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FOREWORD

This *Special Issue* of *Journal Plus Education* is dedicated to the International Conference "***COMPETENCE* – C**ONTE**M**PORARY **PE**RSPECTIVES ON **TE**ACHING PERFORMA**N**CES", organized by *Transilvania* University of Brașov, Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences, Department of Teachers' Training (DPPD), together with its international and national partners, Istituto di Scienze Psicologiche di Educazione e di Formazione (I.S.P.E.F.), Rome, Italy, *Jan Kochanowski* University (JKU), Kielce, Poland, and *Aurel Vlaicu* University of Arad.

The international conference "***COMPETENCE*–C**ONTE**M**PORARY **PE**RSPECTIVES ON **TE**ACHINGPERFORMA**N**CE", held between 8 and 10 June 2018, in Brașov, Romania, was at its first edition and it focused on the past and the present, as well as on the educational perspectives of teachers' initial and permanent professional training. The event was placed under the auspices of the Romanian Centenary and had the support of the Brasov Prefecture, The Schools Inspectorate of Brasov County, and The Museum of The First Romanian School.

The scientific committee of the conference brought together 38 representatives for the education area in Romania and abroad.

The *Special Issue* of *JPE* comprises articles of experts from Romania and abroad, on topics related to education – both as a scientific approach, and as a defining cultural component, adapted and adaptable to the contemporary demands and perspectives crucial in the teachers' training.

Prof. Mariana NOREL, PhD
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"COMPETENCE" UNDER THE MICROSCOPE: ANALYSIS FROM DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

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Abstract: *This paper is an approach to the competence both as a concept and as a core issue of the curriculum design and curriculum implementation. This approach could be considered as an application of existing knowledge so as to generate new nuanced understandings of the competence concept. The ongoing process of competencies' development during the different phases of ontogenesis is synthetically presented. The important place and role of the formal curriculum design and of curriculum implementation for the quality of the process of competencies' development are explained. At the same time, it is emphasized the idea that the curricular design starts with the formulation of the prefigured competences as expected results, while the curricular implementation is finalized with the achievement of these competencies, in a greater or a lower level of quality. The presentation uses metaphors (the "metaphor of the forest" and the "metaphor of the building") for a more suggestive argumentation of the exposed ideas. The paper is part of the series of publications focused on the thorny issue of curriculum theory.*

Keywords: *competence-competency; competent personality; evolving competencies; concrete competencies in practice; curriculum design;*

1. Competence/ competency concept and implications within the curriculum context

It is imperious necessary to understand and to accept that the educational process starts on the way of the ontogenetical evolution from the very beginning of the great entrance in life through the birth gate, if not even before this moment according to specific and interesting researches. (Niculescu, 2014: 243).

The developmental process of the students' competencies is situated on the crossroad of the top-down approach of curriculum design and the down-top route of curriculum fulfilment. The curriculum design establishes (prefigures) the expected outcomes in terms of competencies, as synergetic effects of three components: knowledge, skills (or, more specifically capacities /abilities) as operators, and attitudes based on values, as vectors. This meaning of the concept of competence/competency makes difficult to understand the definition given for competency in the Romanian Education Law in 2011. Here the competence is seen as a multifunctional and transferable assembly of knowledge, skills (defined with a term in Romanian focused on the automatism in action)/abilities, and aptitudes. The aptitudes as operational components of the human personality are premises for a higher development of the abilities, but the definition seems to have lost the attitudes as vector components, extremely important for the quality of the entire construction.

The Draft for Curriculum of Early Education keeps, unfortunately, this definition inside the text, as a referential one (2017:11.), even if the glossary of the same document presents another definition for competence, more complex and complete, but still keeping the Romanian expressions coming from the traditional pedagogy next to new concepts. In fact, as I have suggested in a previously published paper (Niculescu R.M. 2017) it is a kind of keeping the use of "mermaids" in the pedagogical language, unhappily mixing traditional terms with modern ones, often in a tautological manner. This lack of consistency (existing within a lot of official documents) creates difficulties for what it is called perceived

curriculum, meaning the way of decoding the requests of the official curriculum by the actors of curriculum implementation. The perceived curriculum represents an important starting point for an effective implementation of curriculum in the practical field of education.

Another source of influence for understanding the competence concept is the document: Recommendation 2006/962/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competencies for lifelong learning (OJ L 394, 30.12.2006, pp. 10-18) where the competencies are defined as *a combination* of knowledge, skills, and attitudes appropriate to the context. Key competencies, as core concepts of the quoted document, are those which all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion, and an effective integration as an employee. This is a more complete definition except that, essentially, a competence is not a combination of elements but more a *synergetic effect* of them.

2. The evolution of competencies along ontogenesis process

The previously published paper (Niculescu, R.M.2014) speaks about the long way of developing competencies with a special attention for the first stages of the ontogenesis.
In the actual context, a presentation from another perspective is intended. The presentation is rooted in a published book (Niculescu, 2010:99) where the subchapter VII.2.3. put into discussion the idea of "The birth and life of a competent personality". The idea of the continuous and complex process of development of the competencies in ontogenesis is highlighted.
The focus, this time, is not on the different meanings of the concept of competence/ competency (a thorny issue widely presented in the literature) but on the using of the singular and the plural of the concept competence connected to the adjective competent, and the plural of the concept: competences with their alternative competencies, coming from the word: competency. These multi-meanings of different words are specific for the Anglo-Saxon languages and they appear less in Latin languages, especially in French, where the concepts compétence/ competences are well and interestingly addressed.
The use of term competencies is considered in the day to day language as its meaning connected to the adjective competent/ compétent. That is probably why the use of the term competencies in the first part of the ontogenesis is considered less appropriate.
A clear distinction should be done: the distinction between "a competent adult/ professional/ personality (personnalité compétente)" on one side, and the competencies developed during a long-term process from the birth to the maturity, on the other side. Only a mature human can be defined as a more or less competent personality (personnalité compétente), but a human being reaches this level after a continuous process of development of the own competencies
During this long-term process the competencies pass through a complex development from simple competencies, specific for the early year, combined and integrated gradually into more, and more complex competencies, developed in different areas and turning into transferable key competencies; these are further detailed or completed by the so-called specific competencies with peculiar application within defined areas of activity.
Along the person's genesis process, we could use the term of *evolving competencies*, explicitly developed during all the school years through the formal curriculum, and completed by the influences of the non-formal and informal curriculum. When the development of the human has reached maturity, we could talk about a *competent personality* (meaning that the human has already enough transferable/key competencies and specific competencies for a professional/ working area, to be able to support himself/herself independently and to support other people. The level of the personal competence is different and unique as the human

personality is unique, as well. It depends on very specific personal factors, starting to heredity towards all what it meant personal life and individual conditions of development.

Another important issue should complete the previous presentation. The process of evolution of the personal competencies is not finished when they become parts of a competent human personality, as a professional or social person. They are constantly modulated, completed, and sometimes even substantially changed, as the person's active life unfolds. Thus, they can be named on this sequence of the human's life as *concrete competencies in practice* (fig. 1)
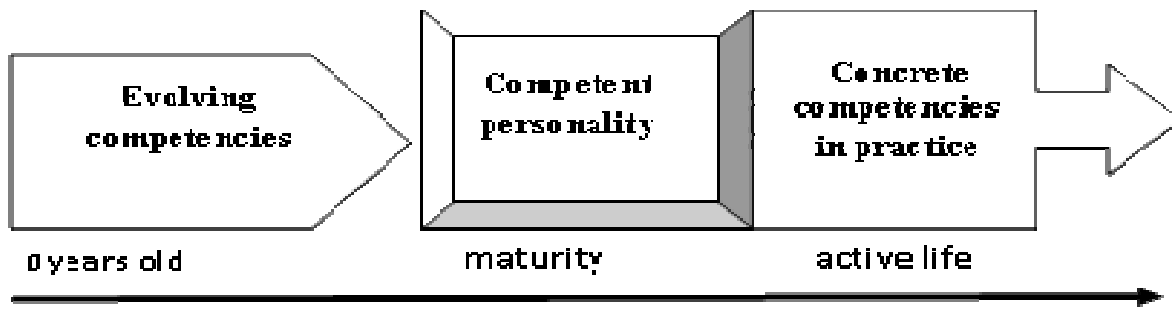
Fig. 1: "The birth and life of a competent personality"

Metaphorically speaking, from seed, through seedlings in nurseries, to forestation is the path of evolution towards maturity. The forest, once already born, from her youth until the end of her existence, gives the green, shade and the freshness of the air to what the environment asks for. But the forest's green, shade, and freshness do not remain the same along the passing of time. Leaving back the ancient periods, since there was a formal intervention in the forests' evolution, humans exist beyond it, aiming to help this evolution.

And just like in this long way of evolution of the forest, the HUMAN PERSONALITY 's development (within formal, non-formal, and informal contexts) keeps hidden the professionals with different educational roles. These hypostases of humans accompanying the long way of competencies development and transformation are represented in the process of human evolution by the parents as educators, the professional educators, and, later, the humans themselves that lead as masters the fabulous symphony of their own development during the so-called life-long-learning.

3. The effectiveness of curriculum management on strategic and tactical levels – a condition of the achievement of high levelled competencies of the students

A reiteration of a core idea is necessary: competencies should be seen both as anticipated and desired expectations as core elements of a curriculum design and final obtained results after the implementation of a designed curriculum. It is obvious that the qualitative results of the implementation (the obtained competencies) depend on the quality of the curriculum design. A paper published in 2016 (Niculescu, R.M) presents the metaphor of curriculum design as a harmony block, pleading for the necessity of keeping the National curriculum design as a well-defined unit characterized by logic, harmony, and continuity.

The metaphor of the building has been presented in the mentioned paper, expressing the unity and the solidity of a curriculum design. The analogy of the building with a different number of floors presumes a defined number of levels according to each national educational system. In the context of this paper, this metaphor is to be seen from the point of view of

competence/ competencies, as finalities (put into analogy with the wellbeing of the people living on each floor and within the entire building).

The metaphorical building was considered having as starting point the right dimensions of the digging for the future foundation, and the foundation solidity; these could represent the early education in the broad sense that includes everything the child did before entering the school system where the play is the main context of the learning process. The first specific educational level where *voluntary learning* becomes step by step dominant versus the *play* starts with late pre-school and become important during the primary school levels. This is generally the case in the world, regardless of the age at which the first grade is placed in the local education system, at about six / seven years.

All the next floors of the building are to be built based on these foundations. They are connected by steps or/and elevators. On each level, there are apartments, connected to each other on the same level and on the vertical plane. The humans' wellbeing (on successive ages) and their functional and effective activities (with the specificity of each level), that implies properly developed competencies (as an analogy), must be the core interest of the design, construction, and, further use/implementation, both for the building and curriculum. The analogy involved by the metaphor of the building with the design and implementation of the curriculum should lead to the understanding of the necessity for curriculum to ensure the right and the functional context for a continuum, consistent, and effective development of the humans' competencies.

The humans climb from a level to another during their school life. Thus, humans' competencies and their quality are deeply influenced by the continuity and the functionality of curriculum design and implementation on the vertical plane: it means that it is necessary to flow without dysfunctional cuts in the electrical system, the water supply or other functional aspects (when it is about the building) and without discontinuity when it is about the continuum of the competencies development. Compatibility, harmony, and functional connections should exist on the horizontal plan as well both between neighbours, and curricular fields, as well.

Retouches and multiple repairs may be required both in the building and on the national curriculum, along with the building process or with the development of a generation subject to education based on it. They are part of the curriculum development process on a tactical level.

When a national curriculum has to be changed, as a whole strategy, the old experience has to be considered both on the work of the architects of the new curriculum and on what the builders will do. But it is essential to consider what the new tenants need (the new generations of the educational system). They are human beings that definitely have the specific features and requirements of a new time, of a new stage in the evolution of mankind.

There will be no re-invented issues, will preserve what has proven positive and introduce what the new tenants/ generations seem to need.

