same value.

The expectancies of employers are again close to those of students in regards to competencies for relating with clients, 55% of students and 50% of employers considering it to have an average importance at the workplace.

Differences of perception are found in the case of conflict management competences (if approximately 50% of students consider them as having an average importance, 56% of employers appreciate them as very important) and for organizational competences (72% of students consider them as very important, while 37,3% of employers think the same).

Teamwork is a competency appreciated approximately the same on both ends, slightly bigger values were given to the high importance of this skill, employers (93,8%) and students (72,7%).

Adapting to change is a competency considered as very important by 87,5% of employers, compared to 55% of the investigated

students. Students rather consider this skill to be of an average importance (27,3%) or small (18,2%).

Entrepreneurial competences interest the employer a little less (43,8% considering them less important). Both students and employers consider entrepreneurial competency as having an average importance.

Creativity and innovation at the workplace is considered of high importance by students (72,7%), compared to average importance as considered by employers (43,8%). If we correlate this item with the one above, about the research competence, we can observe that engineering companies are interested more in the execution skill than in the aptitude of innovation and creation of new products.

#### 6. The expectancies sub-category

No.	Expectancies	Very important		Average importance		Less important	
		Employer	Student	Employer	Student	Employer	Student
1.	Integration into the organizational culture	88%	59,9%	12%	31,81%	0%	4,54%
2.	Personal Development	88%	55%	12%	36,36%	0%	9,9%
3.	Loyalty to the company	87,5%	55%	11,8%	36,4%	0%	0%
4.	Adapting rapidly to the work environment	62,5%	95,5%	31,3%	0%	0%	0%
5.	Respect of deadlines	62,5%	54,5%	37,5%	36,4%	0%	0%
6.	Assimilation of necessary knowledge in a short time	68,8%	72,7%	31,5%	13,6%	0%	4,5%
7.	Maintaining enthusiasm in time	75%	22,7%	25%	54,5%	0%	13,6%
8.	Initiative at the workplace	87,5%	54,5%	12,5%	40,9%	0%	0%

9.	Will to be promoted	81,3%	54,5%	12,5%	31,8%	0%	0%
10.	Results-oriented	93,8%	54,5%	0%	36,4%	0%	0%
11.	Creative conduct	50%	63,6%	50%	31,8%	0%	0%

The third sub-category refers to expectancies that the employer considers desirable and the expectancies that the student believes that the employers considers as adequate in regards to the act of being employed.

Integration into the organizational culture and Personal Development are considered as very important by the employers (88%). Values are different to those of students which consider Integration into the organizational culture and

Personal development 59,09% respectively 55% as very important and 31,81%, respectively 36,36% of an average importance.

Loyalty to the company is a high expectancy (87,5%) of employers, only half of the surveyed students considering it that way.

Adapting rapidly to the work environment is very important to students that want to get employed (95,5%), while employers grade them slightly less; 62,5% very important and 31,3% average importance.

Respect of deadlines and Assimilation of necessary knowledge in a short time indicate a greater concordance between the expectancies of employers and those of students.

Again, we can observe that the Maintaining enthusiasm in time, as a motivational factor, is correlated with the loyalty to the company as well as the difference in grading these between employers and students.

Significant differences of expectancies can be observed from the point of view of Initiative at the workplace, employers considering it as very important (40,9%) and above average (54,5%).

Big differences are found in the Will to be promoted, 81,3% of employers waiting for students to have it and only 12,5% considering it as being of average importance. Over half of the surveyed students consider this attribute of high importance, while 31,8% of them find it as having an average importance.

Almost equal values to the above-mentioned case can be found in the expectancies regarding a Results-oriented attitude in the workplace.

Again, Creative conduct in the workplace is appreciated similarly by both students and employers.

### 3. Conclusions

The results presented here-in show that the specific hypothesis “We estimate that the professional requirements of employers meet to an average degree the average professional requirements of students” is confirmed.

The items that from an attitudinal point of view draw near the expectancies of students to those of employers are: *team spirit, sense of humor, flexibility, involvement and initiative.*

*Adaptability* is the attitude that mostly draws near the expectancies of both parts: employers and students.

The items that indicate big differences (approximately 25%, 35%) between expectancies of both parts are: *ambition, enthusiasm and loyalty.* The biggest difference between the employer and the student from an attitude point of view refers to integrity at the workplace. Here the differences from the point of view of the importance of integrity are of approximately 50% between the two parts. Employers appreciate with an average of 50% more than students the value of integrity in the workplace.

The total number of items yet shows that there are many differences between the two parts, therefore from an attitude point of view the expectancies of employers match those of students to a large degree.

Regarding the sub-category of expectancies itself, we can observe big differences between the expectancies of employers and those of students that are looking for a placeto work.

Differences take into account concepts connected to integration into the organizational culture and Personal Development, Loyalty to the company, Initiative at the workplace, Adapting rapidly to the work environment, maintaining enthusiasm in time, Creative conduct, Will to be promoted as well as a Results-oriented attitude.

The professional expectancies of employers correspond with the professional expectancies of students in regards to the Respect of deadlines at the workplace and the assimilation of necessary knowledge and the formation of necessaryabilities in a short time.

From the perspective of competences, the professional expectancies of employers correspond with the professional expectancies of students in regards to: Mother tongue communication competences, foreign languages communication competences, Digital competences, Customer relation competences and those of Teamwork competences and Entrepreneurial competences.

Nevertheless, we find differences between the employer and the students in the following competences: Research competences, Organizational competences, Conflict dissolution competences,

Competences in adapting to change as well as Significant knowledge in the reference domain.

One can observe the degree of concordance from the point of view of competences regarding the expectancies of the employer compared to those of students, this being bigger when the above-mentioned competences are intensely popularizes in schools, mass-media, family, such as: Foreign languages communication competences, digital competences, teamwork and manifesting openness in relating with the client.

Differences of perception appear when aspects that are function of the internal structure of the company and the specific expectancies of it, are mentioned: Organizational, research, adapting to change, appreciation or lack of it concerning solid knowledge in the reference domain.

This difference is decreased after a better knowledge of the specific of engineering companies. A solution would be for CCOC to realize more seminars, conferences in which the expectancies of employers can be presented to their potential future employees found in students. Moreover, the popularizing of internships would be a solution, the encouragement and informing of students by teachers in regards to the profiles of engineering companies. This means that the companies in the field would popularize their offers and work conditions more intensely in the Politehnica University of Bucharest, by developing more active and constant partnerships between the two parts.

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## **DEVELOPING COMMUNICATIONAL COMPETENCES BY MEANS OF AUTHENTIC TEXTS IN THE CASE OF TECHNICAL STUDENTS**

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**Abstract:** The article deals with some of the issues surrounding the concept of competence and communicational competences. Thus, the first part aims to identify some of the elements defining the university training and the place of universities and their product – the students – in the broader community and the professional working environment. The second part defines the concept of competence and communicational competences and the components of communication. The third and fourth parts cover aspects in relation to some of the specific aspects of learning and evaluating English in general. Part five presents the case of teaching a distinct type of English for specific purposes, English for industry and its place in the professional development of technical students. This part focuses on the innovative teaching approach of using authentic texts for the purpose they have been created instead of turning them into language tests that would measure only linguistic aspects and not communicational events. The conclusions of the case study reveal the fact that this approach brings benefits to the ESP teaching and evaluation and can lead to the development of communicational instrument instead of mere language skills.

**Keywords:** teaching ESP, evaluation of ESP, authentic texts, competence, communicational competences, technical students

### **1. Preamble**

University education has become a subject of many deep transformations due to its dependency on the broad social context. Worldwide, as soon as the iron curtains had disappeared and the restraining walls of former oppressive regimes had collapsed, scientific discoveries and technological progress took over. Science and technology have freed themselves from the burden of ideology and they now belong to the entire humanity, who has concluded that the problems of one country, even the problems of one continent, are not just problems of one area of the globe, but they represent problems for

the entire world. Residual wastes, technologies affecting the health of the Earth and its inhabitants, all these can be annihilated only with the help of all the peoples of the world.

People receiving a formal education can no longer rely on storing information in their brains, rather they must acquire such instruments that will allow them to apply the information in new contexts, to adapt and improve that information by connecting it to other areas and other fields and to collaborate with other people from other areas of expertise. Education must now enforce competences and should by no means settle for the passing of information. This is vital for the higher forms of education, such as the universities, which are meant to offer specialists that will be able to create a vision about the future and build a new society based on that vision.

Creating a system of education at the university level based on the development of competences requires a few changes. First, the students enlisting this system of education should be already trained in the development of competences from the early stages of formal education. Secondly, the entire system of education at the university level should be re-formed and aimed at the development of competences. This implies the change in the teaching methodology, re-writing and re-organizing the teaching materials and the creation of new tests and assessment criteria. Thirdly, both the students and the teaching staff should assume the new roles demanded by this new approach towards the development of competences. Previously, the high education graduate belonged to a social elite and received a special status ensured by the diploma. These days, university education no longer ensures a place in the high society, but it can be the solution for a better life and can ensure a better workplace. Thus, although legally optional, university education has become compulsory thanks to the societal pressure.

University education has become education for the masses based on the high number of students enlisting each year. This form of massification is the result of external pressure exerted on the university but it is also the result of the technological development of our society. Many of the jobs available two decades ago have been replaced by modern technological systems. The worker has been replaced by the machine. There is a higher demand for specialists that are trained to operate these machines rather than work in their stead. The role of the university is no longer only that of creating the elite of the society

(through their master and doctoral programs) but it has to provide education for a better labour insertion. It still has authority in the field of the creation of the elites, but when it comes to educating professionals, the university has to meet the demands of the working community that will hire its graduates. The new curricula do not rely merely on passing knowledge and information towards the students, they have to offer programs that will develop competences (Chis , V., 2005, 2006, 2009).

People's competences are measured by their ability to learn as they go, their willingness to cultivate their vision on the future, their commitment to constantly evaluate their abilities and skills and their skill to adapt their approaches to the new criteria. Contemporary people must learn to adapt constantly to a permanently changing society and to a community that is in constant movement. They must acquire information that will allow them to get to a certain social and professional status and will allow them to be able to change in order to evolve and develop.

People need learning experiences that will enable them to develop discernment, professional ethics, respect for nature and for the past and future generations, a desire to discover and the desire to belong to a global community, willingness to define their own individuality in this global community, an ability and a desire to self improve in accordance to the development of the global society.

Now more than ever, science and technology do not belong to a single ethnic or national community. The scientific discoveries and the technological progress are everywhere, saving lives and improving the quality of life. Science and technology no longer communicate solely through their specific universal language as they did in the past, since science and technology no longer belong to the intellectual elite of humanity. Science and technology have become an integrated part of our daily lives.

In the outpost of these scientific discoveries and technological progress, we find the engineers, those contemporary people who, now more than ever, dedicated their professional lives to making this world a bit cleaner, less polluted, with technologies that treat and improve nature, the human body, the environment. Communicating these new discoveries to the world is done by the same means that gives birth to literature and cultural bridges between nations and continents. In this new communicational environment, the engineers do not communicate solely with their counterparts or peers using the specific language of

science and technology, rather they must communicate with the entire community, since the entire community is the beneficiary of their work. This new context forces the engineers to become not only very good professionals, but also very good communicators.

*(...) Qualified “global” engineers will no doubt be needed in the future, even more than today. We are rapidly moving into a global knowledge-based society, high-tech products become increasingly important and every country is concerned about the international competitiveness of its industry. All engineers will in the future work in an international context, cooperate with people from other countries and many will spend part of their career in other countries. (...)*

*The engineer of tomorrow should of course have a high technical and scientific competence. In addition he or she should be able to communicate in his or her native language, in English and preferably in at least one more foreign language. Crosscultural communication skills are needed as well as managerial skills and ability to work in teams. He or she should have a deep understanding of ethical and environmental issues, be broadminded, innovative, imaginative and creative, well versed in humanities and have a deep understanding of the relationship between technology and social development. He or she should be curious, have a good common sense, be willing to learn and able to take responsibility. (...)*

*(Weichert, D.(Editor). 2001, *Educating the Engineer for the 21st Century. Proceedings of the 3rd Workshop on Global Engineering Education*, Secaucus, NJ, USA: Kluwer Academic Publishers)*

## **2. Communicational competences – an overview**

It his book entitled *Noul curriculum – curriculum pentru competente* (2006), Prof. Vasile Chis provides and overall of three definitions for the term competence:

*Definition 1: Competence is the ability to accomplish various activities related to an occupation or function at a standard defined by the employer.*

*Definition 2: Competence is owning and developing knowledge and abilities, proper attitudes and experiences that are necessary for the accomplishment of assumed roles.*

*Definition 3: The competences are complex structures with operational value that are placed among knowledge, attitudes and abilities and have the following characteristics:*

- they ensure the accomplishment of assumed roles and responsibilities,
- correlate roles and responsibilities with performance
- can be measured on a standardised scale for performance
- can be developed through learning (p.18)

As Prof. Chis states, these definitions describe the competence as being a practical action placed in the professional environment and which is the outcome of learning. This mentioning is vital for the educational process, since it changes the pedagogical paradigm from one that is based on knowledge storage into one that aims at the development of competences.

Prof. Ionescu, in his work entitled *Instructie si educatie* (2007, p.105), defines the competences as being integrated systems of capacities and abilities to apply, operate and transfer acquisitions, which allow the proper manifestation of an activity, the use of knowledge, skills and abilities in a functional manner in various formal, informal and non-formal contexts. The same author states that to master a competence does not only mean that you know how to make or do something or to possess a certain technique, but it implies the ability to attach a particular situation to a family of situations and to approach it in a proper manner (...) Thus, the competence is an integration of knowledge, application and transfer instruments of the knowledge into new contexts, but also the ability to approach a specific situation in a proper manner, in other words, the ability to have the proper attitude in order to do something.

The *European Qualification Framework for Lifelong Learning* – EQF, presents a document on 23 April 2008 in which it defines a framework for eight main qualification levels. The Annex of this document provides definitions for all the terms found in the framework. Here competence is defined as being the proven ability to use knowledge, skills and personal, social and/or methodological abilities, in work or study situations and in professional and personal development. This definition provides a very important characteristic of competence. This is being defined as a proven ability. In other words, competence should be an element that we can quantify, that we can identify on a scale or evaluation grid, that can be measured and compared to predefined

criteria and norms for a specific area in which this competence is manifest.

Synthesizing all the common elements of these definitions, we can say that a competence is an integrated and quantifiable system of acquired knowledge, abilities and attitudes that facilitate the accomplishment of a professional or personal development task. In other words, competence is the manifestation of what an individual can do at a certain moment in time, given a certain context, and this proof is quantifiable and measurable against a universal standard that is valid for that particular learnt activity that has been performed at a similar moment in time like the one we measure and in similar circumstances like the one manifested at the moment of the evaluation.

Using the definition we suggested for the competence in general, we can state that communicational competence is an integrated and quantifiable system of acquired knowledge, abilities and attitudes that facilitate the accomplishment of a communicational professional or personal development task.

The fundamental stage in the development of communicational competences is the language acquisition. Given the magnitude of this stage in the development of the human being, time has witnessed several theories regarding the language acquisition and the way in which the child ends up communicating to the environment using correct and coherent structures. Although each theory manages to explain a small part of this process, language acquisition remains a reality cloaked in mystery. The author of this article subscribes to two of these theories, namely the Noah Chomsky (1981) theory and the interactionist theory, mainly because we agree with these two.

However, language acquisition is necessary but not sufficient for the development of communicational competences. Language supports verbal communication by means of the linguistic structure (the word). Paralanguage is represented by all communicational components that complete the verbal communication by improving the quality of the communication, but the constant connection to the environment takes place thanks to the non-verbal communication such as eye contact, facial expressions, body language, even clothing or pieces of furniture (Pânișoara, I.O., 2007). Another very important communicational element is the meta-communication, that is the birth of certain implications of the message that cannot be attributed to the meaning of the words themselves nor to the way they have been uttered (op.cit.).

All these elements belong to the knowledge about language and communication and they have to represent the basis for the development of communicational competences as fundamental cornerstones. Poor wording tends to burden the communication, just like a lack in the proper usage of paralanguage and non-verbal communication could lead to the death of the communication, while ignoring the mechanisms of meta-communication could put the individual into embarrassing situations both for themselves and for their communicational partners. In addition, all these parts of communication function in specific media, which the individual will have to master by developing skills that they will use as instruments of coding and decoding messages. Thus, verbal and para-verbal communication rely on skills like reading and writing, listening and speaking. Their accuracy will be responsible for the success of the communication.

### **3. Learning to communicate in English**

In what communicating in a foreign language is concerned, teaching and learning a foreign language is not similar to teaching and learning other scholastic subjects. As Klein states (1986), language acquisition is vital for the communication in the first language but it is also vital for the subsequent learning of other languages. Acquiring the first language, or the mother tongue, as it is called by certain authors, takes place at the moment when the child had no other language acquired for the purpose of communicating to the environment. Once the first language is acquired, the child also gains the cognitive categories that are at the foundation of expressive means for the natural languages, such as the categories for time, space, modality, causality, etc. These cognitive categories are automatically gained once the first language is acquired and their integration in the social and communicative context represent a vital aspect of learning second or foreign languages. (op.cit) From the cognitive perspective, Klein (op.cit) claims that when learning a new language, those crucial elements only have to be modified and adjusted according to the new communicational dimensions.

Although many voices still claim and discuss about learning a language „from scratch”, this practically never happens. If in the case of other subjects or sciences, we can talk about developing the notions during the teaching process, in the case of teaching another language these notions have already been formed once the first language has been

acquired. Thus, we speak of transferring the notions and widening their area of influence.

The concept of communicational competence has been introduced in the applied linguistics as a reaction to the theories of linguistic competence based excessively on grammar. According to this theory based on communication, the communicational competence focuses on the users of the language to communicate (Luoma, S., 2004).

Thus, from a historical perspective, we can distinguish between two completely different ways of learning foreign languages: the audio-lingual approach and the communicational approach.

The old didactic paradigms cherished teaching methodologies based on audio-lingual activities, as a consequence of the behavioral theory of language acquisition. The language is viewed as an acquired habit and therefore the most valued activities were memorising dialogues, repetition of verbal patterns, diligently learning the theories behind the grammatical structures of the language. The approach seeks native-speaker type pronunciation, reading and writing are postponed until the learner masters speaking, translations in the mother tongue are forbidden completely (Finocchiaro&Brumfit, 1983). The problem with this method resides in the fact that the learners often develop deficiencies in using the language in real life situations and they fail in understanding it in normal communications (Widdowson, H.G., 1972).

The new methodologies start from the premise that the primordial function of the language is communication. The communicational method states that we do not communicate by means of sentences, but by using sentences to make various statements, descriptions, classifications, questions, demands (Widdowson, H.G., 1972). For example, unlike the audio-lingual method – which was more interested in the interrogative sentence just to practice the placement of the auxiliary verb before the subject – the communicational approach encourages the learner to formulate specific questions about the environment and address them to a person who will validate or not this communicational interrogative attempt. Thus, the method encourages the communication by every means, the pronunciation has to be comprehensible and not native-speaker like, and the learner is encouraged to adopt any strategy, which will motivate learning and communication. The learning material is assimilated by trial and error, the primary goal is fluency and accuracy is evaluated in context. The learner interacts with other people and less with an abstract linguistic



concept. The approach is learning by doing and the learner is in the center of the learning process.

An important element of this approach is the fact that it takes into consideration the learners' needs (Finocchiaro&Brumfit, 1983).

Here are some of the axioms of the communicational method (Widdowson, 1972, Finocchiaro&Brumfit, 1983, Richards&Rodgers, 1993):

- Learning a language means learning to communicate.
- The aim is the communicational competence, the ability to use the linguistic system efficiently and according to the communicational situations.
- The ability to compose sentences is not the only ability that we need when communicating. Communication takes place only when we use sentences to perform a various range of social acts.
- There is no simple equation between the linguistic forms and their communicative functions. It is a serious mistake to assume that if we know how sentences work we automatically know their significance as linguistic communicational units.
- The premise is the context and the meaning is vital.

Thus, communicative teaching relies mainly on interactions, conversation and using the language rather than learning about the language (Lightbown&Spada, 1993).

#### **4. Evaluation of the English language**

This paradigm is completed by another one that assesses the teaching process that aims at the development of communicational competences. Thus, a pedagogy of competences will find a faithful partner in a docimological system based on assessment of competences. The evaluation is the third component of the educational process, which is responsible for closing the circle. This is the moment of the reversed connection which should measure progress, should motivate and provide self-evaluation instruments and an opportunity for the self-awareness to be developed (Ionescu, M., 2001). The evaluation is the one that sheds a positive or negative light on the teaching and learning. This is why teaching and evaluation should be partners and we should demand that assessment supports those teaching strategies, which have

proven to be correct and to have a corrective influence over improper teaching (Hughes, A., 1989).

The new paradigm focuses on the development of competences rather than the acquisition of knowledge. Therefore, evaluation should also focus on assessing competence rather than assessing mere information.

Since assessment is part of this process that aims to develop communicational competences, the tasks and the learners' performance have to be strongly connected to the real life contexts and tasks are created based on both closed and open questions, reaching all the levels of Bloom's taxonomy. Thus, the tasks check if the learners have a deep understanding of what they have learnt and if they are capable of transferring what they have learnt into new contexts and situations.

As a curricular teaching subject, English depends on a formal instructional context that demands a certain norm of the educational process, generates assessment criteria, standards and norms that are used not only to assess the effort of the learner, but also the effort of the teacher, thus becoming a mirror of the efficiency of the educational process itself. Theories mention a series of aims for assessment. These aims generate tests and tasks that measure certain abilities or skills. From this perspective, assessing English as a curricular subject is no different than assessing other subject taught in an educational institution.

However, when dealing with English taught for specific purposes, this classical and somewhat safer approach can produce negative effects on the learners and the learning process.

### **5. Teaching and evaluating English for technical students – an innovative approach**

English for specific purposes (ESP) holds a special place in English language teaching (ELT) precisely because its specificity. As the name suggests, in the case of ESP, both the teacher and the learners focus on developing communicational instruments that are specific for a defined area or profession. This means that the vocabulary, grammar structures and communicational situations are reduced to those mostly encountered in the environment of that specific profession or area of expertise.

In the case of the English courses and seminars taught to technical students, surveys conducted in the professional environment

of the industry and commerce show very clearly which documents and oral communications require the use of English from the part of the engineers at their workplace (Indolean, D., 2010). Thus, these documents and oral communications should be turned into specific teaching structures, with contents that would operate with those documents and with specific methods that can facilitate the development of communicational competences specific for engineers and their professions.

In addition, it is vital that the process of creating docimologic tests that can assess communicational competences in English for specific purposes to be accompanied by a process that can elaborate or adopt an assessment grid suitable to measure not just the linguistic skills which we usually measure by means of language tests.

It is most clear that the linguistic aspects of the language are still an essential part of the assessment, since a poor vocabulary or bad grammar contribute significantly to the corruption of the message. But, unlike language tests which measure linguistic competences at best, we should create tests that measure communicational competences and therefore they take into account not just linguistic aspects of the communication, but also the attitudinal aspect of communication, the one responsible for the paraverbal and the non-verbal side of communication similar to the one present in the professional environment. Thus, the tasks that have to be created should measure communicational competences and benefit from the creation of an assessment grid that is appropriate for such an approach.

The new tasks require the technical students to write documents similar to those present in the engineers' professional activity. These documents are related to the communication to specialists (peers) – as it is the case of the technical documentation and the user manual – or are related to the communication to the commercial environment in which the company operates – as it is the case with the business letters, reports and phone conversations.

Aside the fact that from a linguistic point of view these two communicational areas require the student to operate with extremely various lexical and grammatical structures, thus contributing to a very good training of the language, from our perspective they present yet another vital aspect: all these types of tasks produce real-life documents and therefore authentic.

This authenticity trait is vital, because we believe that we cannot assess communicational competences in the absence of the element of

authenticity of the communication, and without this element we would be unable to assess the attitudinal component and thus we would be unable to speak about competences at all or holistic and qualitative assessment.

Moreover, using authentic documents that belong to the professional life of the engineers should be done as it is done in that professional environment, that is the documents should be used for the purpose they have been created and not as a mere basis for teaching language structures. This change in the paradigm should generate better results at language tests, not just from the perspective of the communicational competences – that is proper English usage and proper attitude – but also from the perspective of the linguistic competences – that is better results for tests that measure the five linguistic skills: listening, reading, writing, spoken interaction and oral discourse.

Teaching materials that contain authentic documents and messages should be used for the purpose they have been created. This means that the students have to be exposed to such documents and operate with them in this manner during the semester, so that the didactic tasks could ask them to produce communicational events based on situations similar to those used during the semester and to those encountered by the engineers at their workplace. The authenticity of the documents elaborated by the students (that is if they are acceptable as communications from the point of view of the attitude adopted) is at the foundation of this approach and it should deliver better results at tests than the traditional approach.

Given the fact that the students are technical students, the teaching materials are technical documentations, scientific articles and user manuals.

Operating with authentic materials and documents is not something new, in fact they are normally part of the teaching approach used by teachers of English in technical universities (Granesco M., 1997). However, the innovation is in the way they have been used for in this case. Usually, the English seminars use authentic documents to create exercises, which support the linguistic functions and not the communicational one. The current teaching method focuses extensively on working with the authentic text that becomes a basis for the lexical and grammatical specific objectives: the text is read, commented, analysed from a lexical and grammatical point of view and then the students have to solve several types of exercises that will assist them in consolidating the elements of the lesson.

This method has certain shortcomings, the biggest one being the fact that the authentic documents are no longer used for the purpose they have been created. They become the basis for lessons in which the teachers teach about the language and its functions. Basically, the authentic documents are introduced as a foundation for teaching grammar and other linguistic structures, and that is why those texts lose their substance and their authenticity. Used this way they lose their power to assist the instructional process and the development of communicational competences in English, and the student will no longer recognize those texts as informative and formative valuable instruments, but rather they become just some exercises that need to be solved.

Douglas (2005) claims that documents lose their authenticity the moment they are no longer used for the purpose they have been created. He gives the example of some lab notes that lose their authenticity when transformed into multiple choice language exercises – grammar or vocabulary.

## 6. Conclusions

Based on this new approach, we believe there are more papers that deserve to pass based on a communicational criterion than the traditional tests allow.

This change in paradigm implies that authentic documents and texts carry vital information about the way they have been created. Usage of authentic texts facilitates the development of communicational competences by the inclusion of attitude in this process. The students are actively involved in this learning process and go through all the learning and evaluation steps that are presented in Bloom's taxonomy: the students identify, define, describe, elaborate categories of elements, use them in new contexts, analyze, decide, synthesize and evaluate.

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## THE INFLUENCE OF MUSIC ON THE CHILDREN'S ART EXPRESSION

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**Abstract:** Considering the fact that the art and musical creativity of the children are one of the essential contents of the educational preschool and elementary school program, one saw the need of investigating the influence of music to the children's art expression, in a wider aspect, that seize, beside the creative and cognitive aspect of the creative process, the semiotic aspect that shows the ability of symbolic, signal expression through the visual review.

Establishing the mentioned influences served as the pedagogical and methodical basis for answering the question: Does music, as the factor, in which way and how much, play the role in the development of children's art creativity?

This answer is very important for the right application of the educational program, as well for the scientific basis of the methodic procedures that improve children's musical and art creativity.

The basic expectations, in this research, were that considering the results of the research and applying of the *Karlavaris's test of visual ideas*, as well in their interpretation in theory and until now, researched phenomenon of children's art and musical creativity, one can find more reliable interpretation, which has wider pedagogical and psychological significance, but can also serve as the start for improving the methodology of the art and musical education, as the scientific discipline and practice at the children kindergartens.

**Keywords:** art education / musical education / preschool pedagogy / methodology of the educational work

### Introduction

The research of the development of children's capabilities and the abilities of influencing them, are very much present in the cotemporary preschool pedagogy. Their results are often opposite and incomplete, which show when being applied in pedagogical practice.

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Musical and art abilities of the children are not the exception in that way, which can be seen in many unanswered questions in science.

The significant thing for this research was to examine whether the musical education influence the other aspects of the creative expression, especially the art, considering the fact that it was the most common way of child's communication during the preschool period. Drawing is one of the most important ways of children's individual expression, its development, in formal and the informative aspect, is caused by the common psychophysical and social development, showing the condition of many functions, perception before all, mobility, thinking, emotions, sociality, etc.

Considering dilemma in the area of the art creativity about the way and the methods of inducing children's art creativity, building and expanding their art language, with this research, one tried to investigate the synergetic influence of the musical and art creativity, that is, the possibility of inducing the children's art abilities by music.

In the art expression of the real world, a preschool child shows the noticeable characteristics of the objects, beings, appearances by scheme. Children of this particular age, don't need the role model for drawing (direct visual stimulus), it shows the same picture with and without them. At the drawings on certain subject, we get the visualization of the children's ideas, concepts about the subject. That is why the child's drawing, together with the verbal comment, (going through the same), can be considered as *the children's defining of the idea*.

At the preschool age, we have two most common factors of the children's thinking: connection to the appearance (that gives perception) and the subjectivity (connection to the personal point of view). The combination of the influence of these two factors makes the specific child's thinking, etc. From this comes the global criterion for establishing the level of the meditative maturity, etc. By B. Karlavaris, the thought is more mature if it is more objective, if it goes more into the essence of the appearance and is not connected to the subjective experience. *"Starting from the informational theory and the theory of the signs (semiology), it is possible to differentiate the signs that have the transferring data function (so, certain significance), from the signs that have the esthetic function (relies to themselves), which are opened and mean the original creative solution. Considering the fact that the art education is directed to the formation of the visual culture*



(developing the abilities of the visual communication, achieving the information and knowledge, meaningful message), and the formation of the art culture (developing the ability of receiving and modeling the esthetic messages), both of these two processes are very much important for us, and they are also dialectically conditioned.”<sup>2</sup> B. Karlavaris set the hypothesis in his research by starting from the basic idea that the visual messages, the coded signs, gradually develop and get the more certain shape. He emphasizes that the development of the visual language as the universal language for the communication, at the level of the scientific knowledge, is still an opened question, which is very much important for the pedagogical work. B.Karlavaris considers that it is essential, in the very art education process, to nourish the *coded* art expression (so called understanding) and reporting a message through the visual signs.

Analyzing the children`s art works, B.Karlavaris came to the conclusion that it was possible to register the gradual appearance of the visual signs for certain ideas, so he expanded the children`s art work analysis by using two available aspects, which were *intellectually – narrative* (what and how the children show) and the *art – expressional* (how do children esthetically interpretate the certain expressions), with one new *conceptually – symbolical*( from the position of the children`s way of forming the visual signs for the ideas, that is, how to find the basis for the visually coded sign by using the meaning of the idea itself).

B. Karlavaris, by using this investigation, opened the important question in examining the development of the children`s art expression, which relies on the nature of the process and the conditions of the visual communication, at the inner, as well as the outer plan.

The development of the musical and art expression at the preschoolers is possible to follow, because the child itself, in its real psychological life cannot differentiate the real from the experienced, that so it cannot differentiate the sensibilities in one art from the creativity in the other.

The expression of one kind can serve as the basis for the expression in the other aspect. There comes the question about the connection of the art and the musical content. The art expression has the

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<sup>2</sup> (Karlavaris B.: *Art interpretation of the ideas at 3-7 years old children*, Center for the art culture, Novi Sad, 1979, pag. 1-5)

visual basis – content and the form comes as the result of the art elements combination - lines, color, surface, light and their mutual relations (principles of the art composition formation). Musical expression has the acoustic basis – content comes out of the movement, interlacing and combining of the tones and their qualities: lasting, pitch, intensity, color, being set in the certain relations and by making the musical entreties. In the art, and especially musical art, the irrational relation between the man and the art content is extremely important, no matter one receives, or creates it- sees or listens. Instead of the clear logical judgments about the works of one or the other art, man establishes the emotional contact, creates the experience, mostly based on the esthetic and the other qualities and accepts, in the totally subjective way, and also valuate these qualities and the work in total. The experience is the starting point for the creation and understanding the art, and the creativity and sensibility are the psychological abilities that able the creation and experience of the art works. These two characteristics are the basis for the connection of the expression and the experience between the different types of the art. The procedure of the transformation and the association, as the direct connection, able the transmitting of the experience of one kind to the other. Association and the transformation are based on the complexity of the human psyche that hides the possibilities of the psychological qualities and creation of the new ones, rational and irrational content as well. With them, starts every creative attempt and everlasting search in the creative activity. Since the child in its own psyche cannot separate the certain art expressions, the possibilities of the association and the power of the transformation are the same as the child makes the attempts to express itself in different types of the art.

The musical pedagogue and the theoretic E.Basic investigated for a long time the art expression and the other children's reactions connected to the music experience. Her experience gave the significant results in enlightening the psychologically - art background of the autochthonous children's sensibility and creativity. The starting point of this pedagogue in investigating the child's art expression was the expression of the two, totally different, in feeling, opposite musical contents: music of the movement and the music of the mood.

The music of the movement has the expressed rhythm, dynamics and tempo, simple facture and the clear form (characteristic motive or the phrase, stands out and repeat in the short time intervals in the basic

or the variable shape) which makes the musical content compact and unique. The attention of the listener is directed to the less circumference of the content and the concentration is made by the presence of the dominant theme or the motive. After pointing out the rhythm, and the even, or temporarily even pulse oscillation of the other, simple and clearer elements, this kind of organized musical content, initiates the movement at the listeners or makes the danceable or similar mood. The expression, made by esthetical qualities, makes, through the danceable mood, the movable reactions and the activities, as the expression of that very mood. According to E. Basic, the musical experience is able to transform into the art expression based on the created mood, using the hidden and transparent movable reactions and activities, which basically have the subjective impression and the inner experience.

The music of the mood has the other content – it is wide and deep in its expression, its character is lyrical, meditative, calm, ceremonial, pathetic or dramatic. It is heterogeneous in its content, flow and mood. The mood in the work can be unique or complex – contrast, when two or more characters interlace. This music has the strong melody, richer and complexed harmony, calm and various tempo, combinations and the changes of the hues, dynamic changes, rhythm is calmer or more various. In the music of the mood, comes to the expression of the sensibility, that is why it influence the sensitivity of the listeners and making the permanent emotional conditions – mood. It “insists” on the deeper inner experience, not on the outer reactions and the activities as the “echo” of the experience. Here, too the inner experience serves as the basis and the stimulus for the transformation and the art expression that needs to express the certain mood expressed in music.

In transposing of the musical experience into the art expression, the child engages most of its abilities and psychophysical functions. One can follow child`s individual reactions and psychological conditions. One can see the body position and the movements, attention object, using the means, interest, commitment, patience, involving, independence, the way and the tempo of the work, persistence and systematic. For the full understanding of the child`s art expression, one have to chose the subject, that is, through what kind of content and the form, the musical experience can be realized: is it concrete or abstract; does it have the clear subjects or is it just the game of the lines and colors; are they natural or unnatural shapes and what are their relations,

what is the character of the art work, what kind of the impression leaves: is the picture monotonous, poor with elements, or is it full of the content, dynamical, lively and colorful with shapes, movements, colors in the movement – with the rhythm and so on.

Making the possibility for the child to transform its musical experience into the art expression, represents the situation for observing and studying the children's reactions, activities and their abilities. Their analysis is more complete because the variable of children's sensitivity and creativity expression is bigger, considering two art areas. The musical and art contents and their mutual relation, made by the children's physic, can point to the children's creative abilities. In order to reach the creative idea as the condition for the creative process, one needs to create the conditions for getting the experience as well as the personal experience. The important factor in the children's art expression, beside the visual experience, is the auditive factor, which is the sound that influence the increase of the experiencing the certain visualization. So, what is well known, and what many experts talk about, as well as E.Kamenov, is the fact that in the process of the educational work with the children's creativity, in this particular case, the art, it is necessary to include all the simulative factors in order to increase the specific experience and the personal experience, as the essential factor for the creative activity, which represents the relation between the situation, individual, process and the product: creative situation => creative individual=> creative process => creative product. In this research one can see if and how much the exposure to music (sound) can influence the visual expression of the children. For this research it was necessary to select the visual appearances that have its own auditive character that is consumption that, older preschool children already have certain visual and auditive experiences, for example, the appearance of the drum as the music instrument and the sound of the drum on which the artist plays some music theme, the look of the plane as the mean of transport and the sound of the flying plane, look of the car as the mean of transport and the sound of the horn while driving... It is necessary to investigate if the direct exposure to the sounds that are characteristic for the motive that the children are drawing, can at the moment of the creative process, increase the experience of the certain phenomenon and influence the quality, creativity and the authentic of the visual picture, as well as its form, symbolic and expressivity of its picture.

### **Methodology of the research**

**Basic goal** of the research was seeing the whole picture of the influence of music on the children`s art creativity in the products of the children`s art creativity, connecting the determined facts and the children`s art creativity characteristics.

**The task** of the research is: To determine if there is a difference between the art abilities of the children with whom the kindergarten teachers use music for the stimulation and development of the children`s art expression and art abilities of the children with whom the kindergarten teachers do not use music for stimulation and development of the children`s art expression, which can be seen through the level of the ability of symbolic and sign expression in the children`s art creativity.

**Basic hypothesis** is set in the zero shape and goes like this: *There is no difference in the art abilities of the children with whom the kindergarten teachers use music for the stimulation and development of the children`s art expression and art abilities of the children with whom the kindergarten teachers do not use music for stimulation and development of the children`s art expression, which can be seen through the level of the ability of symbolic and sign expression in the children`s art creativity.*

**Independent variable** in this part of the research is a pedagogic conception of the educational work program, which applies at the children`s kindergartens, especially – music and art education program.

**Dependant variable** in this research shows through the characteristics of the children`s art expression- children`s art expression of the visual ideas (chosen ideas compatible to the age of the preschool child expressed in the picture (art) way).

The use of the standardized instrument of the **Karlavaris`s test of the visual ideas** in this research enables the statistic data work and conclusions about the basic hypothesis. One can say that the used procedure was *natural*, because the certain conditions were unchanged, such as the work with the children from the same group, which enabled the similar age (preschool group), mostly the same time of the art activities in the both groups...