The life of these human beings, when a block is built, the competencies of the students able to make better their lives, when it is about designing and implementing a curriculum should be the genuine focus of both approaches.

Tertiary
education

Secondary
education

XII

XI

X

IX

Low

Secondary

Education

VIII

VII

VI

V

Primary

education

IV

III

II

I

Early education as pit for
foundation and cement
foundation
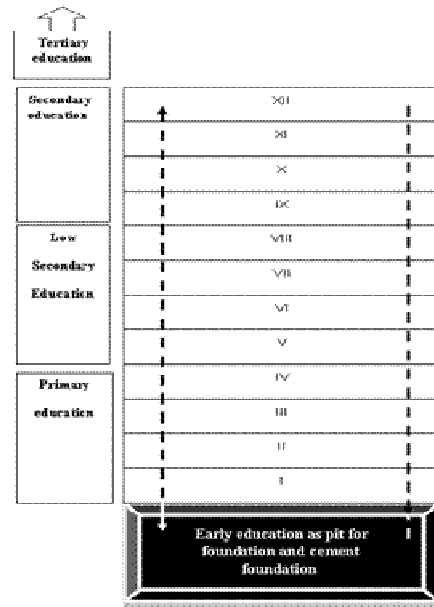
*Fig. 2: The metaphor of the building: for the unity and the consistency of
curriculum design and implementation*

4. The multiple hypostases of the professionals of education within the context of the new millennium.

The "educator", as a generic term, means anybody and everybody who is blessed to have a (desirable positive) influence on another human being. It would be much to discuss all or each of the educators who leave deep fingerprints on the human beings development as humans: parents, teachers, scholars, and a lot of other adults surrounding the humans during their entire existence.

When it is about the teacher from preschool education toward the university on should discuss a double hypostasis: as managers of the educational process and managers of a group of developing human beings, gathered in a class, a school, a university etc. These two hypostases have many similar/common issues, but they have a lot of differences as well. Both of these two hypostases need a high levelled development of both the key competencies and the specific ones.

The complex process of teachers training must be focused on their development as professionals of teaching but also as managers of humans passing a long and difficult process of becoming. They must have a well-developed *competence profile* as professionals in the field of education specifically because they are highly responsible for the appropriate development of their students' competencies.

A more serious and responsible concern should be taken into account for the area of teachers' training in Romania and in the entire world as well. It seems that nowadays this concern should involve a focus on the development of a core curriculum of an international competence profile of a teacher because of the unprecedented mobility of students and teachers across the various meridians of the earth. Specific competencies appropriate for each peculiar national and cultural context can be connected to this core competence profile of the universal teachers, aiming to answer to the very concrete requests. Unfortunately, on the

theoretical level this issue is vaguely accepted and sometimes declared as a wish, but practically, it remains only a dream. The future asks, however, a more obvious effort for turning this dream into effective reality.

The management of the institutions of education, the opportunity of professionalizing this hypostasis is other interesting issues to be debated, analysed and considered as the best practices aiming to rich the genuine quality of education. The different experiences existing worldwide analysed within and outside their social- cultural and political contexts could be an interesting and generous resource.

These all are interesting areas for an in-depth research; they should be considered as fields of interest for an effective research in education. International research projects should be fructified with genuine positive results.

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PERCEPTION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS ON FAIRY TALES

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Abstract: *Fairy tales illustrate differences in gender. Male characters are adventurous, warriors, engaged in restoring justice, while female characters are passive, obedient, presented as victims and dependant on the male characters. The paper presents a mixed research, its objective being the analysis the students' perceptions on fairy tales. The participants of the study are 129 from six different classes of fourth grade. For the analysis, Children's Fairy-tales Perception Questionnaire was applied. The results show that boys view the female characters as being passive, pleasant and beautiful and the male characters as brave and powerful, in line with gender stereotypes. This research is useful for teachers and school counsellors for a better understanding the students' perception on fairy tales.*

Keywords: *fairy tales; gender differences; students; primary school;*

1. Introduction

Gender refers to differences between men and women based on sex differences. Gender related differences are built socially and historically, strengthened by psychological, institutional and cultural means (Nelson, 1995). Gender identity refers to the conscience of belonging to female and male sex, with everything this implies in origin society, being an important aspect of self-concept (Papalia, Olds & Feldman, 2010).

1.1. Gender differences in fairy tales

Gender differences refer to physical, psychological, mental and behavioural differences between men and women. Gender differences are also influenced by the expectations and different social experiences which boys and girls face since birth. Those expectations relate to three aspects of gender identity: gender roles, gender typing and gender stereotypes.

Gender roles concern those behaviours, interests, attitudes, aptitudes and personality traits a culture promotes as being adequate for boys, men and girls, women. Every society or culture define and impose their gender roles. Throughout history, the majority of cultures expected women to devote their time to care for the children and house Men were supposed to ensure livelihood and family protection (Gilligan & Attanucci, 1988). Women had to be obedient and careful, while men were supposed to be active, aggressive and competitive. Nowadays, especially in the Western countries, gender roles have become more flexible and more miscellaneous.

Gender typing refers to the acquisition of a gender role. Traditionalist parents encourage gender typing. On the other hand, in the families where parents have egalitarian vision regarding gender roles, stereotypes are more flexible (Iervolino, Hines, Golombok, Rust & Plomin, 2005). Gender stereotypes are preconceived generalizations related to female and male behaviour; for example, all women are (view as) passive and obedient, all men are aggressive and independent. These stereotypes exist in many cultures and are a close cause for typified gender behaviour (Campbell, Shirley & Candy, 2004; Costa jr., Terracciano, & Mccrae, 2001).

Gender inequality refers to different treatment of men and women for the reason that some are men and the others are women, thus being a birth criterion, which is sex. In modern society, birth inequalities are considered illegitimate and society prohibits and explicitly rejects them through ideology, legislation and institutions specifically designed to combat them (Pasti, 2003). Although we are talking about inequality between women and men, it is usually who are discriminated (Lorber, 2010). Social scientists have accumulated evidence that show that stereotypes about men and women influences daily interactions and generates inequalities in terms of jobs, salaries, authority and family responsibilities (Ridgeway, 2013). For example, women often receive a lower salary for the same work or work comparable to men and are often stuck in their possibilities to advance (Lorber, 2010).

As they grow up, children spend more time interacting with other children. Interactions between children occur largely during the game. Gender role is a central development process during the middle childhood. Relying on mature cognitive skills, children begin to display elaborate knowledge about these roles; more flexible, differentiated concepts appear later in this period (McHale, Crouter & Tucker, 1999).

The fairy tales tell fantastic events that are attributed to characters or forces in the field of the unreal. They bring joy in the lives of children, fulfil their desire to play, strengthen emotional power, develop imagination and memory, expand and intensify the child's social relationships, and provide a basis for linguistic formation (Kready, 1916). As cultural products, fairy tales propose a pattern of heroic behavior (Norel, 2012) and illustrate gender differences. Boys are adventurous, rescuing, fighters and capable; symbolizes ingenuity and perseverance. Feminine characters are passive, subjected, represented as victims, and dependent on male figures (Cekiso, 2013). Feminine characters are appreciated for their physical appearance, feminine beauty being a dominant theme of fairy tales. Instead, the number of references to masculinity of beauty is much smaller, men being appreciated for courage, physical strength and intelligence. While physical beauty is rewarded, the lack of beauty is punished (Baker-Sperry & Grauerholz, 2003; Cocoradă, 2014).

Feminist criticism has attacked for a long time the fairy-tales promoted by Anglo-American culture, claiming that they promote gender stereotypes and strengthens women's restrictive images. Feminist texts reveal that the fairy-tales encourage passive, submissive behaviour of women and male dominance (Westland, 1993). Studies show that fairy tales represent a beauty standard that is hard to achieve, and that girls who read fairy tales often compare themselves with very beautiful princesses and fairies. Therefore, they have negative self-perceptions, a low self-esteem and many of them dream of a Prince Charming who is very far from reality.

1.1. Psychosocial development in middle childhood

The cognitive development that occurs in middle-aged children allows children to develop more complex concepts about their own person and make progress in understanding and controlling emotions. Thus, children are increasingly aware of their own feelings and that of others (Papalia, Olds & Feldman, 2010). In early and middle childhood, the most significant changes are the increased capacities of children and their motivation to engage in coordinated interaction - both positive/cooperative and negative/aggressive (Hartup, 1992). Children demonstrate knowledge of gender stereotypes, and these stereotypes is relatively resistant to change (Martin, Ruble, & Szkrybalo, 2002; Wilson, Lindsey, & Schooler, 2000). Stereotypes become more flexible with age.

2. Method

This research is mixed, quantitative, by applying a questionnaire, and qualitatively by thematic analysis of students' answers related to the perception of female and male characters in fairy tales. The objective of this research is to analyse students' perceptions on fairy tales. The research questions are:

1. What are the gender differences in the perception of female characters in fairy tales?

2. What are the gender differences in the perception of masculine characters in fairy tales?

The participants of this research are 129 pupils from fourth grade, 70 boys and 59 girls aged between 10 and 12.

It was applied the Children's Fairy-tales Perception Questionnaire (CFTPQ), developed by the authors of the research. The questionnaire has 11 questions, of which 2 are multiple choice *questions*and 9 are open-ended questions. Socio-demographic data such as school, class, gender and age were also collected.

3. Results and discussions

At question `How often do you read fairy tales?` 26 boys and 28 girls answered that they read fairy tales a few times a week, 35 boys and 24 girls answered that they read once a month and nine boys and seven girls answered that they read once a year.

Table 1 Students' answers to the question 'How often do you read fairy-tales?'

'How often do you read fairy-tales?'	The boys answers	The girls answers	Total	Percent
Few times a week	26	28	54	42%
Once a month	35	24	59	46%
Once a year	9	7	16	12%

At question 'What do you think about fairy-tales?' 66 of the boys (86%) and all the girls answered that the fairy tales are fascinating. Only four of the boys answered that the fairy- tales are boring.

At question 'Do you like more to read fairy-tales or to view their screenings?', 40 boys (57%) and 38 girls (64%) answered that they prefer to read, 20 boys (29%) and 12 girls (20%) responded that they preferred to see the screenings, while 8 boys and 8 girls agreed to both reading and screening.

At question `What is your favourite fairy tale?`, we can see the students answers in Table 2.

Table 2 Students' answers to the question `What is your favourite fairy tale?`

Fairy tale	The gender of the main character	Boys' answers	Girls' answers
`The story of Harap-Alb` by Ion Creangă	M	22	7

`Snow White and the seven dwarves` by the Brothers Grimm	F	9	8
`Cinderella` by the Brothers Grimm	F	3	6
`Red Riding Hood` by the Brothers Grimm	F	1	5
`Prâslea the Brave and the Golden Apple` by Petre Ispirescu	M	5	1
`Aleodor Emperor` by Petre Ispirescu	M	1	2
`The salt in food` by Petre Ispirescu	F	0	4
`Sleeping Beauty` by the Brothers Grimm	F	0	4
`The Adventures of Pinocchio` by Carlo Collodi	M	2	0
`Prince Charming from Tears` by Mihai Eminescu	M	0	1
`Rapunzel` by Brothers Grimm	F	0	1
`The Goat and the Snake` by Petre Ispirescu	M	0	1
`Bremen Town Musicians` by Brothers Grimm	-	0	1
`Youth without old age and life without death` by Petre Ispirescu	M	1	0
`Prince Charming with Golden Hair` by Petre Ispirescu	M	1	0
`The seven - headed dragon` by Petre Ispirescu	M	1	0
Other *	-	24	14
TOTAL	9 M / 6F	70	55

*Note: In the **Other** category we included all the titles that do not fit in the fairy tale literature but which were mentioned by the students (for example, `The beartricked by the fox`, `The ugly duck`, `The three piglets` and so on). Also, two children did not write any title.*

Analysing the answers, we can see that most of the boys had chosen a fairy tale in which the main character is masculine (`The story of Harap-Alb` - 22), while most girls had chosen a fairy tale in which the main character is female (`Snow White and the seven dwarves` - 9). In the whole sample, boys prefer fairy tales in which the hero is a boy/man, while the girls prefer fairy tales in which the heroine is a girl/woman, contrary to other studies that assert that students identify with the central character, no matter if that character is a male one, or a female one (Westland, 1993).