Considering the different work methods at the art and music activities, one expected to see, in the art creativity area, the certain differences at the level of the creative abilities of the preschoolers, in the lines in which the educational work of the art and music creativity

could influence, in this particular case children's art expression of the visual ideas.

**Investigating technique**, during the data collecting, meant the investigating procedure of the testing, with the use of the instrument *Karlavaris's test of the visual ideas*, which is checked in the other author's researches, and by which one could have seen the characteristics of the children's art expression of the visual ideas at each child in the group, as well at the group as a whole. There were two types of the tested children (1 group – children that were exposed to music during the art work -painting and 2 group – children that were not exposed to music during the art work – painting).The children accomplished art works with a goal of the illustration of the children's way of showing the content of the ideas through the graphical (art) expression medium, and the selected ideas were similar to the age of the preschoolers and expressed in the picture (art) way.

B. Karlavaris, in his research, when calculating the experimental data, used the ideas related to the appearances of different nature, complexity and the abstracts. According to their nature, B.Karlavaris puts them in the following categories: natural appearances (rain, snow, fire, crawling of the snake, bomb explosion); artificial appearances (building, sound of a plane, horns, and drum); psychological appearances (love, sadness) and the social appearances (justice). For the needs of this research, only art works related to the **artificial appearances - sound of the plane, horn, drum**, were analyzed. The things that children showed in their drawings could be called the visual ideas presentation. The children did not have any instructions on how to solve the subject, only described the idea because of the clearness, as well as the circumference of the appearances that belong to the specific idea, in order to encourage the children on the variety of the solutions, being careful not to impose some ideas. The drawing analysis was made from two points: **form** (formal analysis) and **content** (content analysis).

Half of the research sample children were stimulated during the art work by music, the following compositions: for the **sound of the plane** the composition was:” **Glissandi**” by G. Ligeti; for the **horn:**” **Ten Pieces for Wind Quintet**” by G.Ligeti and for the **drum:**”**Bolero**” by M.Ravel.

Starting from the given facts, one can assume that in this particular research **Karlavaris's test of the visual ideas**, with its normative and components, being evaluated based on the art

interpretation of the children( preschoolers), showed the insight of the level of the certain children art abilities development that were under the educational influence.

The sample in this part of the research was the children age from five years and nine months to seven years and one month of age at the kindergarten facility, during the year 2008/2009. The number of the sample children is one hundred children (100) from two (2) Belgrade`s kindergarten that belong to the following preschool facilities: P.S.F”11 April”- municipality Novi Beograd and P.S.F.”Cukarica”-municipality Cukarica. The collected data about the children were: age of the child (day, month, year of the birth, used for calculation of the actual age on the day of the research) and educational facility that a child attended.

PC software was used for the statistic calculation of the data. The data from the *Karlavaris`s test of the visual ideas* were in the charts of the primary data, and the **percentages** were calculated. For the importance of the **difference calculation, the  $\chi$  – square test**.

### Research results

<b>1/a The sound of a plane</b>	<b>1 group</b>		<b>2 group</b>	
(a) Review of the plane without sound	28	<b>56%</b>	10	<b>20%</b>
(b) Review of the sound of a plane line, mass, shape	17	<b>34%</b>	16	<b>32%</b>
(c) Review of the plane with the sound in the situation- review of the continuance and intensity of the sound of the plane line, mass, shape	05	<b>10%</b>	24	<b>48%</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>50</b>		<b>50</b>	

*Chart no. 1: Results review of the children`s art works analysis in the Karlavaris`s test of the visual ideas for the sound of the plane*

The value of the calculated  $\chi^2 = 13,752$  compared with the limited  $\chi^2$  values **3,841, 6,635** and **10,827** with the appropriate freedom degree number (**df = 1**) at the given importance levels  **$\alpha 0,05$ ,  $\alpha 0,01$**  and  **$\alpha 0,001$**  is **bigger**, so one can conclude that **there is the statistically significant difference**, when one talk about the art expression of the visual ideas – **the sound of the plane**, between these two examiners sample.

<b>1/b The sound of the horn</b>	<b>1 group</b>		<b>2 group</b>	
(a) Review of the source without the sound	17	<b>34%</b>	7	<b>14%</b>
(b) Review of the source with the sound	23	<b>46%</b>	19	<b>38%</b>
(c) Total review of the source with the sound in the situation (traffic accident with the police, firemen extinguishing the fire, ambulance, street crossroads...)	10	<b>20%</b>	24	<b>48%</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>50</b>		<b>50</b>	

*Chart no. 2: Results review of the children's art works analysis in the Karlavaris's test of the visual ideas for the sound of the horn*

The value of the calculated  $\chi^2 = 9,916$  compared with the limited  $\chi^2$  values **5,991** and **9,210** with the appropriate freedom degree number (**df = 2**) at the given importance levels  **$\alpha 0,05$**  and  **$\alpha 0,001$**  is **bigger**, so one can conclude that **there is the statistically significant difference**, when one talk about the art expression of the visual ideas – **the sound of the horn**, between these two examiners sample.

<b>1/c The sound of the drum</b>	<b>1 group</b>		<b>2 group</b>	
(a)Review of the drum without the sound	10	<b>20%</b>	08	<b>16%</b>
(b)Review of the drum with the sound	28	<b>56%</b>	18	<b>36%</b>
(c)Review of the situations with the human figures (hand and leg movements hitting the drum)	12	<b>24%</b>	24	<b>48%</b>
<b>Total:</b>	<b>50</b>		<b>50</b>	

*Chart no. 3: Results review of the children's art works analysis in the Karlavaris's test of the visual ideas for the sound of the drums*

The value of the calculated  $\chi^2 = 6,396$  compared with the limited  $\chi^2$  values **5,991** **with** the appropriate freedom degree number (**df = 2**) at the given importance levels  **$\alpha 0,05$**  is **bigger**, so one can conclude that **there is the statistically significant difference**, when one talk about the art expression of the visual ideas – **the sound of the drum**, between these two examiners sample.

Considering the fact that in all three cases (**sound of the plane, sound of the horn and sound of the drum**) **there is the statistically significant difference**, one can say that the zero hypothesis that goes



like *there is no difference in the art abilities of the children with whom the kindergarten teachers use music for the stimulation and development of the children`s art expression and art abilities of the children with whom the kindergarten teachers do not use music for stimulation and development of the children`s art expression, which can be seen through the level of the ability of symbolic and sign expression in the children`s art creativity can be rejected, and the alternative can be accepted*, and it goes like this: *there is a difference in the art abilities of the children with whom the kindergarten teachers use music for the stimulation and development of the children`s art expression and art abilities of the children with whom the kindergarten teachers do not use music for stimulation and development of the children`s art expression, which can be seen through the level of the ability of symbolic and sign expression in the children`s art creativity* .

### Results discussion

Speaking of the sounds of the *plane, horn, drum*, B.Karlavaris in his research (1974) concluded that the graphical review of the different sound source of the preschoolers, mostly represent the individual and original solutions, considering the fact that the sounds are not the common theme of the art research and that there are not conventional graphical symbols for those ideas. B.Karlavaris determined then that the preschoolers do not show the actual art narration, even in the way of showing the objects and situations, and that it was more the way of showing the sound production, so the sound phenomenon (they draw the objects of the sound source, significant elements and the procedures of making the sound, as well as its spreading).<sup>3</sup> In this research were especially chosen musical compositions with the certain musical elements as the specific kind of audio stimulation during the art expression of the children of preschool and early school age.

For the first art activity- **the sound of the plane**, the composition "**Glissandi**", by G.Ligeti. The composition consists of the rising and falling glissandos in the dynamic shading from piano to forte. Considering the fact, that glissando is the way of playing, where the tones go fast, supported by the dynamic shading, one can presume that it

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<sup>3</sup> Karlavaris B.: *Art interpretation of the ideas at 3-7 years old children*, Center for the art culture, Novi Sad, 1979, pag. 1-5)

will create the plane movement association at children( for example: the plane taking off- rising glissandos and landing of the plane- falling glissandos). The very beginning of the composition is represented by the chromatic glissando in piano dynamic with the gradual crescendo, which can associate the children on the for example, turning on the engine. In the developmental part of the composition, glissando is played on the kettledrums, which can associate the children on the flying of the plane, and the sound of the engine, so that can stimulate for more successful art expression.

Expansion of the sound and its intensity makes the basic characteristic of the graphical review of the idea (sign) sound. Karlavaris's research showed that the children, during the art creativity, beside the review of the sound production, with the help of the music, brought the experience, so beside the sound review, they showed the real art narration in reviewing the object and situations. It is interesting that the children of this age express (adequate) some important characteristics of these three types of the sound: lasting and the intensity of the plane sound, lasting of the horn sound and the rhythm of the drums, mostly the children that were stimulated by music during the art work.

Considering the elements types, they were mostly expressed by the lines, which represented the dominant expression mean for the sound review. The children showed the sound, mostly by lines (parallel, wavy, spiral, fat or thin lines), and less by mass and the shape.

The children that were stimulated by music, during the art work, move the attention from the review of the soundless plane 20%, to the review of the very sound of the plane 32%. The sound is represented by the letters, lines, pencil of lines, mass, and combinational. There are always continuous shapes and patterns that are present, based on which we translate them as the graphical review of the sound. The planes are shown when flying with the trace and sound (from the front part, wings...), with many details, decorated, with the intention to look like the real ones – mostly the battle planes. The children that were stimulated by music, mostly showed the motion of the plane with the sound( picture of lasting and the sound intensity by line, mass, or shape) in the situation 48%, which showed us that music increased the experience and imagination, where came to the creative visualization of the motives that had been visually shaped by the children. The narration of these art works could be connected to the music elements exposure,

which directly caused certain associations and stimulated the experience. In a way, the presence of certain art elements could be connected to the music elements exposure, which is characteristic for the mentioned composition. For example, the rising and falling glissandos in the dynamic shading from piano to forte formed the association of the movement of a plane, at children, which could be seen in the quality of certain art elements, as well in the way of art structure formation. There is also the stylization of the line in the visual modeling, which is the symbolic review of the movement, in this particular case the plane, through the direction and the quality of the line (vertical, diagonal, long and short lines, etc...). One can notice the increased presence of the complementary relations between the colors that show us the increased audio experience of a child, representing through the visual effects of the complementary colors. The environment is composed authentically in a correlation to the motive experience, where one can see the compound space organization considering the age characteristics. The art compositions, in this case, are mostly composed in the following way: by contrast( through the color); with the emphasized relation of the sizes( emotional disproportion because of the increased experience, in a desire to reach the size and the monumentality of the plane as an object, and the sky, too); with the emphasized dominant – the plane, as the action carrier, speaks about the essence of the art idea; as the unity, made by the harmonically connected art elements into the mutual whole. Here, the stimulation was based on the creative, divergent thinking, which can be seen, not only through the graphical review, but also through the verbal comment of the children with the drawing.

The children that were not exposed to music during the art work, mostly showed the plane without the sound 56% and the review of the plane using lines, mass or shape was present at 34% of the children. Only 10% of the children that were not exposed to music during the art work, showed the movement of the plane with a sound – review of the lasting and the intensity of the plane sound by lines, mass or shape in the situation. There is a consumption that the result of these children`s experience is absolutely because of the individual creative potentials of the children, not the result of the kindergarten teacher work systematization, whose task is to enable the conditions for the creative expression of the children, which means the stimulation of their experience by different contents, in this case, by music.

What is a characteristic of the both children populations is the affirmative fact, as in the research of B.Karlavaris, that the children cannot present the sound of the plane, without the review of the plane that makes it.

For the other art activity – **horn sound**, the selected composition for the listening was “**Ten Pieces for Wind Quintet**” by G.Ligeti. This composition lasts for 2, 12 min. which is compatible to the abilities of the children’s attention during the active music piece listening. The composition was being repeated during the children’s art expression considering the judgment of the kindergarten teacher. This composition was being performed by the performers on the brass instruments – oboe and the clarinet, whose color is in correlation with the actual horn sound. The character of the composition is determined by the monotonous, long continuance of the tones, which are repeating in sequences. There is consumption that this kind of tone associated the children to the horn sound. In the central part of the composition, comes to the simultaneous performance of the theme in the parts of the clarinet and oboe in the canonic aspect. Dynamic relation of the gradual *crescendo* from *mecoforte* to *forte* dynamics, one can assume that the possible “*howling*” sound of the horn was stimulated. At the ending part of the piece, comes to the theme repetition as the monotonous sound in one tone, playing by the oboe, so one can assume that this kind of the ending simulated the experience of the monotonous horn sound.

At this work, the children, that were exposed to music, during the art work often present the source, mostly the means of traffic with the sound 38% (car, ship, police car, fire truck, ambulance), and without the sound 14%. At the children that were not exposed to music, the picture is slightly different, so the review of the source with the sound could be seen at 46%, while the most of the works were without the sound, even 34%.

In the sample of the children that were exposed to music, at the biggest number of children, we have the increased experience of the situation, so the most of the works have the complete review of the situation 48%.(accident with the police, firemen extinguishing the fire, ambulance, street traffic – crossroad). The children present different types of the horns (on the house, ship’s horn, car’s horn, and some music instruments), and then the sound is represented by the lines (wavy, spiral, and dotted), or the letters (U...U...U, Z...Z...Z). So, it is possible to notice a certain difference in the review of the sound, and the

narrative elements. With the children that were not exposed to music, the very small number showed the source with the sound in a situation, that is 20% of the children.

It was noticeable with the children that were exposed to music, during the art work, that the experience of the horn sound was increased, which had been caused by the character of the composition, that is, by the monotonous and long maintenance of the single tones, repeated in sequences. This particular characteristic can be seen in the way of art composition formation, mostly by the symmetry and asymmetry principle, which reflects in the position of the parts according to the whole (the way of presenting the sound spreading through the line types – wavy, pencil of the lines, spiral, dotted, as well as the diagonal lines domination, with a role of increasing the drama, for example: the firemen extinguishing the fire, ambulance, street traffic...). The most common solutions are the asymmetric ones, with the increased repetition, that is, with the repetition of the same, different or similar elements in a certain order, in time intervals, which can be connected to the character of the musical composition, where the central part shows the simultaneous performance of the theme in the parts of the oboe and the clarinet in the canonic aspect. In the art works, one can also notice the rhythm as the composing principle, which also shows in the certain dynamic, pulsing, movement and lasting, at this particular case, of the sound. This kind of characteristic can be connected with the dynamic relation of the music elements, that is, the gradual *crescendo* from *meccoforte* to *forte* dynamic (“howling” sound of the horn).

The same as in the first drawing, neither of the sample has the review of the sound itself, but the sound with the source, in the situation and the way in which it occurs.

For the third art activity – **drum sound**, the chosen composition was “**Bolero**” by M.Ravel. Considering the fact that the drum is a percussion instrument without the certain tone pitch, in order to notice its importance during the children`s listening to music, it was necessary to chose the composition in which the musical theme would be given to this instrument, where is dominantly presented, what actually was the case with *Bolero*, by M.Ravel. The beginning of the composition has the simple rhythmical structure in three quarters, and with the repetition of the same model through the whole composition, while the melodic theme was given to different instruments. In the developmental part of the composition, the rhythmical light motive was given to the drums in

*forte* dynamics, so the consumption was, that this sound culmination would make a great impression, the trace of the drum sound, during the art expression of the children, which was represented by the repetition as the composing principle, and in this case it had the decorative character, which, in a certain sense could be the characteristic in the musical composition that the children had been listening during the art work.

### **Conclusion**

The goal of this research was to enlighten the most all the creative potentials of the preschool children in an aspect that referred to the mixture of the music and art creativity. It was noticed, that the children that were exposed to music during the art work, showed the increased *need* for representation of their experiences and relations towards the musical contents, as much clear as they can, through the art expressions. Speaking of the musical specificities, this kind of art engagements, simplified the presentation of the level of children's creative abilities and sensibilities. Especially these works were precious in the attempts of understanding the children's experiences and their conditions during the listening of the instrumental pieces of the music. What did the music "tell", and what was their mood like while listening, as well as the other conditions, the children often expressed by using the art means, and then, they used the verbal means in order to describe the music understanding, that is, to describe their art expression, and in that way, the children's art works that we saw in this research, were in the direct and indirect relation with the ways of the children's music creativity.

In this research, one came to the certain knowledge which is precious for the further art education and art culture methodology improvement. It was noticeable that with the children that had been stimulated by music during the art work, was significantly expressed the *intellectually – narrative level* (what and how the children present) and the *idea – sign level* (from the position of children forming the visual signs for ideas, that is, how they find, from the idea meaning, the basis for the visually coded sign). With the children that had not been stimulated by music during the art work, one could notice the lower creatively –emotional level, comparing to the intellectually-art level, where moving these two components away from each other, as well as

decreasing the creatively-emotional component, leads to the routine, repetition of already learned, that is, to the non-creative ideas.

The results of this research show that one can influence the intellectually-art level, creatively-emotional, and the shaped level, as well, by using the systematically chosen themes, and even the methodical ways in the art education of the children. In this case, music was the extremely powerful stimulus that influences the children perception and experience. Based on the results of the research, one can conclude, that there was a special, almost organic connection between the music and art creativity of the preschool children. The art expression, as the way of the communication, is connected to the speech in general, and especially for the literary expression. The sounds of music, as well as the speech, can give very strong impulses for the art creativity. Music can be listened together with observation of an art work that is similar by the character. Music can follow reading of a text from the literature that can be illustrated. Also, using the rhythm and music, the children can make alive their figures made from the different material. Music can “tell a story” that will be represented by art: jolly melody will suggest using the warmer and more vivid colors, while the gloomy will suggest using the darker shades, etc. For the certain sounds, children can make up their own visual signs (drum sign, guitar, horn, plane, etc.). Verbal explanations of these signs are very much interesting and heterogeneous, individually experienced and expressed. Music can be connected to the dance: folk, modern, classic, with the free interpretation of the dynamic solutions in the review of the movement or making the decorative costumes. Children can , spontaneously play and integrate the acting, gesture, movement, sound, color and the word, so – to frame one content with the different activities that enable their connected expression.

The results of this research confirm the thesis that music can increase the experience at children, so with that, the very art expression, and that is why it is very much important to chose particular musical contents that are able to induce and increase the visualization of the certain motives at the children.

One can conclude that the preschool and low school periods of children`s age, are the most important for the connection between the art education and the other aspects of the educational work, especially musical education, and that connection should be in correlation to the

children's needs, abilities and the nature of their personality development.

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## **PHONETIC, GRAMMATICAL AND LEXICAL ASPECT OF THE LOW SCHOOL AGE CHILD LANGUAGE**

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**Abstract:** Language is defined as a communication system that uses words, both written and spoken, and a particular way of combining them. In other words we may say that the genuine language is made up of vocabulary and grammar. The vocabulary comprises all the words in a language that have meaning.

It is known that in speech there are two categories of sounds: vowels and consonants (also known as phonemes). Vowels are proper sounds (musical sounds) and they originate in continuous air emission which causes the vocal chords to vibrate. The differences among the vowels depend on the form the mouth takes and on the position of the tongue when pronouncing.