It is important to underline that many students (38 of 129 - 24 boys and 14 girls) have written titles of novels, stories or other literary species. We can conclude that these students did not know the characteristics of fairy tales.

Themes identified for the perception of characters are similar for boys and girls, but the sub-themes are different, depending on gender ofheroes and heroines. We identified three themes: negative perception, positive perception and ambivalent perception of characters from fairy tales, two of these themes having subheadings (table 3).

The tables 4 and 5 show the frequency analysis at questions `What do you think about female characters form fairy tales?` and `What do you think about male characters form fairy tales?`.

Table 3 Themes and subthemes identified for the perception of characters

Theme	Female characters	Male characters
	Subtheme	Subtheme
Negative perception	Passive non-involvement	Violence and hardness
	Other features	Other features
	Appearance	Appearance
	Agility and sensitivity	Courage and power
	Courage and power	Engaging in action
Positive perception	Intelligence	Agreeableness
	Gentleness and patience	Sense of humour
	Sense of humour	Other personality traits
	Other features	Physical appearance and personality traits
	Physical appearance and personality traits	
Ambivalent perception	-	-

Table 4 Frequency analysis - female characters

Theme	Sub-theme	Meaning units - boys	Meaning units - girls
	`What do you think about female characters form fairy tales?`		
Negative perception	Passive	7	3
	Other features	6	0
	Total	13	3
	Appearance	3	2
	Agility and sensitivity	16	10
	Courage and power	6	3
	Intelligence	3	0
Positive perception	Gentleness and patience	2	1
	Sense of humour	2	0
	Other features	10	6
	Physical appearance and personality traits	1	19
	Total	43	41
Ambivalent perception	-	8	7

Table 5 Frequency analysis - male characters

Theme	Sub-theme	Meaning units - boys	Meaning units - girls
	`What do you think about male characters form fairy tales?`		
Negative perception	Violence and hardness	1	3
	Other features	6	6
	Appearance	5	4
	Total	12	13
Positive			

perception	Courage and power	26	13
	Engaging in action	5	3
	Agreeableness	5	5
	Sense of humour	4	1
	Other personality traits	9	4
	Physical appearance and personality traits	5	6
	Total	*54*	*32*
Ambivalent perception	-	1	11

Regarding the negative perception of female characters, the students - seven boys and three girls - said they are not involved and passive: `Helpless and sillies`, `no one can defend herself, they need a male character`. Also, 6 boys wrote other negative features of feminine characters: `they should not be put in the story because they spoil everything that is for men.`, `Crappy`, `They always want everything expensive and good, especially princesses and they think them self very important.`. Thus, we can say that boys perceive feminine characters more unfavourable than girls.

Concerning the positive perception of female characters, three boys and two girls referred to their physical appearance, answering that they are `beautiful, `arranged, beautiful and neat`. These characters are described as agreeable, good-hearted, but also sensible - `they have a good soul`, `very good to the soul`, `more sensitive and cuter than the masculine`, `slightly more sensitive than the other` - 16 boys and 10 girls perceive female characters it this way. Other features noted by six boys and three girls are courage and strength - `courageous`, `very courageous and cute`, `the most powerful`. Three boys have noticed that feminine characters are intelligent - `smart. `, `Smart`. They are also characterized by two boys and a girl as gentle and patient - `a little calmer and quieter`, `They have a lot of patience`, `gentle`. Two boys have noticed that female characters are `funny`. And in the case of positive perceptions, we can see that the students, 10 boys and six girls, have identified valuable positives as `very creative and interesting, `, `essential`, `very interesting`, `fantastic`, `responsible and creative`.

It is worth noting that a boy and 19 girls described the feminine characters taking into account both physical appearance and other personality traits: `good to the heart, beautiful, smart and working`, `courageous, strong, beautiful, modest`, `elegant, funny or talented`, `beautiful, hilarious and loving`, `cute and funny`, `cute and stylish`. So, according to students' perceptions, female characters are described as good-hearted and physically beautiful, girls emphasizing with these two characteristics. This tendency is called schematization: we notice better the features we have, we think we have.

Some students show stereotype flexibility, highlighting ambivalent or contrasting features. Eight boys and seven girls think that female characters can have both positive and negative characteristics (ambivalent perception): `beautiful and interesting, and some are ugly and evil.`, `good only the positive ones`, `Sometimes fearful, sometimes smart, sometimes courageous.` Summarizing, we can say that most boys perceive feminine characters as passive, uninterested, agreeable, good-hearted, and the girls also perceive them as agreeable, but especially taking into account physical beauty accompanied by features such as kindness, modesty or diligence.

The male characters, in terms of negative perception, are seen by a boy and a girl as violent – `too violent`, `a little harder. ` Six boys and six girls have identified other negative features - `lazy and liars.`, `I find them boring`, `Mean`, `I do not like so much because they are a little more cowards than the female characters`. Analysing the positive perception of

male characters, we observe that the physical appearance is noted by five boys and four girls - `very attractive`, `beautiful`, `very beautiful. That is the reason for what the female characters fall in love.` As for the courage and power of male characters, 26 boys and 13 girls have noticed these characteristics - `courageous`, `strong`, `always strong and fearless`. Unlike female characters, male ones are perceived by five boys and three girls as being (more) involved in the action of fairy tales: `I like male characters because they help female characters`, `They are useful in stories`. Five boys and five girls have noticed that male characters are agreeable: `very good and respectable`, `good and `kind-hearted`, kind-hearted`. Four boys and a girl think these characters are funny: `very funny`, `funny, more fun than girls.` We also find answers from students, nine girls and four boys, who could not be introduced in a specific sub-theme: `great`, `interesting`, `romantic`. Five boys and six girls have highlighted both physical appearance and other personality traits: `cautious, beautiful and always help people in danger`, `beautiful, brave and always ready to save princesses`.

For the ambivalent perception, a boy and 11 girls surprised that male characters can be both positive and negative: `angry or sometimes happy.`, `Good but some of them are cunning.` , `Good or bad, scared or courageous.` So, male characters are seen by most boys and girls as courageous, powerful and fighting. If hero and heroine demonstrate differences, those differences fit gender stereotype and they are amplified by the biased perception of students, girls and boys.

Table 6. Synthesis of the positive and negative assessments

Evaluator group	Group with positive rating		Group with negative rating	
	Heroines	Heroes	Heroines	Heroes
Girls	41	32	**3**	13
Boys	43	**54**	13	12

The negative perception about female characters is strongly negative for boys, compared with negative perception of girls (Table 6). Concerning the perception of male characters, the boys' positive perception is strongly positive compared with the perception of girls. The differences confirm the theory of social identity. In line with this theory (Hogg, Abrams, & Brewer, 2017; Turner, & Tajfel, 1986), the perception of belonging to a group (in our case, boys or girls) can trigger discrimination between groups by favouring the membership group. Attraction to one's own group is simultaneous with the minimization of the other group. For boys, favouring your own group is stronger that out-group denigration, but this trend is not confirmed in the case of girls. For both categories of participants, the positive evaluation of heroes in fairy tales is high frequent than negative, result being explained by the charm and magic of fairy tales and the attractiveness of the events and characters described. Both girls and boys identify with in-group and discrepant comparisons without group produce high self-esteem and prestige. Favouring your own group maintains and protects your own social identity. We highlight that in our research, discrimination of our group, heroines for boys and heroes for girls, occurs not in a real situation, but towards imaginary characters, placed in fairy-tales.

Although the results are interesting, confirming previous research and introducing new data, they should be viewed with caution. Thus, the number of traits attributed to the characters may be influenced by the students' writing speed, *vocabulary size* or by their interest in fairy tales.

4. Conclusions

This research aims to analyse how primary school students perceive male and female characters in fairy tales. The responses show that female characters are perceived as passive and dependent on male figures, confirming gender stereotypes and other studies. Feminine beauty is a dominant theme of fairy tales, and in student responses, especially in girls'responses, we find that female characters are seen as beautiful, elegant and graceful. Male characters, on the other hand, are characterized by students as courageous and powerful.

This research offers the opportunity for teachers and school counsellors to analyse girls and boy's perception of fairy-tale characters. Fairy tales are important sources for the socialization of children's gender attitudes and can increase the stereotypes. In this context, teachers and parents need training to recognize the gender biases and their impact on children behaviours. Based on these results, they can help students to have a critical perspective on fairy tales, analyse character behaviours, expose students to counter-stereotypic models and create alternatives for gender equality.

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THE ANALYSIS OF ANTHROPOTOPONYMIC AND TERMINOLOGICAL STRUCTURES IN ENGLISH SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DISCOURSE

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Abstract:*The authors of this paper study the anthropotoponymic and terminological structures of English scientific and technological discourse (the sphere of nanotechnology and fibre optic technology). The structural peculiarities of anthroponyms, eponyms, toponyms, terms and terminological word-combinations are examined. The classification of the mentioned above lexical units according to their numerical composition is provided.*

Key-words: *scientific and technical discourse; anthroponym; eponym; toponym; term; terminological word combination;*

English scientific and technological discourse is studied in this paper. This kind of discourse is characterized by using great amount of anthropotoponymic and terminological structures. The first one includes anthroponyms, eponyms and toponyms while the second one consists of terms and terminological word combinations. The aim of the paper is to provide the structural analysis of the mentioned above items.

The authors of the paper have made an interpretation of 576 pages of English scientific and technological discourse (the sphere of nanotechnology and fibre optic technology). Among them there are the following articles: S. Arayachukiat [1], J.-M. Beaufils [2], M.A. Castrillon [3], S. Gupta [7], M. Heurlin [8], M. Nakazawa [19], A. Priyadarshi [21], P.D. Townsend [25], H. Wei [28] and monographies: S. Kelley [10] и F. Mitschke [17]. In the course of the analysis 665 text passages (the average length of each is mostly one sentence (simple or compound)) have been picked out by the means of the continuous sampling method. Anthropotoponymic structures make 49 % while terminological ones 51%.

Let us pay attention to the theoretical side of the issue and cover such concepts as "anthroponym", "anthroponomy", "eponym", "eponimy", "toponym", "term" and "terminological unit".

Anthroponomy (from Greek "anthropos" – man and "onyma" – name) is a branch of onomastics, studying anthroponyms, patronyms, surnames, patronimics, nicknames, pseudonyms, cryptonyms and anthroponyms of the literary work [20]. T.V. Myaskovskaya and V.V. Semina have proposed the following classification: personal name (the name given at the birth), patronymic name (the name after your father, grandfather and so on), surname (family name), nickname, pseudonym (individual and group), cryptonym (a hidden name), anthroponyms formed from ethnicons (the names of natios) [18, p.52]. It should be noticed that not all of the mentioned above types are reflected in the studied discourse. This is explained by the chastity and officialism of the last one. In the act of the textual analysis it was determined that only the following structures such as "name", "surname", "initials+surname", "name+surname", "name+numeral", "name+middle name+surname" and "position (degree)+name (initials)+surname".

The works of E.V. Varnavskaya [27], D. Minkova and R. Stockwell [16] as well as the other's ones are devoted to the study of eponyms. According to E.V. Varnavskaya, eponimy is "a nomination of things and events after real and mythic characters widely used while calling geographic features, rewards, film companies and industrial groups" [27, p. 9].

One more definition was provided by D. Minkova and R. Stockwell: "These are new words based on names (epi- 'upon' onym 'name')" [16, p. 19]. The text study has allowed to make the following eponymic models classification: N (Noun), Anthr.+N (Anthroponym+Noun), Anthr.+Anthr.+N (Anthroponym+Anthroponym+Noun), Anthr.suf.+N (Anthroponym complicated with a suffix+Noun), Anthr.'s+N (Anthroponym complicated by possessiveness), eponyms-units of measure and eponyms-abbreviations.

Toponyms have been studied by such language scholars as A.V. Syperanskaya [24], L.V. Uspenski [26], R. Coats [4], M. Gelling [5], C. Smith [23] and the others. Toponyms are the names of geographic features. There are a lot of toponyms classifications. However, as the study material of this paper is scientific and technical discourse, let us consider the most convenient ones for its research. There are two appropriate ones. One of them is based on the morphologic structure (Leonovich 2002), the second one correlates with the type of the denoted geographic features (Syperanskaya 1984). According to the morphologic structure, O.A. Leonovich divides toponyms into four groups: "simple toponyms" (one base morpheme), "secondary toponyms" (one base morpheme + suffix), "complex toponyms" (two base morphemes) and "composite toponyms" (two and more words) [13, p.66]. A.V. Superanskaya offered a division based on the type of the denoted geographic features. They are hydronyms (water object names), oronyms (mountains names), placenames (cities names), urbanonyms (intra-city objects names), macrotoponyms (the names of big geographic features such as countries and so on) and microtoponyms (small undeveloped lands) [24].

Any scientific and technical text is full of terms. There had been a critical problem of the defining such a concept as "term" until the middle of 1970s. Later the language scholars came to the common conclusion that terms are "words and word combinations connected to the concept related to any field of knowledge and activity" [6, p. 24]. Nowadays terminological word combinations prevail in the texts of scientific and technical discourse due to the science acceleration and the growth of the scientific knowledge. A terminological word combination is "a semantically integral combination formed by joining two, three or more components related to a certain science and engineering concept [12, p. 5]. Terminological word combinations can be two-component, three-component and complex ones. Moreover, the components bond character varies. Such parts of speech as nouns (N), adjectives (Adj.), verbs (V), prepositions (prep.), numerals (Num.) and adverbs (Adv.) can act as constituent parts of terminological word combinations.

All examined anthropotoponymic and terminological structures were divided into four groups:
1) simple ones;
2) two-component ones;
3) three-component ones;
4) complex ones (four and more components).
Let us consider each of them in details.

Simple structures
Ex. 1 *For example, large optical gain has been obtained by **Klimov** and coworkers using chemically synthesized NCs, which allows the application of these NCs in the field of quantum-dot lasers* [28, p. 496]. The Anthroponymic structure is "surname". The large optical gain obtained by Klimov and his coworkers is described in Ex. 1. Such a discovery allows nanocrystals to be used in the science field studying quantum-dot lasers.

Ex. 2 *Rather than expressing the energy in **Joules**, it can be interesting to write it as photon number which is found …* [17, p. 168]. There is a full name of the unit of measure in Ex. 2. There is also a short version of it, J. It was named after James Joule, an English physicist [9].

Ex. 3 *In 1992/1993, the same technology is used in **the Pacific** for TPC-4* [17, p. 240]. "The Pacific" is a simple toponym, hydronym complicated by the definite article. The most important thing in such a sentence structure is a place, not the one who has performed the action.

Ex. 4 *In situ monitoring of nanowire growth is highly desirable because these **nanostructures** will play a key role in future semiconductor devices such as **lasers**, photovolvatic cells, **transistors**, and medical sensors* [8, p. 3597]. A term "laser" ia an acronym of a complex collocation "light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation". It dates back to 1960s. American scientists A. Shavlov and Ch. G. Towns as well as Russian scholars A.M. Prohorov and N.G. Basov made this device independently in 1958. A term "transistor" developed from a complex noun "transconductance" in 1940-s. This invention refers to the middle of the 20th century and William Bradford Shockley, an American physicist [22].

Two-component structure
Ex. 5 *In 1959, **Richard Feynman**, another Nobel Prize winner in Physics, proclaimed that there's plenty room at the bottom* [10, p. 5]. The word expression "another Nobel Prize winner in Physics" is used after the anthroponym "Richard Feynman". This stylistic tool is called parenthesis. The aim of its use is to provide the reader with extra information that promotes clear understanding of the described issues. Richard Feynman, an American physicist, a key person and the author of the lecture "There is a plenty room at the bottom". This lecture has become a start to the study of tiny things.

Ex. 6 *The performance of DWDM systems in PMD transmissions over long-haul fiber links is limited by the ASE noise and linear and nonlinear interference (NLI) caused by **Kerr effect** in the fiber* [3, p. 10]. Eponymic structure is "Anthr.+N" is used. Kerr effect was discovered by John Kerr, a Scottish physicist and a pioneer in the field of electro-optics in 1875 [11].

Ex. 7 *In the experiment shown in Fig. 10the PCS Alice and Bob are linked via 28 km of standard telecommunication fiber installed in the **Ipswich area** of BT's public network* [25, p. 345]. In this example "Alice and Bob" denotes transmitters in the Ipswich area (a composite placename) where a standard telecommunication fiber was installed.

Ex. 8 *Knowledge of the refractive index n of the **nanowire layer** is necessary for using this approach* [8, p. 3598]. Nanowire layer is a terminological word combination referring to the middle of 1990s when the scientists managed to make it. The creation work was a result of the cooperation of many people. That is why it is impossible to estimate the authorship of the term. A term "nanowire" is formed by a prefix "nano-" and a root "wire" (from old English "wīr" (wrinkle).

Three-component structure
Ex. 9***Dr. Subodh Mhaisalkar** is an Associate Professor at the School of Materials Engineering, Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore* [21, p. 183]. Anthroponymic structure "degree+name+surname". This person is a professor in School of Materials Science and Engineering (Nanyang Technological University). In this example the reader is given extra-information about one of the authors of the article [15].

Ex. 10 *By interpolation between glass and air indices according to air fill fraction using the* **Lorentz–Lorenz equation** *one obtains the values indicated by arrows on the left* [17, p. 71]. Eponymic structure is "Anthr.+Anthr.+N". The Lorentz–Lorenz equation relates the refractive index of a substance to its polarizability. The Lorentz–Lorenz equation is named after the Danish mathematician and scientist Ludvig Lorenz, who published it in 1869, and the Dutch physicist Hendrik Lorentz, who discovered it independently in 1878 [14].

Ex. 11 *Later, a whole grid of such lines was built across* **all of France,** *eventually reaching a total length of 4800km (Fig. 1.1)* [17, p. 3-4]. A simple toponym, placename is used in this example. Due to this toponym an evaluation of the invention use area size is given. This invention is a telegraph.

Ex. 12 *It has also been reported that* **dispersion-decreasing fiber (DDF)** *can broaden the spectral width of the SC significantly more than* **dispersion-shifted fiber (DSF)** *or* **dispersion-flattened fiber (DFF)**[19, p. 216]. All three terminological word combinations have the same structure N+Adj+N. The last-mentioned type of the fiber was started to use in commercial purposes in 1980s. The creators of the fiver are unknown. The work can have definitely been done by a group of scholars.

Composite structure (four and more components)
Ex. 13 *The authors thank NOVX Systems for providing the random optical add/drop switch (ROADX) that was used as transmission filter in the experiments and* **Dr. Andrew J. Hudson** *for his technical assistance* [7, p. 239]. Anthroponymic structure is "degree+name+initial+surname". The author of the article expresses acknowledgment to Dr. Andrew J. Hudson for his technical assistance.

Ex. 14 *Monitoring the Interaction between MPOCs and Lipid Bilayer Membrane by* **Förster Resonance Energy Transfer (FRET)** *Using Cell-Sized Liposomes* [1, p. 3372-3373]. The name of this physical phenomenon varies in the technical literature: Förster resonance energy transfer (FRET), fluorescence resonance energy transfer (FRET), resonance energy transfer (RET) or electronic energy transfer (EET). The scientific sphere gives preference to the term containing the name of the inventor. The phenomenon was named after Theodor Förster, aGerman physicist and chemist.

Ex. 15 *The sponsors' approach was initiated with the fiber-optic link around the globe (FLAG) system which came in service in November 1997, followed by projects like Southern Cross (* **Australia-New Zealand-United States***)* … [2, p. 32]. The chain of macrotoponyms (Australia-New Zealand-United States) is used in Ex. 15 which denotes the place of the invention use. The last one is fiber-optic link joined the mentioned states.

Ex. 16 *The preparation of* **white-light emitting materials** *has developed rapidly in recent years due to their application in full color displays and illumination sources* [28, p. 497]. The term word-combination has the following components bond Adj+N+Adj+N. The author pays attention to the fact that the production of the materials illuminating white light has greatly increased within the last few years. So, the author evaluates the time and the procedure of their production.
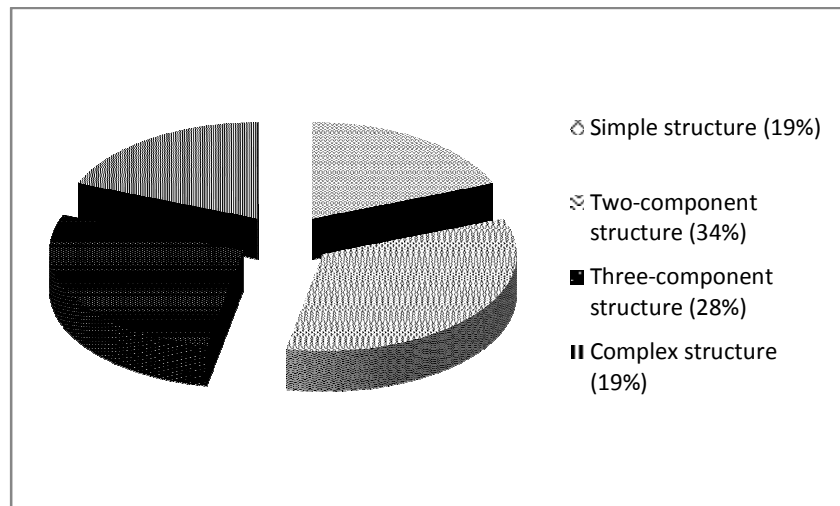
Graph 1. The usage frequency of the anthropotonymic and terminological structures in English scientific and technical discourse

Having studied the anthropotoponymic and terminological structures in English scientific and technical discourse, the authors of this paper came to the following conclusions: **1)** scientific and technical discourse is a complex interpretation product and as a result its texts are rich in complicated lexical material presented by anthropotoponymic and terminological structures;

2) all the anthropotonymic and terminological components of a scientific and technical discourse can be classified according to their structure. There are several types of them: simple, two-component, three-component and complex.

3) as it shown in Graph 1, the most wide-spread model is a two-component structure, then goes three-component one. Such frequency can be explained by the science acceleration and the science knowledge growth. As a result, all the lexical items of the studied scientific and technical discourse undergo added complexity.

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EMPATHIZING – SYSTEMIZING THEORY IN ROMANIAN UNIVERSITY CONTEXT

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Abstract: *222 students of Transilvania University of Brașov, from Humanities and Sciences faculties, with the average age of 23.07 years (SD = 3.92), out of which 88 (39.6%) males, 134 (6.4%) females, were investigated with four questionnaires destined to measure autism quotient (AQ), empathizing quotient (EQ), systemizing quotient (SQ) and the score for Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test (RMET). The study objectives were to investigate the relationships between variables, to determine psychometric qualities for some of the four questionnaires that were used in the Romanian university population context, to test the hypothesis of gender and specialisation differences for some variables and to propose a new method to determine the five categories of brain types. The results highlight psychometric qualities that are poorer than the initial ones of some of the used instruments, but they confirm the hypothesis of gender and of specialisation for some of the study variables in accord with data of other studies. The method of determining the five brain types proves to be more operational but congruent and highly correlated with the one that Goldenfeld et al. proposed.*

Keywords:*empathizing; systemizing; autism;, eyes test; theory of mind*;

1. Introduction

The past three decades have underlined an increased interest of researchers for both understanding autism and creating some valid psychometric instruments which should be able to show it up. According to DSM-IV (1994), individuals form Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC) have severe social difficulties and an obsessive pattern of behaviour, as well as a stronger drive to systemize (Baron-Cohen et al. 1999, Baron-Cohen et al. 2001).Thus in 1985 Baron-Cohen formulated and went on to test the "mind blindness" theory of autism. This is a theory that connects autism to the difficulty that persons with ASC have in developing a theory of mind. According to Premack & Woodruff (1978), "theory of mind" consists in the ability to attribute mental states to oneself or another person's behaviour. Theory of mind is also understood as "mentalising", "mind reading", "social cognition" or "social intelligence".