Since the learning of reading requires the correct differentiation of all the phonemes of the language, the teacher will try to improve the children's speech hearing and the functions of the phonatory system (articulation). Therefore systematic exercises of phonetic analysis of the words are necessary, as well as those of distinguishing the sounds in syllables and words, of finding words with identical mutual sounds.

**Keywords:** sound, phoneme, word, language, vocabulary.

While speaking we pronounce tenth and hundreds of sounds, each of them being made by a special combination of the position of these organs. While speaking our vocal chords, maxillaries, tongue, lips must execute many very fine movements that are very complicated, very fast and perfectly coordinated. All these movements and movement combinations are learnt by the child by hearing those around them speaking and they imitate this speaking.

The word, as a unit between a meaning and an articulate sonant complex, is at the level of collocations structure and of the sentence, the minimal unit of this level. It expresses a certain concept, a generalized

form of reflecting the objective reality in the human's mind through his material side.

From an expressive point of view, namely a strictly phonematic one, it is noticed that this structure has as units: the syllable, the phoneme, the accent, the intonation. For example the word **copil (child)**

syllable	-----	syllable
co		pil
CV		CVC

In this scheme we note: C – consonant; V – vowel;

The word is analyzed in smaller sound units but without a certain meaning, these being called syllables. On the other hand, the syllables are made up of irreducible identities which are in fact articulate sounds or phonemes, the smallest sound units of a language.

The analysis of the words in constitutive parts goes as far as the sound – phoneme. This is the distinct function to make up and differentiate the words and grammatical forms of the words. For example the word **țară** (country) is made up of four sounds – phonemes: ț-a-r-ă. The same word differs from the word **pară** (pear), phonematically speaking, only by one different sound namely the phoneme “p”. In the same way we can establish a whole range of words: **bară** (beam), **gară** (station), **cară** (carry), **zară** (butter – milk), **vară** (summer), **nară** (nostrils), etc. The opposition among the initial consonants of these words distinguishes the words from one another and brings a change at the content level: the word has a different meaning.

If in this case the sound – phoneme had a semantic value of distinguishing the meaning of the words, in other cases, at a morphologic level, the sound – phoneme has a grammatical value. The same word **țară** (country) can have the form **țări** (countries). The sounds “ă” and “i” have a morphologic value within the declension as mutations and plural signs.

But most the times the words are different due to part or all of their sounds or because of the lexical or grammatical classes (declension, conjugation): **socru-soacră-unei soacre** (father-in-law, mother-in-law, to a mother-in-law), **văd-vezi** (I see, you see), **învăț-înceți** (I learn, you learn), **joc-joacă-jucăm** (game-play-we play), **iau-luăm-vom lua** (I take-we take-we shall take), etc.

The process of learning reading in school must be organized in such a way as to give the students the possibility to learn easily but correctly the pronunciation of sounds in the various combinations of

syllables in words, to recognize the letters and then perceiving them from the complex of syllables and words to be able to transform them back to sounds.

The language of the child continues to develop in school and under the aspect of grammatical structure. Even though when he comes to school, the child already practically controls the grammatical language of language – he knows how to decline and conjugate, but without knowing what declension and conjugation mean.

By learning grammar in school, the child learns to perceive words and sentences as language phenomena that have certain rules, he also learns to mind not only the content of his language but also the grammatical aspect, to notice and obey grammatical rules. The requirements of correct speaking grammatically speaking are noticeable mainly in the written language, therefore the learning of this language contributes to the improvement of the spoken language. Concurrently, the learning of grammar contributes to the improvement of thinking because precise and grammatically correct discourse is an important requirement of logical thinking.

The child's vocabulary improves continuously during school and is qualitatively restructured. The child's words are corrected and their generalization function grows. The child's language improves with different terms and verbal expressions and little by little with a scientific terminology.

Enriching the language knowledge from one grade to the other must not be conceived as quantitative learning but as a process that determines the growth of the students' possibilities to work with the abstract and to develop their capabilities and habits of using communication and expressivity resources of their mother tongue.

“The ideas, knowledge and feelings are expressed through words, through speech or the translation in writing. To make the child able to speak his mother tongue correctly and to understand it properly means to serve both the individual and the society.” (R. Dottrens, *To educate and teach*, E.D.P., Bucharest, 1980, p. 79)

The most part of the rules of the natural language are learnt in an unconscious way. Even though they function unconsciously, the rules can be made explicit under certain conditions. The rules of the natural language tend to become usual and they are “part of the implicit memory”. (M. Miclea, *Cognitive Psychology*, Gloria SRL Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 2000, p.52)

The learning of grammatical notions by the students represents a complex process. They have a distinctive characteristic which determines certain particularities of the process of forming them.

The grammar studies the constitutive elements of the language, the rules regarding the changing of the forms of the words and their combination in sentences. The main elements used by grammar are words which are abstract themselves. Words such as: om (man), masă (table), tablou (painting), urs (bear), copil (child) – are nouns, this means that they belong to the totality of words that belong to a speech part which is characterized by the fact that it designates in the large meaning of this term, the beings, things, natural phenomena, etc, changing according to number, case, article, etc.

A grammatical concept cannot be understood if it is taken separately, if it is taken out of a certain context. For example the definition of the subject as the main part of the sentence can be learnt only by understanding the verb which is also correctly understood only after it is correlated with the subject. This is also true for other grammatical concepts.

So the grammatical concepts are proper learnt only by understanding the relation between them and the process of using them in discourse. Due to their high level of generalization, grammatical concepts cannot be understood unless they are used in speaking.

After the grammatical concepts have been learnt, they must be consolidated and systematized periodically, after certain learning periods established by the criteria determined by the structure of the curriculum and text book, by the structure of the school year or, it applies, this is considered to be necessary by the teacher.

During the first grades the child's language develops. The main characteristic of language development during the school period lies in the fact that the language becomes a learning object and consequently is consciously and systematically learnt on scientific basis under all its important aspects: phonetic, lexical (including semantic), grammatical, stylistic, etc.

The oral form is continuously developing in the learning process, the written language having a very important part in the conscious development of the language, both as a way of communication and as an instrument of thinking.

As it is known, the written language widens man's communication and knowing possibilities. The students that have learnt

this language form can express themselves and can communicate to an absent person their ideas, feelings and intentions.

By using the written language, a child can express his thoughts, affective experience, plans to other people with whom they communicate in writing or of a text books authors who are alive or dead. The requirements of the child regarding the written language are higher than those regarding the spoken language. The written expression of the knowledge must obey a series of grammatical, orthographical, stylistic rules and norms; it must be consistent, coherent and explicit in order to be able to be understood by the one that reads it.

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## **A BIRDS-EYE-VIEW PRESENTATION OF CRITICAL PEDAGOGY**

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**Abstract:** This paper attempts a bird-eye-view presentation of critical pedagogy. It starts by trying to define critical pedagogy and its main features, and then continues with a brief presentation of the theories and theorists that highly influenced critical pedagogy. The final part of this paper outlines a few concepts that I consider important if we take into consideration the implications of critical pedagogy in the classroom.

**Keywords:** critical pedagogy, teaching, Paulo Freire, Frankfurt School

Critical pedagogy has been shaped by numerous philosophical ideas and continues to be expanded and transformed through the work of contemporary educators. Because the term has undergone many revisions and transformations, researchers cannot come up with just one definition of critical pedagogy. To Kincheloe (2004) critical pedagogy is “the concern with transforming oppressive relations of power in a variety of domains that lead to human oppression” (p. 45). According to Darder et al. (2003), “critical pedagogy is fundamentally committed to the development and evolution of a culture of schooling that supports the empowerment of culturally marginalized and economically disenfranchised students” (p. 11).

Traditionally, critical pedagogy is an educational theory that raises the learners’ critical awareness regarding social conditions that are oppressive. Through critical pedagogies, researchers strive to create a society based on egalitarianism, understanding and acceptance of its members, regardless of race, colour, and religion. Thus, critical pedagogy also has a political component as pedagogues struggle to challenge and hopefully transform oppressive social conditions.

Although challenged by its critics as being a highly theoretical endeavor, critical pedagogy is also concerned with teaching and learning practices that empower and give agency to students. The classroom component of critical pedagogy is evident in its concern with teacher - student relationships, and its constant challenge of the teacher's role as the 'all-knowing' and the student's role as the 'passive receiver.' Critical pedagogy argues for a classroom where meaningful dialogue produces new experiences for both the teachers and the students.

The most renowned critical educator is the Brazilian Paulo Freire, whose emancipatory work can be traced to the critical theory of the Frankfurt School. A major component of Freire's work was the focus on the development of a critical consciousness. The liberatory education advocated by Freire prepares the students for engaging in social struggles that challenge oppressive social conditions. It is hoped that by empowering students with the necessary tools for critiquing oppressiveness, a more just society will be formed (Freire, 2003).

With time, Freire's critical pedagogy has been expanded and transformed into theories that shifted the focus from class to include race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age, nationality, etc. Thus, new theories have emerged, among which feminist, postcolonial, postmodern, and homosexuality are just a few. These new theories maintained Freire's emphasis on critique, challenging oppressive regimes and social change, but have also adopted postmodern ideas of identity, language, and power.

Critical pedagogy theory was highly influenced by the following theories and theorists: The Frankfurt School, Paulo Freire, postmodernism, and Henry A. Giroux. The "Frankfurt School" refers to the work of the Institute of Social Research, founded on February 3, 1923 at the University of Frankfurt. The Institute came into being as a response to Germany's political struggles that eventually saw the rise to power of Nazi Germany. The Frankfurt School was made up of educators that advocated the neo-Marxist social theory, an approach that incorporated elements of critical theory, psychoanalysis, sociology and others. Among these, critical theory was the term most widely associated to the Frankfurt School (Cowen, 2003). The Frankfurt School also challenged the concept of meaning and other traditional forms of rationality in the Western world (Darder et al., 2003). Basically, critical theory critiques the society in the hope of changing it to the better. This characteristic of critical theory is also evident in the critical pedagogy advocated by Paulo Freire, who is recognised as "the most influential educational philosopher in the development of critical pedagogical thought and practice" (Darder et al., 2003, p. 5). His best-known

contribution to critical pedagogy is the *banking concept of education* in which the teacher is the 'bank' and the students are the empty 'accounts' waiting to be filled by the teacher (Freire, 2003). By placing this concept in context with educational theories and practices, Freire established the foundation of critical pedagogy. Freire addressed not only issues of methodology and teaching practice in his writings, but he also dealt with issues of power, culture, and oppression, all placed in the context of schooling (Darder et al., 2003).

Postmodernism is a problematic term to define, given that many theorists use it to categorise their work. Postmodern critical educators encourage their students to have diverse responses to classroom discussions, responses that cannot be anticipated in advance not even by their own teachers. Such situations are seen by postmodern critical educators as opportunities for creating a forum for discussion that allows and emphasises differences (Giroux, 1994).

Critical pedagogy evolved from the need to put in order radical theories, beliefs, and practices that contributed to the emancipation of democratic schooling in many schools, especially in the United States. The term 'critical pedagogy' was first used by Henry Giroux in his book, *Theory and Resistance in Education*, published in 1983. He argued that critical pedagogy was a movement that emerged from different social and educational radical movements and had the purpose of linking schooling to democratic principles of society and speaking up for the oppressed communities. Alongside with the work of other critical educators, such as Paulo Freire, bell hooks, and Peter McLaren, and many others, Giroux's work had an important role in the revival of educational debates about democratic schooling in the United States (Darder et al., 2003).

Henry Giroux has argued that the way media represents youth is determined by the corporate culture it serves. Following the line set up by Paulo Freire, in Henry Giroux's opinion, educators have to address their students' context of every day life. This cannot be done without first understanding the students. Because of the power that the media has in shaping the students' cultural context, Giroux calls for a critical examination of the media and the cultural artifacts generated by it. In Giroux's view, critical media pedagogy has the role of questioning the interests served by corporate media and provides resistance for those who are silenced and / or oppressed by it (Giroux, 2005). Critical educators, such as Henry A. Giroux, bell hooks, and Peter McLaren, based their critique of globalization, mass media, and race issues on critical pedagogy theory, suggesting possibilities for improvement and change. The dialectical character of critical pedagogy,



its immense possibility to empower students, the hidden curriculum and cultural politics are areas of great importance for educators who strive to create a critical classroom. An important feature of critical pedagogy is its dialectical character. Dialectical theories consider that the problems of society are not isolated events, but that these problems form a network of connections between the individual and the society. As individuals, we are created by the social environment in which we live, and that is why the connection between individual and society is interwoven. Reference to the individual must, by implication, represent reference to society simultaneously. The dialectical aspect of critical pedagogy helps educators and researchers see the school both as a place of indoctrination through instructions and as a place of empowerment and self-transformation. Schools can, at the same time, empower students with regards to issues of social justice, but also can reproduce dominant class interests that have the purpose of creating obedient workers (McLaren, 2003). Empowerment means knowledge and self-awareness. Empowerment is understood as the student's ability to critically arrogate knowledge outside their daily experience, thus broadening their understanding of the world and themselves. Empowering also means teaching students critical skills that give them the necessary tools to question the dominant culture, and to transform the social order they live in, rather than just be part of it (McLaren, 2003). Critical education theorists consider that the curriculum of a school is more than just a syllabus, a program of study, or a classroom text. The curriculum does more than that. It prepares the students for their future role in society as a dominant or a subordinate class. This is done through the forms of knowledge that the curriculum favours, often benefiting dominant groups and excluding subordinate ones. According to McLaren (2003), 'the hidden curriculum' is "the unintended outcomes of the schooling process." (p.86) Critical educators have observed the fact that students are influenced not only by the standardised learning environment practiced by a certain school, but also by the rules of conduct imposed, classroom management and the pedagogical procedures adopted by the teachers. The hidden curriculum also includes the teaching and learning styles advocated by the classroom teacher, by the instructional environment, the schooling structure decided by the government, the teacher's expectations and the testing and grading policy of the school. Thus, through the hidden curriculum, the students learn to comply with practices related to authority, behaviour and morality supported by the dominant class (McLaren, 2003).

The curriculum is also viewed by critical educational theorists as a form of cultural politics. The term cultural politics draws attention to the

political consequence of the teachers and the students who are part of dominant and subordinate classes. This means that when researchers analyse contemporary schooling systems they also have to take into consideration social, cultural, economical and political aspects. A curriculum based on cultural politics links critical social theory to a variety of practices which help teachers deconstruct and critically examine traditions and educational systems that are dominant. It is also in the interest of critical educators to devise teaching systems and practices that empower students in life both in and out of school (McLaren, 2003).

This essay gave a birds-eye-view presentation of critical pedagogy. It started by outlining possible definitions of critical pedagogy, and presented the theorists who helped shape the theories that critical pedagogy is based on. It then looked further at some of most relevant feature of critical pedagogy to classroom practice. The writer of this essay acknowledges the fact the critical pedagogy is a complex teaching approach with numerous ramifications and that the present paper only scratches the surface.

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## **CHARACTERISTICS OF PRE-ADOLESCENTS SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT TO THE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF SECONDARY EDUCATION**

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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. In addition to these changes and preadolescent specific features, we mention the shaping of another student's specific educational activity, resulting from its new features that begin to manifest with the passage of the secondary school student. Taking into account the major changes that take place during the preadolescent period, numerous authors characterize this period as being one of “juvenile crisis”, “a dramatic mood”, “a stormy age”, due to the permanent oscillations between affective moods and extreme attitudes, between the status of a child and the status of an adult, due to the opposite reactions as compared to the previous ones. We believe that we cannot speak of a crisis as long as the features, events and transformations of this age are within the limits of normality. What can impress the parents or teachers is the rudeness and the fastness of some manifestations. Transformation and restructuring that occur during this period may favor the emergence of behavioral disturbances, but it depends on factors such as the external environment in which the child lives, which can stimulate or prevent such events. We speak of a crisis, but the educational one, where these changes are met wrongly, in an inadequate educational environment without having the basic psycho-pedagogical information.

**Keywords:** preadolescents, basic education, international and national educational policies, difficulties of school adaptation, educational crisis.

### **1. Goals of basic education in international and national educational policies**

Secondary education is an integral part of basic education, whose importance is emphasized in international and national

educational policy documents. It is an essential step in preparing for life, the child learns "how to learn" and is able to decide on the path that he/she will follow in the future, in which he/she forms and develops skills in the areas of oral and written language, mathematics, problem solving, science, communication, optimal integration in the sphere of work and in society as a whole.

One of the fundamental principles formulated by UNESCO and reaffirmed by the International Commission for Education in the 21st century targets the vital need for basic education, which is a major problem in all countries, and must include the millions of illiterate adults, and children out of school, children leaving school after the first year of study. In this regard, the Commission recommends (J. Delors, 2000):

- Designing the curriculum for basic education so as to stimulate the love for knowledge and education, to include skills, abilities and knowledge essential to human development;

- Improve basic education through enhancing the traditional elements of the primary programs: reading, writing, arithmetic skills, capability of expression, conversation and understanding skills

- Reconsideration of the teacher-student relationships, whose importance should not be minimized in relation to modern technological means of transmitting information.

References on the creation of conditions necessary to make sure that all children have access to basic education, are found in the Child Rights Convention, which states the obligation of Member States:

- a). "To ensure free and compulsory primary education for everybody;

- b). to encourage the development of different forms of secondary, general and professional education and to allow all children access to them and to take appropriate measures such as introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need, (...) "(Article 28).

*The Framework of Action* adopted at the World Conference on Education for All Jomtiem (1990) and adopted as the conclusion of the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000, provide directions and strategies aimed at making available good quality basic education to all individuals of a (especially for those disadvantaged workgroups) improving the quality of primary education and teacher training, school achieve measurable results, especially in reading and writing, computer

skills and essential life skills, recognition of diverse individual educational needs.

Basic education, performed in compulsory education, provides the necessary skills to access further learning, lifelong learning, an idea given in the first key message of the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning, developed by the European Commission in October, 2000: "new basic skills for all".

The new basic competences mentioned in the conclusions of the European Council in Lisbon, concretely presented in a list of areas of knowledge and competence broadly defined, of interdisciplinary nature, can be also encountered at the level of compulsory education in Romania, being included in *The National Development Plan 2007-2013*:

- the study of at least two foreign languages (the first foreign language appears in the curriculum as compulsory from elementary education, and the second starting from the 5th grade);

- the interest in culture, achieved both in the formal system of education, in the curricular area "Arts", and in extracurricular activities;

- the training in information and communications technology area is realised in the elementary and secondary school in optional subjects or extracurricular activities and, starting with the first level of high school (or Arts and Crafts school) it is included in the common branch;

- the development of competences of the type "learn how to learn" is a priority at the level of compulsory education;

- entrepreneurial culture is achieved at all levels of compulsory education, in subjects such as practical abilities (elementary level), technological education (secondary level), entrepreneurial education and elements of education for business (high school level or professional schools).

The new configuration of competences is generated by the need for each person's active participation to the economy and society of knowledge, in the productive activity, family life and all levels of life in the community (locally and at European level). In order to achieve active and responsible participation in the productive and social activity of the community, there is a need to become aware of and put into practice the new perspective on the role of the school: shifting the accent from the content of subjects to the formation of adaptation skills (learning how to learn), assimilating values, attitudes, lifestyles, putting

into practice the things learnt, offering models and actions necessary to the adaptation to the real world.

Within the Romanian education system, compulsory education, beginning at the age of 6-7 years and lasting to 10 years (by attending primary and lower secondary with two successive cycles, secondary and junior high), holds a basic strategic position. The future levels of education, the future development of the Romanian society, her affirmation as a society of knowledge and learning depend on the quality of the education and learning achieved during this stage.

Emphasizing the role of compulsory education among the tasks proposed at the resolution "*School at a Crossroads*" - *Change and continuity in the curriculum of compulsory education*, the National Council for Curriculum suggests:

- Establishing clear priorities for educational policies, focusing on compulsory education, given its relations with other levels of education, including higher or tertiary education;
- Increased consistency of the curriculum for compulsory education through the development of interdependencies between disciplines in the curriculum areas both horizontally (at the same level of schooling) and vertically (in the curricular cycle);
- Considering the development of compulsory education as a priority, with adequate budgetary allocations and by stimulating partnerships between schools, communities, employers, unions, economic and cultural units.

In the same study, proposals are made on the policies applied in compulsory education:

- Considering the educational level of compulsory education as a whole, distinct and specific, based on the continuity of primary and secondary education stage. To ensure this continuity, it is recommended: considering the duration and curriculum of compulsory education activities as an integrated whole, operating within the formal structure of education with curriculum defined in the regulatory cycles of the National Curriculum, to improve consistency of compulsory education curriculum based on curricular courses and their sequencing.
- Schooling for all, regardless of environment (social, residential, ethnic) background and level of intellectual capacity and eliminate school leaving by adopting effective solutions tailored to each situation;

- Recovery of all those who have left school or were not enrolled, by providing effective alternatives of coming back to school / school recuperation.

## **2. Characteristics of pre-adolescent students' school activities**

Each stage of age has certain bio-psychical and social characteristics, having different mechanisms and resources of adaptation, specific possibilities and limitations. Not knowing or ignoring the physical evolution of the child, the evolution of characteristics, functions and psychic processes, progress and difficulties specific to every age, can generate difficulties of adaptation with severe consequences in the development of the adolescent's personality.

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.

Pre-adolescence, as stage in the ontogenetic development, ranging between the ages of 10-11 to 14-15, also known as mid-school period, marks the ending of childhood and the beginning of maturity stages, the beginning of integration in adult society. Its main characteristic is the intense development of personality. It is a period characterized by spectacular changes, which shall include: increased growth process, changes in intense psychosomatic, cognitive development, especially the thinking that goes into developing a new level of mental activity characterized by the ability of interiorization , increasing aspiration towards independence, autonomy and increased self-awareness.

Due to the dramatic changes that occur at this stage of transition from childhood to adult status, the literature often gives a special meaning to the preadolescent age as compared to other ages. Thus we find in antiquity at Aristotle, Quintilian, Lucretius and Seneca, concerns that were shaped in education, research, observations and descriptions of puberty works, and then the works of the classics. Referring to the

remarkable leaps that are carried out biologically, psychologically and socially, JJ Rousseau describes in "Emile or on education" as "second birth", a crucial period in mental development, calling it the instruction period, development of reason, when, due to the curiosity to discover the truth, the child is apt to begin the study.

In addition to these changes and preadolescent specific features, we mention the shaping of another student's specific educational activity, resulting from its new features that begin to manifest with the passage of the secondary school student:

- Contact with more teachers into secondary schools and their expectations of conduct aimed at specific secondary school students, generate a new image of the teacher, a new type of teacher-student relationship and this is particularly distinguished by a neutral affective teacher-student relationship to.

- Need to adapt to different styles of teaching behavior and evaluation of teachers, meaning: degree of stringency different teaching methods and different evaluation, different personality features. In these circumstances a new requirement to adapt is created, whose result could be a slight downward trend on school performance.

- Diversification of school subjects and increasing complexity of their content, which requires the need to adapt to new learning capacity demands and requirements and has the effect of: acquisition of several ways to learn, develop preferences for certain fields of study, mobilizing skills to appropriately respond to new demands, diversify the motivation behind the learning activity, increase their capacity to self-forces and self-knowledge capacity.

- Reduction of free time and increase the number of hours assigned to independent study in preparation for lessons;

- Strengthening relations between students, representing solidarity in reaction to the requests of teachers. It appears that girls are more conscientious and disciplined in carrying out school tasks and that there is a slight separation between girls and boys, but also forms of rivalry or competition.

### **3. Experimental investigation regarding the difficulties preadolescents experience in connection with secondary school specific requirements**

In a broader experimental investigations carried out on a sample of students in the fifth grade, where we intended to make the partners of



education aware of the difficulties of adapting to the specific requirements of preadolescent students' secondary school environment, we started from the need to identify the changes in the school activities which raised the greatest difficulties for students. To investigate this variable, we used a questionnaire-based survey, and we obtained the data summarized in Table no. 1:

**Table no. 1: When you were in the fifth grade, did you experience any changes in your school activities? Which of these changes did you find the most difficult?**

	Frequent	%
Each subject is taught by another teacher	22	44,9
The subject matters are more numerous and more difficult as compared with the 4th grade	11	22,4
Free time is significantly reduced	10	20,4
The relation with the teachers is different as compared with the relation with the primary school teacher	5	10,2
Assessment is carried out through grades	1	2,0
Total	49	100,0

The data presented show that the main difficulty faced by students in secondary education is that every subject is taught by another teacher, each with a different teaching style, formulating different requirements, using different teaching methods and evaluation and the student is forced to adapt to all these requirements. Also, increasing the number of school subjects studied and the degree of difficulty of their content, and reduce leisure time, are perceived as difficult. The preadolescents in the fifth grade are forced to adapt to all these requirements.

Correlating this with the results of the students at the end of the first semester of fifth grade, we found that students with the lowest average considered the main difficulty the different teaching style of each teacher (Table no. 2). The collected data point out the need to conduct activities that contribute to an appropriate learning style and new school requirements assimilation techniques and strategies for increasing learning efficiency.

**Table no. 2: overall average grade - the 1st semester \* When you went in the 5th grade you faced some changes in school activities. Which of the following seemed the most difficult?**

When you went in the 5th grade you faced some changes in school activities. Which of the following seemed the most difficult?	average	number
Each subject is taught by another teacher	8,8555	22
The subject matters are more numerous and more difficult as compared with the 4th grade	9,3245	11
Free time is significantly reduced	9,3640	10
The relation with the teachers is different as compared with the relation with the primary school teacher	9,0640	5
Assessment is carried out through grades	9,2000	1
Total	9,0929	49

#### **4. Data analysis and data interpretation**

In terms of the change of the teacher-student relationship, this is determined by a new image of the teacher (which usually differs from that of the primary school teacher): less affectionate, less tolerant, more demanding, more authoritarian. Once they get into the 5th grade, the students are confronted with an "affective neutrality" of the teachers, unlike the primary school, where, even if there is a weight restriction compared to the kindergarten or the family, this restriction is now more pronounced.

Starting from the fact that relations between teachers and students are an important factor in school adjustment, the best type of teacher-student relationship is considered to be conditioned by the existence of qualities, attitudes and skills of the teacher: respect and love for children, tact, teaching understanding, openness, intuition and sensitivity, potential for interaction with students. The best type of teacher-student relationship involves removing authoritarianism and promote democratic relations by combining management of the teacher education process by fostering individuality of each student by offering students the opportunity to express their opinions, options, but at the same time, by creating their own sense of responsibility regarding the

school results obtained. But the teacher's option for a particular type of relationship should take into account the age of the students and classroom characteristics. According to the thesis formulated by Parsons, the relationship between education and pre-school children should be based on affection, in primary education by particularism and affection, in secondary education on emotional neutrality and universalism (D. Sălăvăstru, 2004). Finding the appropriate tone in relations with students, based on knowledge of individual peculiarities and possibilities of development of each is one of the most effective means of achieving satisfactory academic results from students who have difficulties. Combining demanding with supporting positive student self-confidence and its manifestation is another condition to achieve a good adaptation of the student in school.

Another pedagogical aspect can be a difficulty for some students refers to different teaching styles of each teacher, which manifests itself through different teaching methods and different evaluation techniques. In these circumstances, the student is forced to adapt to the requirements of each, which are diversified in terms of quality and quantity. Therefore, it is considered necessary that all teachers should coordinate the requirements for the disagreement or contradiction between the requirement not to give students an opportunity to justify their negative conduct or to adopt a critical attitude towards teachers. In excess of zeal, some teachers require excessive effort in preparing lessons from students in the subject they taught, regardless of dosage requirements in relation to efforts to prepare students for all learning objects. This causes overloading students, reduced labor efficiency concerns and other educational items. The price of great efforts, some students fail to meet the object of education claims that are overworked, threatening to become mediocre in other disciplines.

To these we can add other common mistakes in behavior, attitude, related to the teaching style of each professor:

- the teacher who does not take into account the individual characteristics of students, and does not know their intellectual capabilities and limitations;

- the teacher who protects the student and the teacher who does not give the possibility of affirmation, independence and initiative, confining his thinking, creativity;

- the indulgent teacher, lacking firmness, unable to impose appropriate school conduct requirements to the students;

➤ incompetent teacher who fails to make himself heard or respected by students.

Development of effective educational approaches tailored to the educational needs of the students, should be a permanent and central concern of teachers, along with introduction to theoretical and practical issues aimed at modernizing the educational process, such as promoting inter-disciplinary perspective in teaching learning (the development of synthetic lessons in interdisciplinary teams, the development of interdisciplinary connections, promoting interdisciplinary and non-formal activities), harmonization and articulation of the content of formal, non formal and informal education, promoting and organizing the principle of lifelong learning in the educational activity; effective integration into the educational process of active learning, participatory, interactive methods and computer technology, concern for developing skills.

The social context has changed considerably; the growth and continued development of information and knowledge generate difficulties in the process of selection and organization of the learning content. This necessarily requires a change of vision and teaching style, an adaptation of the teaching staff to the new situation, a rethinking and review of the classic triad of educational objectives (knowledge, attitudes, skills, and abilities). If classical pedagogy favors the accumulation of knowledge, education and training aimed at major transfer of knowledge, at present, education should pay considerable attention to the attitudes and skills training (living values and applying information) to help the individual guide to select and use information science and technology. Its transition to a knowledge-centered education at school or training center enables the student to use the skills, attitudes, and self-training in order to adapt to the changing world.

The increase of the educational subjects and the degree of difficulty of their content is another aspect that fifth grade students must adapt. An attitude of indifference or carelessness on the part of students regarding some objects may be caused by:

- disparity between assessment results and student's opinion of himself/herself;
- subjective attitude of the teacher to the student and wrong appreciation of the;

➤ lack of responsiveness of teachers to pupils' progress trends (the student will lose his confidence, will become disinterested in continuing the effort) (V Radulian, 1967). Instead, preference and attraction of students for the learning object can be determined by their sympathy and respect towards the teacher (Ghe. Tomşa, 2001).

During this period, learning becomes more organized and it gets a more powerful emotional load. It emphasizes a preference for certain objects of education, thus some educational and vocational tendencies are outlined. Once with the formation of their own thinking style, they form a style of learning.

Designing curricula and alternative textbooks, specific to secondary education by meeting the educational paradigm that emphasizes adaptation to the educational needs of school children, allowing each to follow "his personal journey of growth and development" (M. Stanciu, 1999, p . 210), the transition from discipline-centered curriculum to student-centered curricula, giving up overloading curricula, generating a gap between requirements and capabilities, learning abilities of students, and organizing content in a predominantly intra-view as well as inter-and transdisciplinary elements will provide students with the essential elements of each disciplines.

M. Stanciu (1999), in a reference work dealing with reform issues at all levels of education, identifies a number of features that preserve the contents of education which may be premises of the best school and social adaptation of the students:

- Adaptation of the learning content to specific requirements of a democratic society by promoting national values, which are open to European and world culture and civilization, promoting an intercultural dimension;

- The contents of education should be characterized by openness to the concrete problems of life, preparing the individual for life, and openness to contemporary world problems materialized through formal content, but also the non-formal and informal content;

- Develop content in order to contribute to human change, to predict and control change;

- Ensuring an integrated character by promoting interdisciplinary content, through optional subjects

- Extracting the most important issues from the content (both in the development of curricula and textbooks and the educational process in class) to avoid information overload and ensure application of

knowledge learned theoretical and practical contexts;  
- Selection and circulation of knowledge which are operational in nature, with applicability in different situations.

Increase number of disciplines studied and their degree of difficulty has as a consequence an increase in the hours allocated to individual study and thus reduce the free time of the students. To streamline the activity, the preadolescent must be supported and guided. The time units of an ordinary day in the life of preadolescents can be divided as follows (T. Cosma, 2001):

- time spent in school: 5-6 hours;
- time to prepare lessons: 3-4 hours;
- time for sleep and rest: 9 hours;
- time for personal needs: 1-2 hours;
- free time: 2 hours;
- other activities: 1-2 hours.

Using the evaluation system through qualifications is one aspect of modernization of the assessment, which involves the evaluation of school reform. This eliminates the stress of evaluation marks, the media and the obsession of the school year end awards and selective assimilation facilitates knowledge skills and abilities to form at the expense of learning based mainly on memorization and automatic replication of knowledge. The transition to lower secondary level involves an adaptation of students to another system of evaluation of knowledge, one based on marks.

### **Conclusions**

Taking into account the major changes that take place during the preadolescent period, numerous authors characterize this period as being one of “juvenile crisis”, “a dramatic mood”, “a stormy age”, due to the permanent oscillations between affective moods and extreme attitudes, between the status of a child and the status of an adult, due to the opposite reactions as compared to the previous ones: negativism, individualism, disobedience etc. Among these authors we note American psychologist G. Stanley Hall, the first author to launch this opinion on the crisis nature of the preadolescent age (A. Munteanu, 1998). These views were built under the influence of Freud's studies that design puberty as a time of sexual repression and sublimation. But there is another category of authors who, while recognizing the transformation that occurs at this stage, do not share the idea of "crisis"

of the preadolescent. M. Debesse believes that while mental development is intense, this is already marked out by the lines of childhood, establishing some continuity and opposes the idea of crisis, highlighting the basic characteristic of puberty: harmonization of the disharmonic sides and recovery some mental qualities insufficiently developed during the previous stages.

We also believe that we cannot speak of a crisis as long as the features, events and transformations of this age are within the limits of normality. What can impress the parents or teachers is the rudeness and the fastness of some manifestations. Transformation and restructuring that occur during this period may favor the emergence of behavioral disturbances, but it depends on factors such as the external environment in which the child lives, which can stimulate or prevent such events. We speak of a crisis, but the educational one, where these changes are met wrongly, in an inadequate educational environment without having the basic psycho-pedagogical information.

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.

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**Annexes**

Item we have used within our research, selected from the *Student Questionnaire* we have applied:



*When you went in the 5th grade you faced some changes in school activities. Which of the following seemed the most difficult? (Circle only one answer)*

Each subject is taught by another teacher
The subject matters are more numerous and more difficult as compared with the 4th grade
Free time is significantly reduced
The relation with the teachers is different as compared with the relation with the primary school teacher
Assessment is carried out through grades
Other answer (please specify)
I do not know/I do not want to answer

## NON-FORMAL EDUCATION- A LOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE TERM

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**Abstract:** This article reflects a logical analysis of the *non-formal education* term, starting by distinction between *learning*, as natural result of the human interactions with the environment, and *education*, as intentional learning which is shaping by someone for another one. Reflections are centred on the linguistic, cognitive and ontological components delimitation of this term which is considered a compound-negative term because it reflects a lack of properties (as lack of organisation and form). The analysis indicates that non formal education is also a species of education that is means it must have some organisation and form, even if this takes shape during the educational process. These opposite situations show a logical contradiction within its internal terms (between non formal and education terms) that makes the expression logically incorrect. The analysis also highlights the tendency to define the characteristics of non formal education by negative sense, by not saying what it is, but what it is not. This is another logical error because definition, as a logic operation, not allows the use of the negative terms; non formal education has specific features, which must be described in positives terms. All these observations are used as grounds for replacing non-formal education term with participatory education term, proposed by Alan Rogers in the book “Non-Formal Education-Flexible Schooling or Participatory Education?”, of 2004.

**Keywords:** Non formal education, out of school education, participatory education, logical analysis.

### Introduction

The twentieth century has made visible the need for change of educational systems at global level and has boosted the academic community to find valid and compatible answers for an unstable environment, deeply affected by the speed of its own transformations. One of the most resounding voices of the period was Philip Coombs, who has warned that formal education everywhere is in crisis and that requires looking for innovative education strategies (Bock, 1976, pg.348). This has opened the issue of educational alternatives from a

lifelong learning perspective and has focused international academic discourse on the identification of the education forms. First delimitation as formal, non-formal and informal education, made by Coombs and his colleagues, aroused a series of controversies because non formal education was directly and irrevocably linked with formal education due to used language. Also, the criticism of the formal education system that was designed as a central part of human universe was interpreted by formal education supporters as a reason to bring on the educational stage two illegitimate rivals: non-formal education and informal education. Consequently, the results from non-formal education were seeing with suspicion and that has put into question its quality, validity and authenticity. In fact, the distrust of non-formal education was boosted by the constant inclusion of two elements in its discourse: formal education and also the idea of human development. Perhaps, Coombs's choice to use the non-formal education term was not intended to make so strong contrast with formal education, but the using of the negation "non" has rather determined a discourse about what it is not this (compared and directly related to formal education). Therefore, non formal education has been receipted as separate, isolated and inferior education system, even Coombs himself noted that the need to find strong educational levers for attacking issues of concern such health, nutrition, lack of jobs etc., does not lead a simple answer; non-formal education is not a separate system of education, nor is a system in the same sense as is the formal system, with separate parts which overlap and keep internal consistency (Coombs, 1976, pg.282). Moreover, the misunderstanding of the non formal education due to a certain kind of myopia that occurs when the mind can not escape by concepts of the formal school, may influence the emergence of regrettable tensions and rivalries that have nothing to do with the intention to respond more effectively to the diversity of learning needs that characterize different human subgroups (Coombs, 1976). It is obvious that keeping the non formal discourse in the shadow of formal education has contributed to shaping of its low status; including when some non formal education programs were successful, those were considered just alternatives of formal education whilst non formal education was seeing as nothing more than an extension of formal education (Harbans, 1983).