Empathizing-systemizing theory (Baron-Cohen, 2002) establishes useful distinctions in our understanding of different types of mind, the two key modes of thought being empathizing and systemizing. Empathizing is a specific component of social cognition consisting in the drive to identify another person thoughts and emotions, and to respond with appropriate emotions (Goldenfeld, Baron-Cohen, and Weelwright, 2005). Systemizing is the drive to understand the rules governing the behaviour of a system which allows one to predict and control such system. ASC is measurable using the Autism Spectrum Quotient (AQ). Empathizing and Systemizing, measured using the Empathizing Quotient (EQ) and Systemizing Quotient (SQ) questionnaires, are two dimensions involved in an operational definition of autism. In accordance to Baron-Cohen et al. research empathizing is largely but not completely independent of systemizing: autism involves week empathizing alongside intact or superior systemizing. Baron-Cohen et al. (2007) published "Reading the Mind in the Eyes" test (RMET, revised by Baron-Cohen et al., 2001), which is a measurement of adult "mentalizing", is in the same time an advanced test of theory of mind. Typical sexdifferences

have been reported for total score of RMET, females being in advantage. In the same time, individuals with ASC show much more difficulty in reading mind in the eyes (Baron-Cohen et al., 2015; Montgomery et al., 2016).

The Cambridge School surveys so far which is grouped around Baron-Cohen, have heeded not only on autism and its associated concepts but also on creating adequate psychometric instruments like AQ, EQ, SQ, RMET. The initial variants of these instruments have known re-elaborations which have resulted in significantly psychometric ameliorations. They have generated studies concerning their psychometric qualities, extensions from adult population to adolescents or from Anglo-Saxon population to other population categories. Some studies have investigated the relationships between these variables, taken by twos or threes, and others (Weelwright et al., 2006), have conducted to a classification of five different 'brain types' based on difference scores between SQ and EQ, which broadly correspond to the male- and female-typical brain, as the extremes of this difference, and a final brain type which is balanced. The present survey studies all the four variables that we mention which are used in a research on a Romanian student population to investigate not only their psychometric qualities but also the relationships between variables. Secondarily I tested the possibility of a simpler approach to determine the type of brain with its five variants – extremely systemizing, systemizing, balanced, empathizing and extremely empathizing.

The present study has the following objectives:
a. To investigate the relations between Empathizing Quotient (EQ), Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test (RMET),Systemizing Quotient (SQ) and Autism Quotient (AQ) in Romanian academic population context. In particular, we wanted to test on our sample whether AQ score could be predicted from EQ and SQ scores.
b. To confirm previous sex differences reported using EQ, SQ, AQ and RMET on our sample.
c. To test the hypothesis according to which the students who take sciences programmes (engineering, computer science) will score higher at SQ and AQ, while the humanities students (psychology, sciences of education and philology) will score higher at EQ and RMET.
d. To analyse the relationship between two methods to calculate the proportion of subjects scoring in each of the five "brain types": Extreme Type S (Systemizing), Type S, Type B (balanced brain, S=E), Type E (Empathizing) and Extreme Type E. Apart from the classic method (described by Goldenfeld, Baron-Cohen and Weelwright in 2006) we suggest a simpler alternative method of performing this sharing by using z scores standardization for Empathizing and Systematizing variables.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

The 222 participants are students of Transilvania University of Braşov, aging between 18 and 39 years, average age 23.07 years and SD 3.92. Out of them, 88 (39.6%) were of masculine gender and 134 (60.4%) of feminine gender. In the sample structure were 161 (72.5%) students representing Humanities specialisations (psychology, sciences of education and philology) and 61 (27.5%) students representing Sciences specialisations (engineering and computer science). Participation was willingly approved and anonymous, and the students received a bonus for filling in the four pencil-and-paper instruments.

2.2. Instruments

Baron-Cohen (2002) argues that two key modes of thought are systemizing and empathizing. Systemizing is the drive to understand the rules governing the behaviour of a system which allows one to control or predict such system. Baron-Cohen (2003) conceptualizes empathy as a specific component of social cognition, defining it as the drive to identify another person's emotions and thoughts, and to respond to these with an appropriate emotion. The Empathy Quotient (EQ)is a questionnaire which was explicitly designed to have a clinical applicationand to be sensitive to a lack of empathy asa psychopathological feature. Similarly to Systemizing Quotient (SQ), the EQ was designed to be short, easy to use and to score instrument. Both SQ and EQ consist of 60 questions, divided into 40 items tapping systemizing/empathizing and 20 filler items.The filler items were included to distract the participant attention from a relentless focus on empathy. Each of the 60 SQ and EQ items is scored with 1 point if therespondent records the empathic behaviour mildly or 2 points if the respondent records the behaviour strongly. Both SQ and EQ have a forced choice format, and can be self-administered.

"Reading the Mind in the Eyes" Test (RMET) – or "The Eyes Test" – is an expression of adult "mentalising". RMET Revised Version consists of 36 photographs of the eye-region of the face of different actors and actresses. The participant is asked to choose which from four words best describes what the person is feeling or thinking. To accomplish this purpose the participant has to put him in the mind of another person ("mentalising"), reason for which Baron-Cohen et al. (1997) described RMET as an advanced theory of mind (TOM) test. "Mentalising" means mind reading and supposes social intelligence, which overlaps with the term "empathy". From the first version of RMET results indicate that women score slightly but significantly higher than men. In the revised form of RMET Baron-Cohen et al. (2001) limited the items to complex mental states to make the task much more challenging, increasing the likelihood of obtaining a greater range of performance.

The Autism Spectrum Quotient (AQ, Baron-Cohen and Wheelwright, 2006) measures the degree to which any adult of normal IQ possesses traits related to the autistic spectrum. The AQ scores range from 0 to 50, the higher the score, the more autistic traits a person possesses. Previous research indicates that AQ score was successfully predicted from EQ or EQ scores.

3. Results

1. AQ from EQ and SQ
The descriptive statistics for students in humanities, in sciences and in total are summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Means and SD for SQ, AQ, EQ and RMET for Humanities, Sciences and total

Degree	Sex	*n*		SQ	AQ	EQ	RMET
Humanities	Male	59	Mean	32.56	21.00	36.53	22.56
			SD	6.77	6.32	8.62	2.83
	Female	102	Mean	25.76	17.66	44.39	25.39
			SD	9.59	4.15	8.91	3.31
Sciences	Male	29	Mean	36.79	18.66	35.07	23.41
			SD	11.19	5.16	8.86	3.11
	Female	32	Mean	26.81	16.72	41.25	25.44
			SD	8.87	5.31	7.51	2.77
Humanities +	Male	88	Mean	33.95	20.23	36.05	22.84

Sciences			SD	8.65	6.03	8.67	2.94
	Female	134	Mean	26.01	17.43	43.64	25.40
			SD	9.40	4.45	8.67	3.18
Total	Male +	222	Mean	29.16	18.54	40.63	24.39
	Female		SD	9.89	5.30	9.42	3.33
			Skewness	0.35	0.93	0.07	-0.06
			Kurtosis	0.59	2.71	-0.12	-0.76

As you can notice in the above table, there are clear indications with regard to the normality of distribution for all the four instruments that were used, skewness and kurtosis inserting – with a single exception – in the values within the -1 and +1 interval. The scores of AQ questionnaire present symmetry of the left tail with the right one of distribution but it tends to overcrowd the data on the centre providing a leptokurtic distribution.

In order to answerthe first objective of the present research there was carried out an exploratory factor analysis on the total scores of the four questionnaires. One factor with an eigen value greater than 1 was extracted, accounting 40.04% of the total variance. This factor accounted for 54.4% from EQ scores, 54.1% from RMET scores, 41.5% from AQ scores and only 10.2% from SQ scores. The EQ and RMET have a strong positive loading on the factor (0.74), the AQ has a strong negative loading on the factor (-0.64), and the SQ has a week negative loading on the factor (-0.32). These results suggest that it is most appropriate to create a model which predicts AQ score based only on EQ and RMET scores.

Table 2. Means and SD for AQ, EQ, and RMET and correlations between variables of regression models

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3
1. AQ	18.54	5.30	-	-.27	-.23
2. EQ	40.63	9.42		-	.34
3. RMET	24.39	3.33			-

Table 3. The results of hierarchical regression analyze explaining scores for Autism Spectrum Quotient (AQ)

Variables	B	SE B	β
First model			
EQ	-.15	.04	-.27**
Second model			
EQ	-.12	.04	-.21**
RMET	.21	.11	-.16*

Note: $R^2 = 0.28$ for first model; $\Delta R^2 = 0.023$ for the next model (p = .02); * p < .05; ** p < .01.

Though both models that result are statistically significant, it can be appreciated that their predictive force is low. Thus, the second model, that simultaneously takes into consideration EQ and RMET in AQ prediction, explains only 10 percent from the variance of dependent variable. Using the parameters generated in the model AQ scores can be estimated using the formula: AQ = 29.969 – 0.12EQ – 0.26RMET.

2. Gender differences for AQ, SQ, EQ and RMET
Previous research has shown that there are significant differences by sex at AQ, SQ, EQ and RMET scores. Hoekstra, Bartels, Cath, and Boomsma (2008) reported that men scored at AQ higher thanwomen, and sciences students higher than non-sciences students. Preti, Vellante,

Baron-Cohen, Zucca, Petretto and Masala (2011) found that females scored at EQ higher than males, and more males than females scored lower than 30, the cut-off score that best differentiates autism spectrum conditions from controls. A study carried by Auyeung, Allison, Wheelwright and Baron-Cohen (2012) found that similar patterns of sex differences were observed in children, adolescents and adults, suggesting that the behaviours measured by EQ and SQ are stable across time. In a similar study Baron-Cohen, Bowen, Holt, Allison, Auyeung, Lombardo, Smith, and Lai (2015) found significant difference for RMET scores between controlmales and females, and absence of such differences in males and females with autism.

Table 4. Sex differences for AQ, SQ, EQ and RMET

Variables	Categories	*n*	Mean	SD	Difference	t test	sig.
AQ Autism Spectrum Quotient	Male	88	20.23	6.03	2.79	3.97	p < .001
	Female	134	17.43	4.45			
SQ Systemizing Quotient	Male	88	33.95	8.65	7.94	6.35	p < .001
	Female	134	26.01	9.40			
EQ Empathy Quotient	Male	88	36.05	8.67	-7.60	6.38	p < .001
	Female	134	43.64	8.67			
RMET Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test	Male	88	22.84	2.94	-2.56	6.05	p < .001
	Female	134	25.40	3.18			

In our study all the four instruments produce significant differences after the gender criterion. In accord with the previously presented studies, boys score significantly higher at AQ and at SQ, while girls have significantly higher scores at EQ and RMET. This fact constitutes a supplementary argument concerning the validity of empathizing – systemizing theory which is the frame for a sexual typology of brain. This thing is also sustained by the exploratory factor analysis, which we presented previously, carried out on the scores of the four instruments. Out of it there results only one factor with an eigen value greater than 1, accounting 40.04% of the total variance.

3. Degree differences for AQ, SQ, EQ and RMET

In a study destined to predict autism spectrum quotient from systemizing quotient and empathy quotient, Wheelwright, Baron-Cohen, Goldenfeld, Delaney, Fine, Smith, Weil, and Wakabayashi (2006) conducted separate ANOVAs with between-subject factors of Degree (physical science vs. biological science, vs. social science vs. humanities) and Sex (males vs. females). They found significant main effect of Degree and Sex for both AQ and EQ. The Degree by Sex interaction was found insignificant.

Table 5. Degree differences for AQ, SQ, EQ and RMET

Variables	Categories	*n*	Mean	SD	Difference	t test	sig.
AQ Autism Spectrum Quotient	Humanities	161	18.88	5.29	1.24	1.56	p > .05
	Sciences	61	17.64	5.29			
SQ Systemizing Quotient	Humanities	161	28.25	9.24	-3.30	2.06	p = .042
	Sciences	61	31.56	11.15			
EQ Empathy Quotient	Humanities	161	41.51	9.56	3.20	2.28	p = .024
	Sciences	61	38.31	8.69			
RMET Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test	Humanities	161	24.35	3.42	-0.12	0.24	p > .05
	Sciences	61	24.48	3.09			

Though the correlations between variables indicate an association between AQ and SQ – on one side – and EQ and RMET – on the other side – in the present study only the scores at Systemizing and Empathizing variables differentiate clearly after academic degree. This suggests an interesting research area and practical application of Systemizing – Empathizing theory in vocational counselling and guidance.

4. Two methods to determine the five "brain types"

Goldenfeld et al. (2005) suggested an algorithm to determine the cognitive "brain types". The first step consists in obtaining standardized scores for both EQ and SQ according to the two formulae: E(standardized) = [EQobserved - <EQ mean for typical population>) / maximum attainable score for EQ]; S(standardized) = [SQobserved - <SQ mean for typical population>) / maximum attainable score for SQ]. The standardized E and S variables from the previous step were used to produce a difference score (D). The new variable is defined as follows in the second step: D (difference between the normalized EQ and SQ scores) = (S – E)/2. In the third step, cognitive "brain types" were numerically assigned according to the percentiles on the group on "D" scale as follows: the lowest scoring 2.5% were classified as Extreme Type E (Extreme Empathizing); participants who scored between the 2.5th and 35th percentiles were classified as Type E (Empathizing); those scoring between the 35th and 65 percentile were classified as Type B (Balanced); those defined by scores between the 65th and 97.5th percentile were classified as Type S (Systemizing) and the top 2.5% were classified as Extreme Type S (Extreme Systemizing). The four cut-off points delimitating the five brain types are indicated from Frequencies table for D.

The alternative algorithm used in our research is based on the same sequence of three steps, but the manner to standardize variables is different. To standardize E and S we simply used *z* scores delivered from *Descriptives* menu from SPSS. Next, we determined the D with the same formula indicated by Goldenfeld and al. (2005), finally classifying the participants an accord with the four cut-off (2.5%, 35%, 65% and 97.5%) percentile points for D. The results of two classificatory methods are presented in the Table 6 below.

Table 6. Percent of 222 participants with each "brain type" measured in D

Brain type	D Percentile (per)	Initial method of classification				New method of classification			
		Males	Females	Huma-nities	Scien-ces	Males	Females	Huma-nities	Scien-ces
	N	88	134	161	61	88	134	161	61
Extreme E	per < 2.5	0	5	5	0	0	5	5	0
Type E	2.5 ≤ p < 35	7	66	56	17	8	69	58	19
Type B	35 ≤ p < 65	24	42	50	16	22	36	45	13
Type S	65 ≤ p < 97.5	53	20	49	24	54	23	42	25
Extreme S	per ≥ 97.5	4	1	1	4	4	1	1	4

The Pearson *r* correlation of 0.98 between the initial and the new method of classification indicates 96 percent of overlapping between their results. Analysing distributions for the four categories resulted from initial and new method (males, females, students from Humanities and Sciences, Table 6 from above) the overlapping between them appears as very large too. ANOVAs one-way conducted on the AQ and RMET with initial and new method of "brain type" classification provide very similar results. So, for AQ initial

classification $F(4,221) = 3.13$; $p = .016$, and for RMET $F(4,221) = 7.15$; $p < .001$. For AQ in new classification $F(4,221) = 3.10$; $p = .016$, and for RMET $F(4,221) = 7.88$; $p < .001$.

As it results from Table 6 and from Figure 1, females are found mostly in the category of Empathizing cognitive type while males in Systemizing type. The extreme categories of this typology are also associated in majority with gender, females with Extreme Empathizing type, and males with Extreme Systemizing type. This thing is in accordance with the research data so far.

After academic degree, humanities are assigned in similar proportions on types E, B and S, while sciences are predominantly associated with the cognitive type S. In conclusion, the capacity of creating distinct categories is better in relation to gender than to academic degree, which once again requires a more detailed study of the relationship between the cognitive type of the brain and career option. The draw conclusions of such an approach can be very useful in career counselling and vocational guidance.
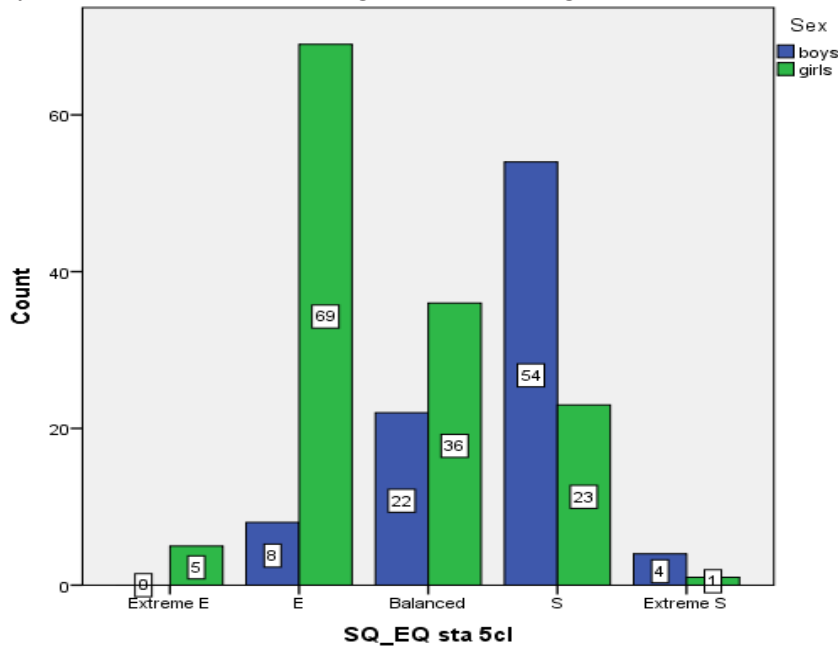
Figure 1. Repartition of boys and girls in function of cognitive "brain type"

4. Conclusions

The four questionnaires that were used in this study produce normally distributed scores, with values of mean and standard deviation that are closed to the one reported by their authors. But, though the correlations between variables are as Baron-Cohen et al. emphasised, in the present survey the intensity of these relationships is lower, which does not allow generating a powerfully regressive model in anticipating the level of autism starting from the scores of empathizing and systemizing. The explanation of this fact can reside in the peculiarities of investigated sample, which makes the survey replication to be necessary on other samples.

Differences connected to gender regarding empathizing and systemizing which the author of empathizing-systemizing theory reported are fully found out in the present survey as well. A growing body of data suggests that, as groups, females are better than males at empathizing, while males are better than females at systemizing. The discrepancy between these two domains leads to useful distinctions in understanding different types of mind. Our data are in accord with those reported by Goldenfeld, Baron-Cohen and Weelwright (2005)

who show that these two abilities – empathizing and systemizing – compete, so that, despite sex difference in cognitive style, there is no overall such differences in cognitive ability, and the sumof EQ and SQ does not produce significant differences between males and females. It means that females' relatively high empathizing ability compensates for their less developed systemizing ability, while males' high systemizing ability compensates for their less well-developed empathizing skills. Another valuable result of this survey is the one that finds differences of the empathizing-systemizing report at the level of sciences academic studies domain (more systemizing) versus humanities (more empathizing). This thing constitutes not only a supplement validation of the empathizing-systemizing theory, but it also suggests its possible extension towards the area of career counselling and vocational guidance.

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THE EFFECTS OF COMPUTER-ASSISTED TRAINING IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

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Abstract: *Technology advances exponentially, and with it, education is faced with a great challenge: to prepare the next generation for the world of tomorrow, for professions that do not yet exist, for technologies that have not yet been discovered, with teaching resources now in place and with knowledge held today. Undoubtedly, computer-assisted training has become a very important element of modern pedagogy.In this paper we intend to present the experimental results of the implementation of computer-assisted training in primary education, at the third grade, experiment conducted within a Romanian elementary school. The stage of the formative intervention aimed at transforming the classical lessons into interactive activities, to increase the interest in the learned content and, last but not least, to improve quality of the school results for the elementary third grade students.*

Keywords: *computer-assisted training (CAT); information and communication technology (ICT); school results; primary education;*

1. Introduction

There is a consensus among educators and decision-makers that digital technologies have spawned a new generation of students who see the world in a different way. The "New Millennium Learner" is an expression used by The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 2006 to describe the population for which digital technologies already existed at the time of their birth and thus grew with these technologies, such as computer, internet, mobile phone and similar devices (OECD-CERI, 2006). There are other terms describing this generation, and, implicitly, the children of today - "digital natives" or "generation I" (Internet). In school, however, it would be exaggerated to think of all students as a homogeneous mass of "digital students" – each student has his own learning style and a unique character. However, we agree with Brown (2001, p. 70), according to which "today's digital children" use ICT to meet, play, date, and learn. It is an integral part of their social life; it's how they acknowledge each other and form their personal identities."

1.1. Computer-assisted training in European context

Over time, four key trends have emerged in the development of ICT tools (Romanian Government, 2012, p. 10), namely:
- The abundance of educational resources available online and the high level of student participation in online environments;
- The increasing access to the Internet, including through mobile devices (phones, tablets, etc.);
- The development of a global market, products and services, and also work;
- The increasing share of cloud technologies (stored on a central server accessible from anywhere) and the decentralization of ICT support services.

One of the targets of the European 2020 Strategy, materialized in the Digital Agenda, emphasizes the key role of ICT in delivering the political, economic, social and educational goals for 2020, promoting creativity and innovation through the use of new ICT tools. According to the Agenda, Member States need to expand their services on the integration of new technologies through national education policies, modernizing education and training services, including ICT in national curricula, evaluating learning outcomes, and training and professional development of teachers and trainers (European Commission, 2010).

Under the Human Capital Operational Program 2014-2020, Priority Axis 6 - Education and Competencies, we find the following two specific objectives relevant to the present work (cf. European Union & Romanian Government, 2015):

O.S.6.5. The increasing number of educational offers focused on skills training and the use of digital / ICT solutions in the teaching process. This specific objective results in an optimized and attractive curricular offer in primary and secondary education level, focusing on key competency training, including for disadvantaged children.

O.S.6.6. The improvement of skills of teaching staff in pre-university education level in order to promote quality educational services oriented to the needs of students and an inclusive school. This specific objective aims at forming and developing the digital competences of pre-university teaching staff in order to promote quality educational services oriented to pupils' needs and an inclusive school.

1.2. Computer-assisted training in the Romanian educational system

The computerization of education represents "a pedagogical strategy adapted / adaptable at the level of education policy in the conditions of the cultural model of the post-industrial, computerized society" (Cristea, 2002, p. 182). Concretely, by the computerization of education it is meant the exploit to the maximum of the advantages that modern technologies offer in the didactic approach of teachers.

Romania is currently undergoing the rationalization and restructuring of the school network aimed at increasing the efficiency of the system. However, much of the education infrastructure continues to be overcome and unattractive and limits the effectiveness of existing policies aimed at improving the quality of education. In Romania, an action at the national level of computerization of the educational system has started in 2001 through the program Computerization of the Educational System - program launched by the Ministry of Education and Research and supported by the Romanian Government. This program has helped to increase students' and teachers' access to modern technologies and the Internet through a set of projects and activities aimed at implementing ICT in pre-university education.The Strategic Document of the Government of Romania in which we find the objectives of ICT development is the Digital Agenda for Romania 2014-2020, supporting the necessary infrastructure, the means of communication and, last but not least, the development of teachers' digital competences through the initial training and continuous training to use modern teaching and evaluation tools (Romanian Government, 2014).