Another very important element that influenced perceptions about this type of education is related to the social issues of the underdevelopment and dependence. Different voices have developed the

theory of the dependency which said that non formal education is a response produced by elite Western countries whose intention was first to declare the crisis of the formal education system, and then, due to the necessity for a response to the minimum basic needs of the poor, to provide a solution to the Third World (Harbans, 1983). This interpretation was very dangerous, because it was seen as an arguments for considering non-formal education “only for poor people and poor countries who can afford nothing better” (Coombs,1976, pg.287), a way to emphases a lower status of it and to transform it into a simple alternative education for excluded and vulnerable people (Brockington and White,1983). Adherents of this theory have considered that underdevelopment explanation was in fact a motivation for political and economic interventions by developed countries, a way to strengthen a dependency and subordination relationship between them and the recipient countries, positioned at the periphery and usually categorized as developing countries (Harbans,1983). They do not think that the underdevelopment is generated by skills deficit of people, but because of an unfair, dominant and elitist policy that made the school an instrument used for the interests of those who have power and control (LaBelle,1976). However, with or without these traces of doubt about its authenticity, non-formal education seems to contradict exactly the dependency idea. This is because it can sometimes bring into prominence even the need for social and behavioral change, as a manifestation of human effort to escape from such relations which involved directly or indirectly dependency and control. The aim of non formal education is not to overthrow the world hierarchies, but simply to affirm the value and uniqueness of each human who has a legal and moral right to choose freely the opportunities for change or development.

## **2. Differentiated perspectives on non-formal education: the delimitation of the linguistic component**

Introducing the non-formal education term within *an international discourse* centered on education issues has caused many conflicts on its definition and interpretation. The first definition for non formal education belongs to Coombs and his collaborators who have also established this terminology, during the critical analysis of the formal education systems, in the second half of the twentieth century (Evans, 1981). Trying to find rigorous solutions for the global crisis

education, they have seen the potential of the other types of education, as non-formal and informal education. In the book “New paths to learning for rural children and youths” of 1973, non-formal education was defined by Coombs, Prosser and Ahmed as “...any organized educational activity outside the established formal system...that is intended to serve identifiable clientele and learning objectives” (Coombs et al, 1973, pg.11). They have highlight three characteristics which defines it:

\* Non-formal education involves *organized educational activity*, which means that there are educational actors who have clear and distinct roles, who interact and perform their functions consciously and planned; educational activity is organized around deliberate intentions from the supplier to a specific clientele.

\* Non-formal education is organized *outside the formal system*, out of this specific context. However, this feature has opened the possibility to describe non-formal education as education outside the school (Evans, 1981, pg.27), as synonymic term that further deepens the confusions and interpretations.

\* Non-formal education *targets a specific set of learning objectives*, appropriate to customer identified needs (Evans, 1981, pg.28). In the same publication, the authors define formal education as organized, institutionalized, chronologically graded and generally controlled by state, while informal education is unorganized and derived by the spontaneous contacts with environment (Coombs et al, 1973, pg.9-13). The representation of these educational forms on an axis, using proposed landmarks by Coombs and collaborators, is as follows:

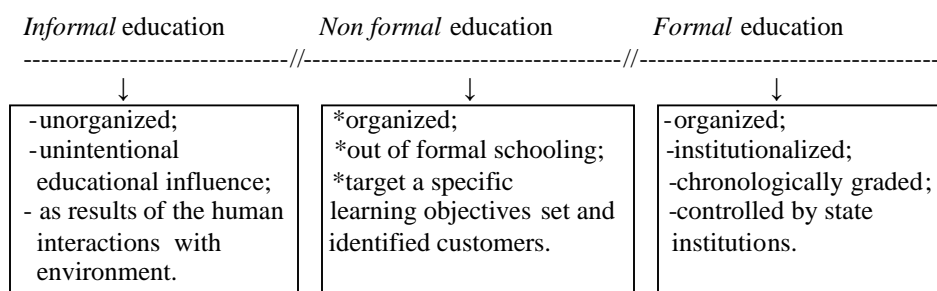


Fig.1-types of education to Coombs (Coombs et after all, 1973)

Starting from the same scheme, a working group at the University of Michigan introduced four types of education whose borders were outlined by David R. Evans in his book “The planning of nonformal education”, of 1981. These forms have included all possible learning activities and have been identified as (after Evans, 1981):

\**Incidental education*- resulting from all accidental situations, when there is no consciousness or intention for learning.

\**Informal education*- resulting from conscious efforts of the person who wants to learn but the learning context is not designed to promote learning *or* from learning contexts that are intentionally designed to produce learning but the possible learner dose not have learning intentions.

Evans notes that the intention of learning occurs *only* from learner part or *only* from learning context but not simultaneously from both parts. For example, when a person wants to learn about auto mechanics can appeal to the knowledge of a mechanic friend or can spend several hours in a garage looking at mechanics work, but in both cases the situation is not organized to promote intentional learning.

On the other hand can be another situation, when the context is structured to promote learning, but the person does not have this intention.

\**Non-formal education* or *out of school education*-when situational context is intentionally centred to learning and also the person has the desire to promote and encourage learning. In this case the action is outside the school context and is not controlled and guided by compulsory standards.

\**Formal education* takes place in the school, is conducted by a fix and valid curriculum for all and uses specific teaching methods and also performance standards. It has many compulsory aspects which are determined for all, by a central institution.

The representation on the same axis by Evans’s landmarks, makes visible the differences in understanding the issue of educational types.

<i>Incidental</i> education	<i>Informal</i> education	<i>Out-of-school</i> education	<i>School</i> education
↓	↓	↓	↓
Total unintentional (and person and situation)	Partially intentional (or person, or situation)	*Total Intentional (and person, and situation); *out-of-school; *decentralized control	Total intentional (and person, and situation); -in school; -centralized control; -for all curricula.

Fig.2--types of education to Evans (after Evans, 1981)

The debate over what is or is not non-formal education has continued in time. In “Non Formal Education-Flexible Schooling or Participatory Education?” of 2004, Alan Rogers has started a debate about educational types and has drawn the attention toward two new important aspects: first, it is possible as each education form, occasionally, to possess the other’s characteristics, and second, there is a dangerous confusion between *non educational* and *educational* activities. Coombs has put the sign of equivalence between education and learning, although previously he has defined education as intentional act, planned by educators for an identifiable group of participants (Rogers, 2004). But this equivalence is not acceptable because not all learning is education, although learning is a continuum that occurs throughout human life; just as bread is not the same think with flour although is made of it, also learning becomes education if learning is put into shape, for a specific purpose (Education for Development, 1996). Alan Rogers has suggested a new perspective on the types of education and has identified as a continuum, three forms (Rogers, 2004):

\**Formal or school education*--it is de-contextualized, rigid to the needs and desires of the individual participants. Activities are guided by performance standards and a compulsory curriculum for all, teachers have the control of educational process and the system is centralized, hierarchical and vertical.

\**Flexible schooling*--it is partially adapted to the context, but still limited to the specific needs and options’ participants; it is a hybrid form.

\**Participatory education*--its background is totally adapted to the needs and options of the participants who are encouraged to take the control of their own development process, so that is focused on working on smaller scale; the teacher is only a facilitator who develop horizontal relationships with participants and the system is decentralized and horizontal, too.

He has also noted that the non-formal education term is circulated in the contemporary context to refer by both forms: flexible schooling, as well for participatory education and this is one of main cause for the misunderstandings of education forms.

So, the terminology clarification is necessary for a correct distinction between education forms, but also between education and learning. He has proposed to use *informal education* term to reflect *participatory education* which is based on the control transfer from teacher to participants and allows modeling activities after needs, desires and individual peculiarities (but not the same with informal learning that is incidental learning) and *non formal education* term to designate *flexible schooling* which tends to be flexible to the particularities of the students, but still limited by the indicators of the provider system. Representing this view on the same axis, can be identified a different contemporary perspective for educational types that starts by the distinction between learning and education.

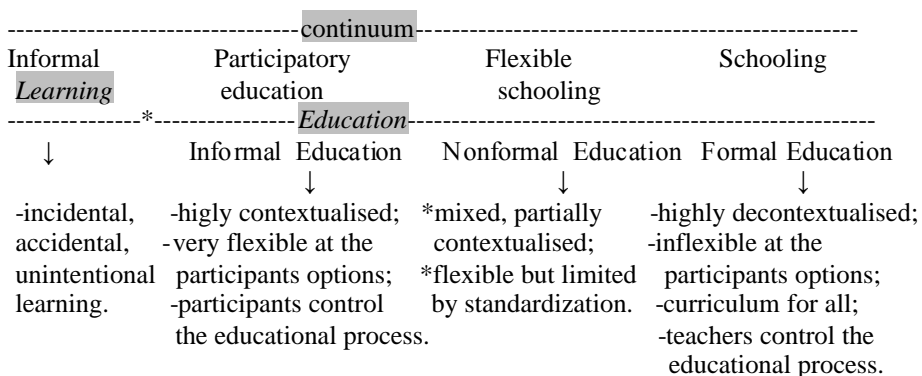


Fig.3--types of education to Rogers (after Rogers, 2004)

The possibility of interpretation conflicts on educational types is not stopped here and this requests a logical analysis of used terminology, in order to identify the possible logical inadequacies. This must be centred first by a correct distinction of the genus notion and its species notions. Trying to maintain the terminology identified in the models above and to respect the logical *principle of identity* which says that any object is identical only with itself (in the same time and the same report) and the logical *principle of non contradiction* which says that an object can not be A and non-A (in the same time and the same



report), would be more appropriate to talk about *learning* as genus-notion and *non-formal learning* and *formal learning* as species-notions.

If I note with  $p$  formal learning and non-formal learning is  $p$  negation, *in logical aproch* it can be noted with  $\neg p$ . As contradictionally terms,  $p$  must describe the presence of the specific particularities because is a positive term, while  $\neg p$  must describe the revers of this specific particularities because is a negative term. Usually, the negation as a logical constant, reflects the *absence* or *lack of* and has different possibilities to be distinguite and expressed in natural language, especially in propositional context where is usually near verb for deny an action, as in the example- I haven' t gone at cinema today-. Sometimes negation can appear or can not appear but the term can be negative; it denotes the absence of some proprieties and has not a referential and propositional context (for example „blind” is a negative term and „nonformal”, too ). While a action can be denied, a propriety must be affirmed, even it is affirmed in terms of lack, because the definition, as logical operation will not allowed the uses of negation in its definiens/defining part that must reflect all the identified characteristics of term. So, using these logical remarks, *formal learning* has form, intention, is organized, planned and involves specific strategies dicteited by purposes, while *non formal learning* shows the lack of shapes, intention, organization, planning and strategy; in this case non formal learning is even *incidental learning*, without intention and strategy.

Actually here is a high risk of logical error, especially when the used terms are *negative* and *composed*, as in presente situation; first term comes with the presence of the specific characteristics while second term comes with the absence of some characteristics. Both terms are together as one and this is means that one term must to keeps all the specific features with exception of that is pointed as absence by the other term. In this case the lack feature is form and starting from the presence or the absence of the form criteria (also organisation which are assumed by any form), is possible to identify two kinds of learning: one is *accidental* because the individual interacts with an unorganized learning context whose facets of learning are randomn, and another one is *anticipated* because formal learning involves intention, planning and controlled environment. Also, learning which involves a form can has two subspecies (by criteria of how is given sens to the form): *in-formal learning* as a manifestation of the self-conscious intention for learning, a diffuse, personal and spontaneous form resulted from humans interactions with a selected context (someone who wants to

know about medicinal plants can learn himself following the ancestors advice or can use the internet) and *education*, as *extra-formal learning*, where the persons already *assumes the role* of self-educated and puts themselves in the intentional, controlled, planned and conducted learning context, already configured from outside, through the intervention and vision of others. And here also can be detected some possibles nuances of interpretation. Informal learning can be a species of formal learning if it is considered as self-learning that involves a diffuse and foreshadowed form, dicteited by internal motivations, aims or options as potency. Also, this can be a separate specie of learning, a mixed type, located at interaction of formal with nonformal learning, but without organisation and form.

Still, in this case, the person gives sens and transformes an unspecific environment by personal options while in extra-formal learning the person is an actor who play a role and already has a scene created by the others persons. In the education, as in the theater too, the human beings can assist at classical, modern or contemporary theater plays; these seem to sound different but in fact all are just theater, an interesting form to live the coincidence of your life with the others life. Using this analogy, can be identified three subspecies for education (as extra-learning), the same forms described by Alan Rogers in 2004: *school education* that comes from a closed, rigid, vertical compulsory schooling, *flexible schooling* that is semi-flexible, partially limited by standardization and *participatory learning* that is totally open for free choices of participants and stimulates their control of educational process. If these three subspecies of education are assumed, means that each has a certain form which determines and influences the type of interaction between the educated, context, educators and education process too. If every type of education has more or less open form, then it is not possible to use the non-formal education term because has an internal and logical contradiction into its component terms; education can not be without form and organisation... the non-formal term is corectly compatible with learning, not with education. Returning to the manifestation of form, each type of education already has a stage but the participants exercise in different ways the rol of his-self; even participatory education as informal education has one (Rogers, 2004).

The difference is that human beings have open ways to be free, creative and inovative with his-self role because the scene itself is a open space. Also here, flexible schooling can be seen as a subspecies of education, at intersection between formal and informal features and

must to be renamed *or* as a subspecies of formal education, as the expression says. The problem in fact is about intersection and hybride forms because a reality or a object must to be included in one category. From this point of view I intend to think that flexible schooling is a subspecies for formal education, an viable alternative of it. The representation of these observations on the same previously axis has lead to a new figure; the mark was used to delimitate species and subspecies.

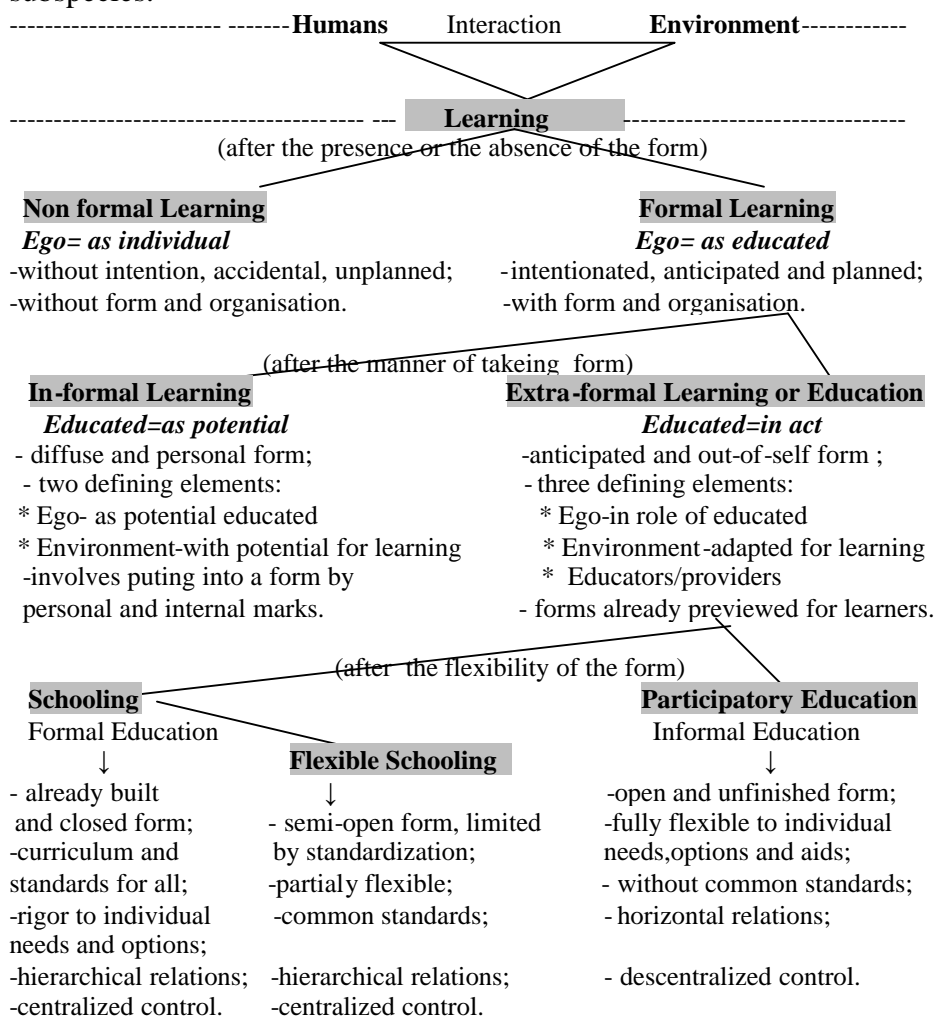


Fig.4-types of education (after Evans and Rogers)

This point of analysis must to be continued with an important aspect that can be forget. Any term (regardless of its nature) has three interconnected elements: *linguistic component* which is a word or a group of words, *cognitive component* which is a notion (in virtual plan) and *ontological component* which is a set of objects (in real plan). Linguistic component that is different for every language is just a cover which “dresses” a cognitive content that is always universal. Linguistic component must send correctly at cognitive component and vice versa, with other words, the inadequate linguistic choices can cause boundaries there where is not the case, or can generate incorrectly boundaries; in this case the language must be reinvented. On another part, the virtual realities must have appropriate names to be recognized and communicated from one to the other. In both cases, the language is a dangerous and necessary tool used to give reality and expression for our virtual world, uploaded by thought shapes.

Therefore, what I have initially named and considered non-formal education, then out of school education, is actually participatory education and I opt for this last terminology, hoping that will reflect more better its specific features.

### **3. The characteristics of non formal education as participatory education- the delimitation of the cognitive component**

Any simple or compound term assumes two correlative elements: *content* or *in-tension* which corresponds to mentally plan (as features that gives identity and understanding) and *sphere* or *ex-tension* which corresponds to real plan (as items bearing such features). A completed terminological logic analysis must target the delimitation of the peculiarities from in-tension (in positive terms), the elements from ex-tension and to check the correspondence between these and the lingvistique component. In the case of non formal education, the diversity of perception and interpretation has started with confused delimitation of the in-tension that is composed from all the particularities which gives a specific and unique identity; it was uncertain, incomplete and determinated more by denial of some features that belonging to the other related in-tension terms. A full identification of the non formal education (as participatory education) peculiarities is not simply because involves a double perspective: as system and as process, too.

The way to clarify these is directed here by nine support marks for an analytical delimitation of the in-tension term:

\* *The characteristics of the group*

Participatory education puts its focus on work group, on the desires, needs and concerns of the individual participants. One of the features that makes the difference between education forms is the type of the promoted group. Initially, the identification of the possible participants inevitably shape a profil for a target group which is relatively homogeneous and distinct due a number of common characteristics. However, a target group is more from the perspective of those who provides learning opportunities; once the potential participants have expressed their options to engage in activities, the target group as potency, becomes a real working group which is shaping itself, along with its individual choices and, like a living body, it is tranforming.

Participatory education creates the *open and living group* premises for two reasons: the participants are not conditioned by skills and competencies, their entry into program beeing determined by their desires and motivations (Simkins, 1977; Evans, 1981) and because it allows multiple entry and exit points in the program, the individuals beeing free to enter and free to give up (Evans, 1981). The opening of the group cancels all the symbolics doors that are closed after the teachers who enter in the traditional class room, and that often creates anxiety or forces students to identify strategies for escape. Indeed, the possibility to enter and to leave naturally a group can create the impression that participatory education, without imposing some clear limits, changes the individual into a visitor, even the superficiality is not the intention of participatory education. This *permissiveness* is just a way to strengt personal motivation, to encourage the manifestation of the individual potential and to explore an environmental context that values the diversity as normal status. Also, the promotion of the open group intendes to change the human habitus. For example, the closed groupe from formal education has already generates the habit to represent daily group using closed lines from geometric shapes as circle, square or rectangle, but that doesn't mean there can not be also open lines which can be used in human representations and that doesn't mean that human must to be servant of such inflexible contours which often do not belong him.