2. Advantages of using innovative technological pedagogy

Technology and education are a great combination if they are used together with a coherent motivation and a correct vision. With the help of new technologies, teachers, students and parents have a variety of learning tools available. Here are some of the ways that technology can help improve educational performance (cf. Lloyd, 2010):

- Teachers can collaborate to share their ideas and online resources - they can communicate with other teachers around the world instantly, respond to the shortcomings of their work, refine methodologically, and provide students with topical content;
- Students can develop valuable research skills at an early age - technology gives them immediate access to an abundance of quality information, unprecedented learning acceleration;
- Students and teachers have access to a vast collection of materials - there are lots of rich and credible websites available on the Internet that both teachers and students can use; The Internet also offers a variety of knowledge and does not limit students to a single person's opinion;
- Online learning is now an equally credible option - face-to-face interaction is immense, especially in small classes, but some students work better when they can progress at their own pace; online education is now accredited, changing the way we see education in general.

There are countless situations that have highlighted the improvement of education through the use of new technologies. Technology can be a major tool, both from the perspective of a pedagogical resource and from the perspective of a tool for connecting with the younger generation. Analysing the methods of using new technologies in instructive-educational activity, Lynch (2017) outlined the following features:

- Active involvement with learning material - technology is interactive, and students learn by acting, researching and receiving immediate feedback; this helps students become passionate about what they learn, they can now study using interactive software instead of looking at a static image.
- Real-world case approach – this model encourages the use of day-to-day issues in the classroom; using the Internet, pupils can document the issues addressed in real time and in accordance with the curriculum; this helps students understand the lessons learned in relation to situations, problems and real people;
- Simulation and modelling – simulation software allows the teacher to present to the class real phenomena that would be impossible to observe without the help of technology; with the help of specific simulation tools, students can observe planetary movements, how a tornado is formed or how dinosaurs lived; modelling software provide similar facilities - instead of static patterns and static models used in previous decades, these tools allow pupils to observe the dynamics of the particularities of these models.
- Forums, discussion and debate areas – using the Internet and software applications, students can create online groups, WEB pages and virtual communities that connect them in real time with other students and teachers around the world; they can receive feedback from teachers and can share questions and uncertainties about their lessons; reading the opinions of others, students can refine their thinking, reaching higher and deeper levels of understanding.
- Working groups – technology-based education does not involve a classroom with learners learning individually, looking at manuals, working groups boost collective activities, discussions and debates, and encourage democratic group dynamics.
- Coaching – teachers become facilitators; they are no longer just instructors who deliver a lesson; they guide and orient the student's activities as a coach, provide feedback and guidance to the class so that students receive appropriate academic information and training, they guide students into competence development in problem-solving, research and decision-making;
- Formative assessment – teachers ensure that students learn not only concepts, but also

ways of using the technological resources they have at their disposal, activities involving technology often require critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills.

3. Research methodology

The psycho-pedagogical experiment presented in this paper aims to investigate the effectiveness of computer-assisted training as a result of the implementation of specific didactic approaches to the Mathematics discipline in the primary education in the third grade.

3.1. Purpose and objectives of research

The aim of the research is to identify the formative effects of the use of new technologies in education, in the teaching-learning-evaluation process in the third grade, by obtaining answers to the following research questions: 1) Do students get better grades with the help of computer assisted training? 2) Are the students more involved / motivated to learn specific content following the use of computer-assisted training?

The research has the following specific objective:

O. Investigating the effectiveness of computer-assisted training in teaching, learning and evaluating specific content in Mathematics discipline, in the 3rd grade.

3.2. Research hypotheses

I.1. The systematic use of computer-assisted training in didactic activity within the Mathematics discipline in the third grade contributes significantly to the improvement of learning performance, reflected in the performance of the students' grades.

I.2. The systematic use of computer-assisted training in didactic activity within the Mathematics discipline in the third grade determines the increase of the involvement / motivation for the study of its specific contents.

3.3. Research participants and research tools

The two classes, the experimental and the control class, have the same number of students and the same gender structure, respectively 24 pupils, of which 13 girls and 11 boys. In the experimental class there is a pupil with special educational needs.

In order to obtain information about the level of development of pupils' specific competences in mathematics and data on their involvement / motivation in the learning process, we used as a research tool the docimological tests and the questionnaire survey.

3.4. Phases of the psycho-pedagogic experiment
3.4.1. Pre-experimental stage

In this first step, the pupils' initial training level was established at the time of initiation of the experiment, for both the experimental class and the control class. After applying the initial tests on Mathematics, we analyzed the results of the students of the two classes and found that the level of their initial training was similar, the groups being relatively homogeneous.

3.4.2. Stage of formative intervention

The content units handed over with the digital manual, multiple educational software, using the interactive blackboard and the Google Classroom platform, subordinated to the "Fractions" unit of learning, were: 1) Writing and reading fractional units; 2) Fractions. Numerator and nominator and 3) Comparison and ordering of fractions.

3.4.3. The post-experimental stage

At this stage, a final evaluation sample was applied, identical for the two classes, and the differences between pupils' results were determined.

4. Analysis and interpretation of research results

4.1. The results of the psycho-pedagogical experiment

In this section of the article we focused our attention on the first hypothesis of our study, which assumes that "the systematic use of computer-assisted training in didactic activity within Mathematics discipline in the third grade contributes significantly to the improvement performance in learning, performance reflected by the increased grades of students".

4.1.1. Results of the pre-experimental stage

It can be seen in figure no. 1 that there are insignificant differences between the initial knowledge of the students in the two analysed groups, which are slightly weaker overall in the experimental class. This is partly explained by the fact that, as expected, the pupil with SEN has achieved weaker results in the initial assessment.
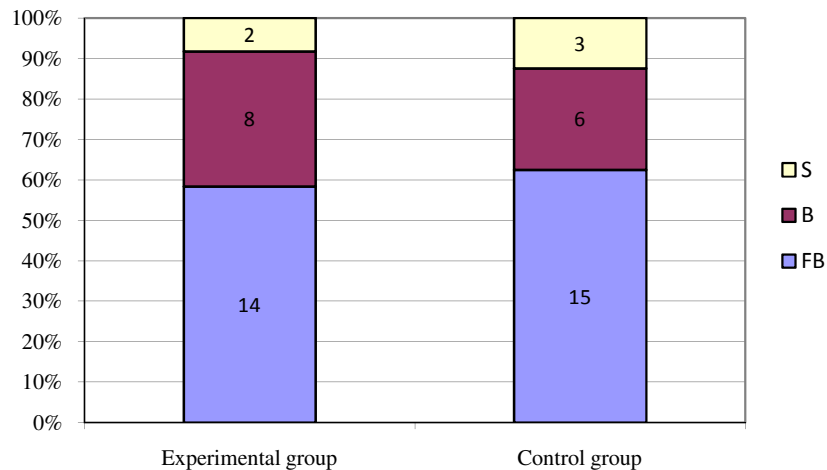
Fig. 1. Results of the initial evaluation

4.1.2. Results of the post-experimental stage

There can be seen in figure no. 2 notable differences between the two classes, marked by the strong increase of the results in the final evaluation of the experimental group compared to the results of the initial evaluation, all the students of the experimental group obtaining the "Good" or "Very good" grades.
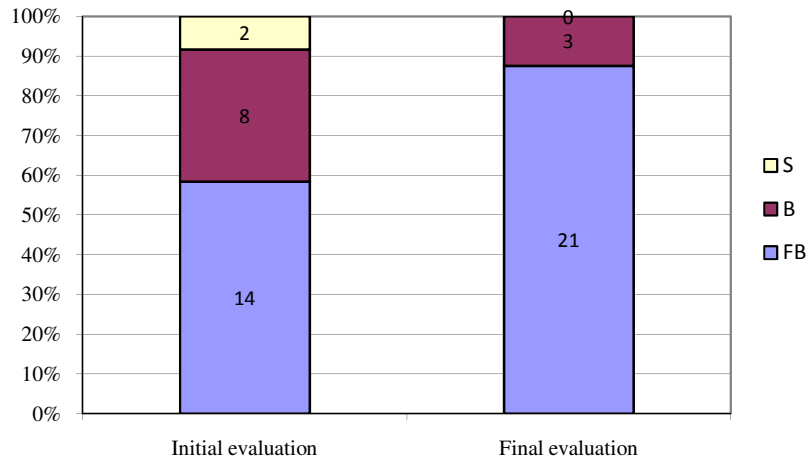
Fig. 2. The comparative results of the experimental class

The comparative results of the two classes obtained in the post-experimental stage are presented in figure no. 3.
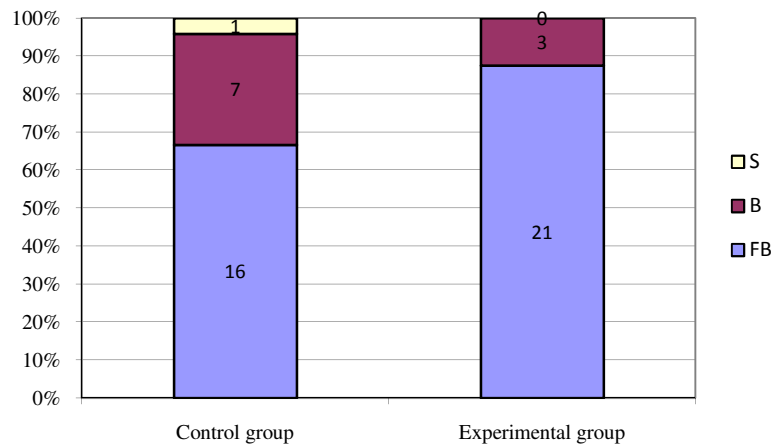
Fig. 3. The results of the two classes in the post-experimental stage

Given the presented data, we confirm the first hypothesis of our study in which we assumed that "the systematic use of computer-assisted training in didactic work within Mathematics discipline in the third grade contributes significantly to improving learning performance, performance reflected by the increased grades of students".

4.2. Survey results based on questionnaire

In order to be able to verify the second hypothesis that "the systematic use of computer-assisted training in didactic activity within Mathematics at the third grade determines the increase of involvement / motivation to study its specific contents," I used a questionnaire with four items. They enabled students to select multiple variants of response.

The questionnaire was administered to students in the experimental class. Centralized responses are presented in the following tables.

Table 1. Students' answers to the question "What activities did you like the most?"

(24 replies, 100%)	activities on the multi-touch board
(19 responses, 79.16%)	activities with VR glasses
(8 answers, 33.33%)	activities with the Google Classroom application and the use of mobile phones

Table 2. Table 2. Students' Responses to the item "Check in the box corresponding to the answer you agree to"

(24 replies, 100%)	I'm interested in learning many interesting things using the computer and at school
(20 answers, 83.33%)	I'm much better focused when the teacher uses new things at school
(16 answers, 66.66%)	I work better in team with my colleagues
(24 replies, 100%)	I would like all the lessons to take place in the same manner
(10 replies, 41.66%)	We got better grades
(23 replies, 95.83%)	We have a much better understanding of the lessons

Table 3. Students' answers to the question, "Which devices would you like to use more in lessons?"

(24 replies, 100%)	multi-touch board
(24 answers, 100%)	mobile phone

Table 4. Students' answers to the question "Rate how the lessons in which you used your computer, phone and other applications were interesting and demanding"

	To a large extent	Not at all	To some extent
a. attractive	24 100%	0	0
b. demanding	0	22 87,50%	2 12,50%

Considering the results of the questionnaire presented and interpreted above, I believe that the second hypothesis of our study is confirmed, according to which "the systematic use of computer-assisted training in didactic activity within Mathematics of the third grade determines increasing involvement / motivation to learn its specific content."

5. Conclusions

The key to effective learning is effective teaching. Teachers who embrace the use of new technologies in teaching-learning activities with the necessary logistical support provided by the management of the educational institution can transform the learning environment into an attractive one, adapted to the needs of new generations of students.