Another feature of this type of group is the *heterogeneity*- the interaction between participants is open to all, without taking into account age, gender or other characteristics that separate them (Evans, 1981). Because participatory education takes care about particularities, needs, options and the tacit fund of knowledge of the participants, is preferred to involve in the proposed activities the small and heterogeneous working groups (S. Kindervatter, 1979). All of these imperative features of the group influence the purposes, control and specific strategies perspectives, for any participatory educational activitie.

*\* The characteristics of the finalities*

Participatory education is more focused around the distinction between objectives and purposes. The program objectives are usually determined by social, economic and political considerations, while the learning goals are determinated by participants themselves, during the process of education (Evans, 1981 A. Rogers, 2004). Since the open and heterogeneous group is not compatible with the homogeneous and prescribed for all targets, the participants themselves must identify their needs and the best ways to answer them. Participatory education values the freedom and contribution at their own group buildings and appreciates any personal interventions, in sense of uniqueness. The problem of the finalities is also very sensitive at the concrete issues of the educational programe end. Participatory education offers a kind of learning which tends to be valued in different contexts of life and does not offer certificates (Simkins, 1977); it is not measured by success or failure because each participant is free to try again or to opt for more (Rogers, 2004). The only unit in this case is the degree of satisfaction (Rogers, 2004), but it is a relative measure and an uncredited tool for a world so rooted by the indicators of the utilitarianism. Of course, for many people the lack of certification results is a evidence of superficiality because the certificates can be very important for learners or employers. More of that, beyond the possibility that a certificate to reflect only the presence, participatory education has no need to prove the end, because *it has no end*, only a break to continue the race of life.

*\* The problem of the control and participation*

Another typical feature of participatory education is related to answer at questions: Who decides, to whom and by what mechanisms? (Evans, 1981, pg.37). These raise the problem of the relationship that exists between educated and educators, the distance between them, the

measure and the direction of the education process or the system control. The promotion of the open and heterogeneous group generates subtle premises for a significant rapprochement and a horizontal relationship between educators and educated; the educated are encouraged to participate on their own goals, needs and learning strategies, to be autonomous, creative, spontaneous and natural (Simkims, 1977). They define their goals, take initiative and have a progressive control of decisions about their activities, simultaneously with the transfer of responsibility (Kindervatter, 1979) because educators prefigure opportunities to tilt the control towards participants and facilitate their active involvement. Also, the educated can choose the leaders or they can be designated in a natural way because participatory education process is a democratic type, where participants, considered equal, can take decisions by consensus (Kindervatter, 1979).

The issue of taking control and the transfer of responsibility from educator to educated is linked by the participation problem. The participation of individuals can take three distinct forms (Rogers, 2004, pg.251-252): the participation as presence, the participation as activity and the participation as control. Participatory education encourages all three forms of participation and focuses the entire process toward gradual assumption of control by the learners. That influences the process itself and also the form of the participatory education system that is a horizontal receptacle, free by hierarchical bureaucracy control; the only valid, unimposed and diffuse authority is here the community.

*\* Educator and staff*

Reported to the characteristics presented, the educator has the role of the resource person, of the process guide who orientates the participants towards learning opportunities, encourages the individual potential, the self-esteem, the active involvement and creativity. He/she gives up the control and authoritative position in favor of the participants and helps them to plan the activities (Evans, 1981). For this reason the facilitator in participatory education is not necessary a specialist in education (with academic studies in education), but any experienced person from the community or a particular industry who is willing and able to facilitate the learning process (Evans, 1981).

The problem of staff involved in participatory education is also closely linked with the community support (Rogers, 2004, pg.103) which gives the possibility to resort non-traditional resources for its completion, as volunteers people or part time workers (Evans, 1981).

The openness to such alternatives for staff and educators can put in doubt the selection criteria and the professionalism of the involved people because usually, the credibility and the quality of the facilitator work is judged by academic studies mark. Indeed, can be ideal like participants to choose their facilitators but this are often impossible because the provider, as institution, simply can not afford it all the time. On the other hand, the social recognition of the pedagogical studies for facilitators can be an apparently guarantor of learning quality; it is rather a subjective added value that can contribute at decision-making but also at the comfort of the participants.

*\*Content and curriculum*

Reported in previous features, the content and curriculum are open, focused and driven by the needs and potential of the participants (Simkins, 1977). There is no standardized packages of knowledge for all, because is emerging by the particular needs of the group as a whole or the individuals as part, and is focusing on the practical part of learning (Rogers, 2004).

*\*Temporal and spacial resources*

Another important feature is related to the time and the place for activities. Usually, participatory education involves a relatively short time because the activities are oriented to the specific learning needs and often not exceeding a period of two years (Rogers, 2004, pg.102). The time for activities has not a fixed limits, but rather is conditioned by how to answer at the needs of the participant and how to respect the open group indicators. Also, the location of these activities should be favorable for the interaction of the diversity and for the participation as control, in the case of the beneficiaries. A favorable phisical space can be identified in various institutions of the community, in the public or private institution, in the natural environment and even at school, but in any possible context, can be respected the rule of the openness to the needs, options and characteristics of participants.

*\*Methods and means*

Participatory learning methodology and learning strategies are focused on individuals and encourage them to assume gradually the responsibility for their own learning (Evans, 1981). The facilitator does not dominate the learning process and allows the active involvement of participants; the means of learning tend to respond effectively to different learning needs and peculiarities. The means used for such educational activities are various but still are critical voices that question the appropriate use of the professional equipment, which often



involves high costs. The most used communication technologies are large-scale mass-media means (internet, radio, tv), the small-scale mass-media means (videos, audio, games, etc.) and traditional technologies (traditional folk media as puppets, masks, dances, etc.) which has a high degree of credibility and are easily acceptable. This last one has been even considered “the essence of non formal education, in that they are indigenously created educational processes whose message and style is totally controlled by the people” (Evans, 1976, pg.325).

*\*The characteristics of the system*

Finding an internal or external structure in the case of participatory education can not be broken from the particularities of the educational process, because the structure as organisation, and the process as steps sequence, are mutual determined and influenced. Participatory education proposes a spontaneous, open, uneven, flexible and unfinished form; it facilitates the control transfer, the decision making and the authority toward the local, regional or national community, which, in turn, influences and keeps free the potential inputs and outputs of the system. Most often this type of education means lower costs because community involvement; it ensures not just equidistant and horizontal distribution of control but even other facilities as support, volunteering and voluntary work. Participation as enthusiastic implication transforms all the persons involved in actors; no one is spectator because every individual dedicates with enthusiasm a part of their soul. If the diversity is a major source of value of participatory education (Evans, 1981, p. 39), also the enthusiasm and dedication are some referential aspects that make it to be an education soul-maded.

*\*The design of the participatory education programs*

Participatory education as a deliberate and planned activity requires a process of design that “is an active, creative and prescriptive activity and requires tools appropriate to that task” (Evans, 1981, pg.30). The used recommendations are not imperative like-If outside is raining, you can take umbrella; this transforms identified realities in opportunities for creativity and innovation and leaves a provocative and optional freedom for those who want to discover their own answers.

Previous description of the identified particularities as belonging to participatory education notion can be also schematically represented and this can be very useful for the delimitation of the ontological component.

Providers/Trainers ↓	- Interaction- Context/Environment	Beneficiaries/Educated ↓
<b>Target group:</b>	<b>1.Group</b>	<b>Working groups:</b>
-potential and big scale group;	← →	-active and small scale group;
-relatively homogeneous due common features;		-not homogeneous due the diversity of participants;
-relatively closed because Focus features.		-totally open and flexible; -multiple entrances and exits points; - it is transforming during process.
<b>2. Finalities</b>		
<b>Program objectives:</b>	← →	<b>Learning goals:</b>
-determined by the socio-economic Reasons and relatives for all.		-determined by different needs and options participants, during process.
*no certificates for the end of the educational process		
<b>3.Control and participation</b>		
*decentralized and horizontal control		
*non-hierarchical relationship		
<b>Participation as:</b>	← →	<b>Participation as:</b>
-presence;		-presence;
-activity;		-activity;
-enthusiastic implication.		-enthusiastic implication; -control of process.
<b>4. Educators/Staff</b>		
*the educators are guides and facilitators of the activity		
*the facilitators can be persons from community without academic studies		
*staff can be filled with volunteer people or part time workers from community		
<b>5. Content and curriculum</b>		
*centered and driven by different needs and potential of the participants		
<b>6. Temporal and space resources</b>		
*relatively short period, dictated by the participants needs and choices		
*the space can be in any institution or in nature, but must facilitate a non-hierarchical relationship and a democratic control		
<b>7. Methods and means</b>		
*the methods are focused on the participants		
*are used mass-media means and also traditional or indigenous technologies		
<b>8. System features</b>		
*decentralized control for an out of forms rules system; open, spontaneous and irregular form of it		
<b>9. Design of educational program</b>		
*prescriptive, active and creative action, without a definitive form of the advance planning		

Fig.5- The characteristics of participatory education

#### **4. Non formal education forms-a conclusive delimitation of the ontological component**

A logical analysis must continue with the delimitation of the extension term but this is very difficult as long the linguistic expression “non-formal education” is still used to denote two distinct educational forms: flexible schooling and participatory education, too (Rogers, 2004). This intention can only lead to an incomplete and diffuse delimitation of the possible elements from term extension because many types of non-formal education which have already been identified are rather alternative of flexible schooling than participatory education. The output from these confusions requests a language reconstruction but also some specific tools that can clearly sort the educational species and subspecies.

The most important identified manifestations of non-formal education, starting from the understanding of non formal term as “simply a device for labeling those activities outside the control or regulation of the bureaucratic school system” (Carron and Carr-Hill, 1991, pg.20) are:

\* *Para-formal education*-it is as a second chance for people who can not benefit by schooling and takes various ways: evening classes, distance education programs, officially literacy programs, etc (Carron and Carr-Hill, 1991).

On another part through para-formal education is understand like all the formal education programs which follow the same curriculum for all, prepare learners for the some or equivalent certification but are implemented after non-formal marks; it is a compensatory education as community schools or community courses for poor or for marginal people from rural and urban areas (Hoppers, 2006).

\* *Popular education*- is directed toward marginal groups of the population and has the characteristics like: learning by doing, high flexibility, a constant preoccupation for adapting the learning process by the participants’ needs or the concentration of poor persons (Carron and Carr-Hill, 1991). It is distinguished by the para-formal education in that this tends toward a reconstruction of the curriculum and focus on the action learning (Hoppers, 2006).

\* *Personal development* – is a trend that covers a whole range of the organized learning by institutions, centers, clubs or association; it is in opposition with popular education where the collective development is a central purpose (Carron and Carr-Hill, 1991).

\* *Vocational and professional training*- is organized by firms, private agencies, unions and also formal schools that tend to develop new institutional frames for skills development, especially for youth; its objectives are partially associated with the national economic development and the social development goals (Carron and Carr-Hill, 1991 Hoppers, 2006).

\**Literacy with skills development training*-is a way to combine two components, usually used in adult education.

\* *Supplementary programs for vulnerable groups*-where the education process is focused on the needs and particularities of groups, but simultaneously is limited by the rules and indicators of the providers (Hoppers, 2006).

\* *Early childhood care and education*-is a kind of education by continuum of the life learning, in opposition, as life moment, with adult education which long time was equated with non formal education (Hoppers, 2006).

Non formal education can take any of these forms and can be very easy confused with flexible alternatives of schooling; in fact, pure forms of non-formal education as participatory education are difficult to identify due to the usual presence of the mixed elements (Rogers, 2004). It seems that the safest criterion for delimitation between formal education, flexible schooling and participatory education is the analysis of how the educational process and system is controlled, but from a logical perspective, this one is not sufficiently, although is necessary. The ambiguous delimitation of the ontological component for the non formal education term, especially if it is equivalent with participatory education, also requests the development of some valid instruments which can certainly sort the different types of education.

Non-formal education issues, from the perspective of logical analysis of the term, involves an inevitable correlation with principles of classical logic or another rules of logical validity, with the becoming perspective as a subtle alternation between potency and act, and also with organization or form ideas. Even this analysis is focused on linguistic, cognitive and ontological components which are three inter-conditioned and compulsory components for any term, the purpose of this approach is not to draw undeniable boundaries between educational forms, but to mark the possibility of the logical errors and the lack of valid tools there where is necessary a clear delimitation of the identity aspects. Just in case, the borders can be naturally noticed if are clarified

the identity characteristics for any type of education and also, if is checked the logical compatibility between the linguistic expressions and the realities that are reflected by these. Although all of these details seem insignificant and obvious, sometimes these are decisive and can make all the differences.

### **Aknowlegements**

Thank you to “Al.I.Cuza” University team for doctoral studies project POOSDRU/88.1/1.5/S/47646 and to Professor Alan Rogers for the gifted knowledge.

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## **PLURALIST APPROACH TO THE METHODOLOGY OF FINE ARTS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GIFTED**

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**Abstract:** The term *gifted* could be defined as a complex of psychological and physical abilities which are a prerequisite for success in one or more fields. The sense of the term is quite clear and close to one frequently used term in the field of socio-humanistic sciences – *ability*. Having in mind that semnificative realities are quasi identical, there are no conditions for risk or dilemmas when both terms are in synchrony use.

**Key words:** performance, giftedness, educational culture, ability.

In the literature most frequently encountered are the boundaries of genre: general equipment - special equipment and general equipment - talent. An alternative approach to the relationship giftedness - intelligence, develops so-called modular theory of intelligence, that there is not one but several types or forms of the skills (linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, kinesthetic or hyperactivity, intrapersonal and interpersonal), each using its system of symbols as basic units for processing information. Consequently, giftedness, including creativity, is a high level of functioning appropriate mental structures that domain.

A broader definition considers some giftedness as a manifestation of human potential can be increased under certain circumstances and conditions. This can be addressed as a result of the interaction of several factors, actually grouped into three categories:

- a. general cognitive skills or above average.
- b. employment task (motivation, confidence, curiosity, etc. epistemic.) and
- c. creativity.

The model developed by F. Gagne, giftedness is associated with the natural development or unsystematic human skills and talent, with skills or skills systematically developed, which is (up) expertise in a specific area of activity man.<sup>1</sup> Emergence of a particular talent resulting from applying one or more skills to mastering the knowledge and skills in that area, averaging intrapersonal catalyst.

Many specialists consider that the child is gifted: Learn faster and more easily to the knowledge of the same age group suggested, has a superior mental elderly chronological achieve outstanding results in terms of creativity or social utility of its work, evidence of special memory and learning capacity, etc.

Current guidelines go towards the endowment term association with the performance of complex activities with interdisciplinary. And has the talent, the results of unpublished, original, valuable obtained in a given area.

Like other forms of special equipment, fine arts skills to intertwine in their structure a series of processes, skills and cognitive skills and noncognitiv character. These components, whose weight varies from one substructure to another, are strongly influenced by their dynamic type of activity as it is a painter, sculptor, curator, architect, art teacher or worker in another area related.

Special skills and qualities crystallize the various processes that make up the human psyche unit. Through their educational load different, some general skills can become a component of special features: musician will have a good auditory memory and motor skills, a good painter and visual-spatial memory motor, a tragedian and verbal-logical, literate, etc.

The arts share special skills in obtaining notable performances, especially in production, the creation of values, seems to be more important than intelligence. In other words, special skills and intelligence do not contribute equally and do not condition each other in artistic activities, which does not preclude their interaction. Given the existing data in literature, arts skills can describe the structure as a sensory-perceptual component configuration, driving, intellect,

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<sup>1</sup> Gagné, F. (1993), *Constructs and Models Pertaining to Exceptional Human Abilities*. In: H. A. Heller, F. J. Mönks, A. H. Passow (ed.), *International Handbook of Research and Development of Giftedness and Talent*, Oxford, New York, Seoul, Tokyo, Pergamon, page. 60-78.



emotional-motivational and creative, as follows: sensory-perceptual components: capacity to distinguish colors and shades of colors or color discrimination, learning so dependent physiological and neurological anatomical features of the person (different sensitivity to receptor cells, or cones of the retina, the relationship between excitation and inhibition at cortical area ) and socio-cultural factors (level of education, personal experience, preferences and collective attitudes, etc).. As mentioned areas of involvement: painting, industrial design, art, clothing, school etc. ergonomics.

Assessment of the proportion of correct reproduction of objects, learning that depends on the integrity and normal functioning of visual analyzer, but time and experience. It is known that preschoolers commit many mistakes in the proportions of the elements of a figure or drawing objects of sizes.<sup>2</sup>

Other sensory-perceptual components: the ratio of light and shadow, "feel" the rhythm, shape and volume, etc. objects. Coordination of eye - hand actions involved in drafting the article, cutting, shaping, cutting, etc.. Provides continuous interaction between the real object product and mental image.

Provide superior in fine arts, as in any other sector of activity can not be understood without analysis of cognitive mechanisms that ensures specific information and processing. A developed sense of observation, useful both for the collection object as a whole and the details, nuances, its specificity and originality.

Ability and imaginary representation, especially operating with forms, distances, colors, proportions and perspectives. Plastic products are really interesting work when the concrete beyond the usual, they propose solutions graphics, sculpture, clothing, technical, etc.. valuable in terms of aesthetic and utility.

Thinking is involved in arts activities in all its forms and operations. The sculptor's work, for example, there is a passage repeated, frequent eye and attention from the overall picture of the business object constituent parts and even aspects of its detail. Comparisons are made between model results and real or imagined mental or made by the author. The final synthesis of the key elements

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<sup>2</sup> Cox, M. V. (1994), *Children's Drawings*. D. J. Hargreaves (ed.), *Children and the Arts*, Milton Keynes, Philadelphia, Open University Press, page 40-54.

are essential, defining the created object is strongly emphasized, and only acquire secondary meaning decorative.

Parsons's model, although it was met with some objections about the experiments that led to the building's, is a comprehensive and robust approach to the phenomenon in the fine arts endowment.<sup>3</sup>

Referring to the peculiarities of spelling in children, Morin Cox notes that the age of 3 years their designs have a specificity of undeniable: nearly all draw "tadpoles" that figures in certain parts of the body missing and others are placed in a bizarre.<sup>4</sup> Later design focuses factual information about the object, regardless of point of which is seen. Paintings are so-called object-centered older children and adults of drawings made objects aimed at a particular point of view, obviously, all these changes are related to cognitive maturity of children.

For the knowledge / skills identification, respectively degree in fine arts endowment, experts recommend various ways, some common, frequently used in school practice, other more special, more difficult to apply and interpret, but the most valuable diagnostic and prognostic aspect.

The first category includes: analyzing and evaluating the work done by students on the basis of data subjects or their free choice, analysis and comparison of marks obtained in different subjects, highlighting various psychological tests for structural components (spatial perception, color discrimination, spirit observation plane and spatial representation, labyrinth tests, tracking lines, pointing, touching, etc..).

Today is widespread among specialists is the idea of educating children in teaching gifted high school usual, provided the development and implementation of special programs that provide opportunity to develop at your own pace and in preferred directions. Proposed solutions for differentiated instruction to gifted and talented children's education vary from one country to another or even from one locality to another.

In conclusion, it may be significant that the idea that high in fine arts endowment is a substructure of personality in ontogenesis developed through assimilation and accommodation provided specific

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<sup>3</sup> Hargreaves, D. J., Galton, M. J., Robinson, S. (1994), *Developmental Psychology and Arts Education*. In: D. J. Hargreaves (ed.), *Children and the Arts*, Milton Keynes, Philadelphia, Open University Press, page: 5-18.

<sup>4</sup> M. Cox, ...42-47.

conditions of society. As the constitution, it delivers superior performance in one or more fields.

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## STUDENT MOTIVATION, COMPONENT OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

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**Abstract:** Motivating students represents one of the main components of classroom management, with reference to the focus of the current educational paradigms: democratic, motivating and participatory. Students face different motivation problems related to learning. Starting from the knowledge of the structure of students' learning ability, the teacher, in terms of classroom management, should: guide the students' intellectual resources towards anchor ideas, capable of being organized in complex information systems; develop those complex thinking strategies based on both convergent and divergent-heuristic thinking, both on the crystallised and on the fluid one; train the upper levels of socio-cultural needs; stimulate positive, creative intrinsic motivation; develop volitional structures, neglected by classical pedagogy, based on truth, belief, initiative, performance; build skills, abilities, capabilities, competences, according to the practical-applicative requirements of modern pedagogy.

**Keywords:** classroom management, educational paradigms, motivating students, competences.

### **Effective learning, component of classroom management**

Classroom management is particularly concerned with various types of learning: *didactic learning itself*, acquiring knowledge, forming skills, developing abilities and competences; *socio-relational learning* based on a model, forming attitudes towards self, towards others and towards work, developing social behaviour; *normative learning*, of moral, school and group rules and regulations.

In order to acquire efficiency in the educational activity of all these types of learning, teachers have in mind (as determined by Iucu R., 2000): the stage of the bio-psycho-social development of students (Piaget, Kohlberg, Erikson), cognitive experience of students (Gagne), motivational component for students (Ausubel).

Referring to these initial levels of the management process, teachers need to elaborate educational strategies of cognitive, affective-motivational, volitional-behavioural development in students.

In terms specific for educational management, Voiculescu F., 2005, shows the following structure of students' learning ability: **intellectual resources** (information stored in long-term memory, the algorithms operating the information, strategies for thinking); **regulating resources** (needs of different levels, reasons of different intensities and shapes, interests, attributes of the will); **behavioural-instrumental resources** (skills, behaviours, conducts).

Starting from the knowledge of the structure of students' learning ability, the teacher, in terms of classroom management, should: guide the students' intellectual resources towards anchor ideas, capable of being organized in complex information systems; develop those complex thinking strategies based on both convergent and divergent-heuristic thinking, both on the crystallised and on the fluid one; train the upper levels of socio-cultural needs; stimulate positive, creative intrinsic motivation; develop volitional structures, neglected by classical pedagogy, based on truth, belief, initiative, performance; build skills, abilities, capabilities, competences, according to the practical-applicative requirements of modern pedagogy.

### **Motivational theories from the class perspective**

Motivating students represents one of the main components of classroom management, with reference to the focus of the current educational paradigms: democratic, motivating and participatory. Students face different motivation problems related to learning. Thus, some learn because they are preoccupied with avoiding failure, others believe that nothing they do has value, and therefore it is meaningless to learn, some students are so anxious that they can not concentrate in solving tasks, while others limit their participation to classroom activities, as they believe the rules and interactions within the school environment different from their social and cultural experiences. Therefore, in order to identify the most effective ways to motivate students, we highlight some of the best-known motivational theories:

-D.Ausubel and F.Robinson, 1981, identify three categories of reasons: the cognitive impulse or tendency to know, to understand; the need for a strong affirmation of the ego, the need for prestige; the need of affiliation to *a social group*. Therefore, when the need of affiliation to the group is active, the other reasons

are becoming predominant, and the teacher, knowing these necessities, organizes their teaching and educational work in such a way as to satisfy them adequately, stimulating cognitive needs specific to the learning process, the needs for the affirmation of self at optimal level, avoiding both supra-motivation and sub-motivation, developing social needs by affiliating and integrating students in the group.

-*Motivational dynamics* according to E.L.Deci and J. Ryan, 1983, situates motivation on a *motivational continuum*, from extrinsic to intrinsic. In this respect, the motivation goes through several stages: external regulation, through penalty and / or rewards; internalization, when the student may feel guilty if he/she does not learn, or wants to show others that he/she is capable of performance; identification, which leads to learning because of its consequences; integration, which represents intrinsic motivation itself. It is also important for the teacher to know both these stages of motivational dynamics and the particularities of his students in order to adjust them to each other to develop intrinsic motivation, truly effective.

-A. Bandura, 1993, develops the concept of self-efficacy, based on our beliefs on our own abilities. These beliefs depend on: previous performances, comparison with others, influence of others on the self. From the perspective of this theory, the teacher can stimulate students to achieve performance, to compare with others but also to develop an optimistic outlook on their own personalities, a constellation of positive beliefs, efficiency and success.

- The Socio-cultural model of motivation in school context developed by R. Viau, 1997, views motivation as a dynamic phenomenon, stressing the importance of the student's perceptions of himself and his environment and the perseverance in achieving a goal. The same components of perception and representations of self and others, of the activity of learning but also the volitional component in setting and achieving goals are considered crucial motivational elements in achieving success and educational accomplishment.

### Factors of learning motivation in the class of students

M. Miclea, G. Lemeni, 2004, present learning motivation as the result of a multitude of factors:

*Tab.1. Factors which influence learning motivation*

<p><b>Cultural factors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Represented by the norms and values referring to learning which often implicitly influence the attitude and behaviour of the student.</li> <li>• Any student internalises values and practices of the community, which manifest themselves at behavioural level, in the way they get involved in school tasks:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>Values given to school learning</i> (for some, learning in school is very important; for others, life experience – “school of life” – has a greater importance);</li> <li>- <i>Types of interaction</i> which they encourage in learning (cooperation or competition);</li> <li>- <i>Conceptions about competence</i> (for some competence refers to knowledge acquisition - they have a theoretical orientation, directed towards research; for others to the development of work skills – they have a practical orientation, regarding the application of knowledge).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Contextual factors (related especially to the educational environment)</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Type of school tasks</i> – the closer the task is to the everyday interests and concerns of the children, the more stimulating it is.</li> <li>• <i>Autonomy</i> – the students in classes where teachers’ control is lower (independence in the learning process) have intrinsic motivation for learning, they perceive their cognitive competence as being superior and report higher self-esteem as compared to students in classes where teachers have greater control.</li> <li>• <i>Recognition</i> – refers to the use of rewards in the class. These rewards have important consequences on the students’ interest for learning, as well as on their feelings of satisfaction and self-valuing.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Group Work</i> – cooperation (achievement of the goal by all members of the group), as opposed to competition (achievement of the goal ahead of the other classmates), generates positive interaction and long-term learning motivation.</li> <li>• <i>Evaluation</i> – the type and frequency of class evaluation has important implications on the students’ motivation. The way in which the teacher grades students also influences the way in which they learn and what they learn.</li> <li>• <i>Time</i> – refers to adapting the duration of the tasks to their difficulty level.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Individual Factors</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Value given to the learning task by the student</i> – it is in close connection with the students’ learning goals.</li> </ul> <p><b>Effective learning goals</b> suppose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Defining goals in specific, clear and realistic terms. Establishing a goal in terms like “I want to be better.” does not allow monitoring the progress towards the goal or efficiency in achieving the goal. More efficient is a non-specific formulation of the goal, such as “I want to go through 50 pages at History in the next 3 days.”.</li> <li>- Being measurable. Criteria are established according to which the degree in which the goal was achieved is assessed.</li> <li>- Establishing a deadline for the achievement of the goal.</li> <li>- Identifying the steps which must be followed to achieve the goal.</li> <li>- Anticipating possible obstacles in attaining the goal and developing ways to overcome them.</li> <li>- Establishing a reward for achieving the goal.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Expectations related to learning results:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Self-efficiency convictions – students with high self-efficiency will choose more difficult tasks, will put more effort into them, will persist in</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



	<p>the task, will use adequate solving strategies for problems, and will display lower anxiety for the task.</p> <p>- Convictions about control over learning – research show that students who believe that the result of learning depends mainly on them perform better in school.</p> <p>- Assignments or explanations the students give to the causes of their success or failure in learning – depending of the types of assignments he makes, the student will display certain emotional and behavioural reactions (joy, guilt, indifference) which can affect immediate and long-term motivation.</p> <p>(according to M. Miclea, G. Lemeni, 2004:113-117)</p>
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### **Strategies used to motivate students in the classroom**

L. Trif, 2008, identifies in specialty works strategies of motivating students used in the classroom:

- *Creating a motivating learning environment* (for generating motivation) – together with contextual factors of motivation mentioned above, a good relationship with students, a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere are aspects of the relationship which facilitate the appearance of motivation for learning.

- *Triggering motivation* by developing a positive attitude towards subjects, orienting learning towards an established goal, formulating expectations for performance in learning, forming realistic beliefs on learning.

- *Maintaining motivation*, namely establishing immediate goals, presenting and administering of tasks in a motivating manner, enhancing the quality of learning experiences, increasing self-confidence, forming a positive self image, developing autonomy and promoting self-motivation strategies.

- *Positive completion of learning experiences* and encouragement of positive self-evaluation – providing motivational feedback, increasing learning satisfaction, rewards and logical consequences in learning management.

Therefore, learning efficiency, as an important dimension in classroom management includes both *motivational aspects* (cognition, emotions and behaviours of initiation, direction and maintenance of learning motivation and maximizing learning and development opportunities) and *strategic aspects* (educational techniques and strategies used to increase learning efficiency).

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## EUROPEAN AND NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL POLICIES BETWEEN REALITY AND EXPECTATIONS AT THE LEVEL OF ADULTHOOD

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**Abstract:** *Cognitive societies, the challenge brought about by change*, as an argument for the preoccupation with lifelong learning, where lifelong education and training are the most adequate way for anyone to answer the challenges of change; digital technology transforms every aspect of the citizens' life into modern life, offers opportunities and multiple options, but also risks and increased uncertainties. The citizens have the freedom to adopt various lifestyles but also the responsibility to organise their own lives. We emphasise the importance of national educational programmes regarding the facilitation and opening towards the European space of adults, in order to demonstrate respect for the citizens of every European community, respect for a system of values necessary regardless of the economic or political level of each country.

**Keywords:** educational policies; educational paradigms; education for adults; cognitive societies; lifelong education.

Contemporary society signals a series of aspects which impose the elaboration of the directions of educational policies and reconfiguration of educational paradigms, at macro as well as micro level, by considering certain aspects, like (Ionescu, M., 2005:352): the exponential growth of the volume of information; the increase in the degree of knowledge wear; the high degree of abstracting of certain knowledge products; the restructuring of the system of values promoted by society; the acceleration of dynamics, of the change production rate; the general scientific, technical, cultural, etc. progress; the mobility of social life, the need to shift tasks, roles, status and professions; the evolution of the labour market.

Therefore, lifelong education starts from the objective need to keep up with the rhythm of changes which appear in society, as well as with the needs of each individual – the self-improvement and

continuous perfecting of every person. Lifelong learning no longer represents just an aspect of education and training – it must become the guiding principle of education and participation in the continuous learning process. (Hanches, L., 2007:16-19).

From these perspectives, we will enumerate the major themes recommended as coherent and comprehensive strategy for lifelong education in Europe, described in the Memorandum regarding lifelong learning, 2001:

- Visible growth in the level of investment in human resources in order to grant priority to the most important chapter of Europe – its citizens;
- The elaboration of efficient teaching and learning methodologies and the cultivation of a favourable educational climate for learning during the entire life;
- The significant improvement of the way to participate in learning, especially non-formal and informal, and of the understanding and appreciation of the results;
- The guarantee that every person can have easy access to information and competent advice regarding educational offers existent throughout Europe and during his/her entire life;
- Bringing the educational offer closer to the beneficiaries, in their own communities and wherever possible, through information and communication technology;
- Guaranteeing the general and permanent access to education for the purpose of forming and perfecting the required skills for a sustained activity in the cognitive society.

***Cognitive societies, the challenge brought about by change***, as an argument for the preoccupation with lifelong learning, where lifelong education and training are the most adequate way for anyone to answer the challenges of change; digital technology transforms every aspect of the citizens' life into modern life, offers opportunities and multiple options, but also risks and increased uncertainties. The citizens have the freedom to adopt various lifestyles but also the responsibility to organise their own lives. We observe that more and more citizens prolong their education and instruction period, but the distance between those who possess sufficient qualifications to maintain themselves afloat on the labour market and those who become marginalised is increasing considerably. In this type of social world, up-to-date information, knowledge and skills are highly valued.

Therefore, cognitive societies promote active citizens, human abilities capable of creating and using efficiently and intelligently the knowledge, on a continually changing background.

We must emphasise Marijke Dashorst's and Helen Keogh's (2009) preoccupation with keeping adult learning in the European agenda also in the period after 2010.

The 2009 Communication "The strategic framework for European co-operation in education and training" identifies four strategic challenges for 2020 and mid-term priorities for the period 2009-2011. Four strategic challenges are identified:

1. Making lifelong learning and cross-border mobility a reality.
2. Improving the quality and efficiency of education and training.
3. Promoting equity, social cohesion and citizenship in order to contribute to a sustainable society.
4. Enhancing innovation and creativity through developing transversal key competences as entrepreneurship, communication etc. (Dashorst, M. and Keogh, H., 2009, pag.22)

Following these goals we propose targets, at the level of Hunedoara County, the identification of the needs of elderly people from the perspective of national and European policies regarding: social security, improvement of the health system, aspects related to the lifestyle, performing an activity which should provide extra income, participation in courses for qualifying in certain professions/activities, participation in courses training for learning foreign languages and using the computer, organized by foundations, non-governmental organizations (with financial support for the costs). The research instrument we have used is a structured questionnaire which includes information domains regarding the needs of elderly people.

The research sample comprises 102 subjects: 62% from the urban area and 38% from the rural area; the age category 50-70 represents 43.4%, and the age category over 70 years represents 16.6%. Information about occupation is relevant: 60% of the subjects are retired, and the level of education is mostly high school (52%). The demographic data of the research sample are presented in the table below (table I.)

**Table I. Demographic Data**

	Percentage
<b>1. Age category</b>	
50-60 years	54%
60-70 years	29,4%
over 70 years	16,6%
<b>2. Place of residence</b>	
urban	62%
rural	38%
<b>3. Gender</b>	
male	51%
female	49%
<b>4. Nationality</b>	
Romanian	97%
Hungarian	3%

The second dimension regarding *EU and national policy between reality and expectations* at the level of late adulthood emphasises the need to improve the current national policy regarding elderly people, which 98% of the subjects consider inadequate

Out of the national and European policies, the following areas are considered a priority: the improvement of social protection (increase in pensions, subventions for food, heating and transportation). This component is represented by an overwhelming percentage of over 80%, which shows a high economic deficit; we could even call it an alarming poverty threshold for this part of the population, who cannot satisfy their primary needs concerning food and heating.

We have also identified acute needs in connection with the health care system from the perspective of the purchase power of medicine; 83% from the subjects consider it necessary either to reduce the price of medicine or to compensate for a part of the price. There have been dramatic situations exemplified, where people have been unable to buy their medicine on which they depend, suffering from chronic diseases. The table below shows obvious percentage on this situation and the need to formulate national laws which should meet the social needs of the elderly population.

**Table II. EU and national policy between reality and expectations**

	Percentage
<b>1. Consider the current national policy regarding elderly people good:</b>	
yes	2%
no	98%
<b>2. Consider as priority national and European policies in the areas:</b>	
<b>a) improvement of social protection</b>	
- increase in pensions	
yes	84%
no	16%
- subventions for food	
yes	85%
no	15%
- subventions for heating	
yes	85%
no	15%
- subventions for transportation	
yes	78%
no	22%
<b>b) improvement of the health care system</b>	
- reduction of medicine price	
yes	83%
no	17%
- subventions for balneary treatment in the off-peak season	
yes	67%
no	33%
<b>3. Are you satisfied with your social status?</b>	
yes	8%
partially	34%
no	58%
<b>4. Do you want to improve your living conditions?</b>	
Yes	52%
partially	41%
no	7%

<b>5. If your answer is 'yes', are you willing to perform an activity for extra income?</b>	
yes	54%
partially	28%
no	18%
<b>6. Are you willing to participate in courses to qualify for one of the above-mentioned activities?</b>	
yes	50%
partially	29%
no	21%
<b>7. In the context of current European requirements, do you consider necessary to participate in courses for learning foreign languages and using the computer, organized by foundations, non-governmental organizations (with financial support for the costs)?</b>	
yes	60%
partially	22%
no	18%

The final conclusions of this micro-investigation reflect the correlation of the economical/social/political/educational factors in our country, Romania, in the present: *the national policy concerning the elderly* is inadequate; there are attempts to relate to European policies, there are attempts to access external funds. However, these initiatives are granted mostly to the people who have reached extreme living situations; the role of preventing or, more accurately, the role of improving the quality of life in late adulthood, are not put into practice through common actions, implemented in every community or geographical area. As we have previously shown, we consider policies in the areas of social protection and health system to be a priority.

In order to improve living conditions, we note an important willingness to participate in training courses in order to perform additional activities, on the one hand for supplementing their income, on the other hand to help their fellow citizens. For this, we point out the need for organizations which should carry on activities and at the same time have professional services by hiring qualified staff.



According to D. Billington (1990), efficient educational programmes for adults have the following characteristics:

- A learning environment where the participants feel safe and supported, where their individuality, life experience, abilities and competences are appreciated;
- A learning environment which promotes and encourages critical thinking, exploring and creativity;
- Learning is mostly self-controlled, the students or trainees assuming responsibility for their own learning;
- Learning is individualised, centred on the concrete interests and needs of the students, who collaborate with teachers in their step towards the individualisation and adaptation of curricula;
- The learning environment is stimulating, the situations-problems constituting real intellectual challenges for the students;
- A strong involvement in learning; the students are not passive listeners, they get involved in the dialogue, they interact with each other and with the teacher, they formulate problems, express opinions and exchange ideas, practise, cooperate, use their personal experience to concretise the theoretical aspects, etc;
- Efficient feed-back mechanisms, through which the teacher collects information almost permanently, adapting his/her teaching activity and guiding learning according to results.

We emphasise the importance of national educational programmes regarding the facilitation and opening towards the European space of adults, in order to demonstrate respect for the citizens of every European community, respect for a system of values necessary regardless of the economic or political level of each country.

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- Facultatea Pedagogică "Tessedik Samuel", *Diskurzus*, Szarvas, Hungary, ISSN 1589-2662

**Editura Universității „Aurel Vlaicu” Arad**

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**Tipar executat la Imprimeria Universității „Aurel Vlaicu”, Arad, România**