When technology is properly implemented – as a complementary element – it significantly influences students' results. Like other innovations in education, the impact of technology depends on how it is integrated into teaching. Here we highlight the need to develop initial and continuous teacher training programs in the field of digital competences specific to teacher training, investment in school provision, implementation of ICT governance standards and policies in education and their integration into the current work of teacher.

Digital natives need teachers to transform their learning experience into an individualized, pupil-centred approach in which the teacher discards the role of a "single actor on stage", possessing all the knowledge and becoming a "guide" from the side", a true guide of the student on his way to knowledge. And for this, computer-assisted training and the use of modern technologies are one of the most effective approaches.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING CIVIC CULTURE IN THE FORMATION OF ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

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Abstract: *The reality of the last decades (terrorism, ethnic and religious persecution, discrimination, forced migration, criminality etc.) demonstrates that young people need to know their rights and duties to develop their sense of responsibility towards themselves and to the community, as well as the attachment and the spirit of sacrifice to their neighbours and their homeland but also to be patriotic. The main goal of civic education is to prepare generations for the essential principles and values of democracy embodied with a high sense of responsibility and active engagement in issues the society, community, or state face in their everyday life. The educational approach, in this respect, tries to cultivate behaviour in accordance with social norms and ethics, in order to apply and respect them in education's role is obvious in building the good behaviour of citizens. The paper analyses the perspectives offered by the actual Romanian curriculum for social as well civic culture.*

Keywords: *civic culture; social culture; education; citizenship;*

1. Introduction

The goal of civic and social education is to prepare generations for the essential principles and values of democracy embodied with a high sense of responsibility and active engagement in issues related to society, community, or state that they face in their everyday life. Civic education is "the cultivation of the virtues, knowledge, and skills necessary for political participation" (Tovmasyan, 2008, p. 5).

Kidwell considers that the implementation of civic education should provide a philosophical and structural framework on which to base the teaching of skills and strategies that reinforce reasoned decision-making skills, evaluation of information, practical application of civic virtue, and an in depth understanding of citizenship responsibility. In the terms of the role of civic education, this constitutes one of the most effective vehicles available to educators today who strive to encourage the understanding and assimilation and assumption of topics that highlight civic responsibility, civic awareness, rights and duties of the individual, community, governance structures, social responsibility and inclusiveness. (Kidwell, 2005, a, p. 8)

Civic and social education in the 21st century is necessary for maintaining and developing the skills, knowledge, and dispositions of the pupils and of the young people as they become informed and concerned citizens who assume responsibilities in the democratic governances. This focus on children, as well student engagement and the responsibilities of citizenship are reflected in some of the civic education curricula that have been developed in recent years all over Europe, not only in Romania.

2. Civic education - a comparative analysis

The Romanian school curriculum for Social Education is a curriculum specifically for grades V-VIII modified by the law nr. 3590/05.04.2016. The new standards and Program for

Social Studies prepared and realized by the Ministry of National Education in Romania brought a new perspective of opportunities for citizenship education starting with 2017.

The discipline of Social Education is provided in the curriculum Human and Society with a time frame of one hour per week, during each of the four school years. According to the provisions of the educational curriculum, within the discipline of Social Education are studied as follows: in the 5th grade - Critical thinking and the Rights of the Child, in the 6th grade - Intercultural Education, at the 7th grade - Education for Democratic Citizenship, at 8th grade - Economic and Financial Education.

The new curriculum addresses the skills of the 8th-grade graduate training profile, contributing to the gradual formation of key competencies for lifelong learning. This contribution covers both direct support of social and civic competences, a key competence spirit of initiative and entrepreneurship, and raising awareness of other key skills.

The novelty emerges in the 5th grade, by including the new discipline Critical Thinking and the Rights of the Child (under the general framework of Social Education), aiming at the development of critical thinking in relation to and/or by orienting to the issue of children's rights. The discipline proposes to approach critical thinking and child rights in an integrated way, starting from the specific competencies defined in the new curriculum. The learning activities proposed also by the ministry aim to support students in their critical reflection on their own rights and responsibilities; thus, this course provides contexts for formulating questions, building a grounded point of view, to examine opinions, and the explanations and arguments made by others. Also, learning activities are intended to stimulate and direct involvement of students in promoting and defending their rights.

In the 6th grade of Social Education - Intercultural Education discipline proposes a didactic approach centred on the values and principles of interculturality in the context of contemporary Romanian society. The discipline aims at educating students as individuals able to value their own culture and to appreciate positively different cultures that are found in an intercultural society.

In the 7th grade, Social Education - Education for Democratic Citizenship discipline is centred on the values and principles of democratic citizenship. Through this discipline, civic education of pupils continues, started in primary education, acquiring new competencies regarding the understanding of the functioning of the democratic state as a state of law, and the practice of active citizenship.

And finally, the 8th grade of the social education curriculum, Economic and Financial Education discipline is oriented on the economic, financial and entrepreneurial dimension of the exercise of citizenship. Secondary school students learn to solve issues related to finance and economics is achieved naturally, targeting key issues with which they come into contact directly or through family they belong; the discipline aims also the development of the spirit of initiative and entrepreneurship, as well as the realization of action plans (personal / family) for achieving a goal, on the person's ability to turn ideas into action.

The Romanian curriculum described offer a new perspective of the school in preparing the children to learn and function in diverse social circumstances, the pupils learn how to reason, to identify and solve problems. Also, they are organized to work in teams and to collaborate with others in order to develop research and critical thinking skills, to understand responsibility, to develop leadership, learn tolerance, how to coexist, and respect others. Having regard that the primary purpose of social studies and civic education is to instil in pupils/young the knowledge, skills, and values for active contribution to society as a citizen is important to start this education early.

Related to civic and social education it is complicated to realise a succinct summary of everything that is being done in Europe with respect to this topic education but is obvious to see that is a great variety in forms and aims. Even the names of the subject vary from aktivt

medborgerskap (in Norway), citizenship (in Great Britain) or politische Bildung (in Austria and Germany) to social studies (in Cyprus) or éducation civique (in France) (Veldhuis, 2006, a).The most interesting developments in the field are currently taking place in Great Britain; in 2002, a new topic was introduced in the curriculum there: citizenship. Great Britain invests a lot of energy into material development and teacher training in the civic education area. The topic of citizenship is part of the curriculum for school children from 11 to 16 years of age and the aim is centred on the perspective to make the children which represent the next people to 'think of themselves as active citizens, willing, able and equipped to have an influence in public life.' Much emphasis goes to the children's future roles as citizens in society' (Veldhuis, 2006, b).

The situation in Germany is different, because in this country since education is not coordinated by the central government, but by the federal states. Civic education is among the general aims of education in Germany and has been integrated in all subjects. As a separate subject, it is generally not taught to children before they are around 12 years of age. Germany is very active in the field of civic education as an enormous number of professors at teachers' colleges and universities are involved in civic education (Veldhuis, 2006, c).

Despite 50 years of democratic education, many people in Germany are still worried about the lack of political engagement among the German people and complain that the many investments in civic education have not been able to prevent right-wing extremism from re-emerging after World War II. Recently, a debate has flared on the question whether civic education should focus on the mechanics of political decision making or rather on key concepts like 'democracy' or 'acting democratically' (Veldhuis, 2006, d).

As it can be seen on today's European political scene, the European Commission is obviously confronted with a great lack of 'European citizenship'. The commission has taken a number of initiatives to tackle this problem. In the context of the Lisbon-agreement, the commission has established a number of committees for describing the competencies that school children should develop in various school subjects. One of those subjects is 'civics', furthermore, the European Commission is researching the indicators of active citizenship (Veldhuis, 2006, e).

In 2010 the Council of Europe member states adopted the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. The Charter is setting a common European standard in this area and is the only international legal document which makes explicit reference to both EDC (Education for Democratic Citizenship) and HRE (Human Rights Education). It has a strong role to play both with respect to informing policy-making and as a practical tool for the promotion of learning democracy and human rights. The Charter establishes the principle that the member states "provide every person within their territory with the opportunity of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education" and not only to their citizens (Council of Europe, 2017, a, p. 7).

The citizenship and the specific education should receive extra attention through the actual curriculum on the knowledge and attitudes among pupils of secondary school with respect to politics and democracy. In the next future, this will prove that civic education can be effective under certain conditions (Council of Europe, 2017, b, p. 8).

In June 2017, was held a conference on the Future of Citizenship and Human Rights Education in Europe in Strasbourg, where the participation of many representatives of public authorities, education institutions and civil society organisations took part. The aim of the conference was to explore how the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7) could be further strengthened as an effective support tool for building democratic societies based on respect for human rights.

In that context, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe Thorbjørn Jagland asked in his report on the "State of Democracy, Human Rights and the Rule of Law, "How resilient are Europe's democracies?" and continuing by: "Europe remains, in many parts of the world, a beacon of democratic progress. Today, however, many of our societies appear less protective of their pluralism and more accepting of populism [...]. Balanced discussion gives way to polarised, us-versus-them polemic, making it harder for members of society to find common ground [...]. The European Convention of Human Rights founder fathers understood that our best security policy is one which stops our societies from descending into xenophobia, aggressive nationalism and disregard for democratic institutions[...]. Our shared standards are a means of resolving disputes and building bridges, whether between governments or communities" (Council of Europe, 2017, c, p. 7).

So, it's obvious that education plays an important role in strengthening the resilience of democratic societies. This is why the Council of Europe supports cooperation among its member states, which have a lot of good practice in the area of Education for Democratic Citizenship (EDC) and Human Rights Education (HRE), and can learn a lot from each other (Council of Europe, 2017, d, p. 7).

At the finale of the conference were underlined some important conclusions: Europe is facing serious challenges to democracy and human rights and education has to have an important role to play in addressing these challenges. A shared ownership of democratic societies and a sense of belonging are crucial for peace and security in Europe and in the world. It is therefore important to pay particular attention to vulnerable and marginalised groups and to address the issue of unequal access to citizenship and human rights education. More progress is needed in general education and it must remain a priority area. Further efforts need to be made in the areas of higher education, preschool education and vocational education and training, where education for democratic citizenship and human rights has not been sufficiently present so far. Capacity building for education professionals is of crucial importance and should be given more attention; synergies between formal and non-formal education sectors are essential for improving the quality and sustainability of this work. The Council of Europe should strengthen its regional leadership in promoting synergies among international institutions in the area of education for democratic citizenship and human rights, in particular in the framework of the UN Agenda 2030 (Council of Europe, 2017, e, p. 6).

According to the same Report, across Council of Europe member states, "education is increasingly recognised as a tool for tackling radicalisation leading to terrorism, for successfully integrating migrants and refugees and for tackling disenchantment with democracy and the rise of populism. International cooperation in education for democratic citizenship and human rights is growing, supporting national approaches by raising standards and allowing states to learn from each other's experiences. But despite this growing understanding of the relationship between education and Europe's overall democratic health, challenges remain. In many countries […] citizenship and human rights education are not sufficiently mainstreamed. In some areas of learning, such as vocational training, they are often absent. Where they are present, in many cases not enough is being done to monitor their impact, meaning that they do not receive sufficient priority, with resources geared instead towards areas of education that are evaluated and ranked" (Council of Europe, Report on State, p. 5).

In this context, I chose an example of good practices offered by the Lithuanian state; the Lithuanian Ministry of Education introduced in 2015 the "Concept of Good School", which serves as a guideline to schools on how to improve education quality. It is addressed to all interest groups: pupils, teachers, parents, school leaders and school authorities, and the general public. The concept aims to support the development of the "basic skills that make it possible to become civic-minded, humane, cherished members of society and to successfully

plan personal and professional life". Each school is given the opportunity to choose which aspects of the school's activities it wants to improve first and to build up a school improvement path based on self-assessment, school community needs an agreement (Ministry of Education and Science of Lithuania, 2015).

3. Final conclusions

As is known, a few years ago the possibility of conceiving a European civic education had been discussed related to this, in 2009, the European Economic and Social Committee recommended the EU to introduce a "Common European Civic Education". Obviously, that proposal underlined that is important to take into consideration the national context having to regard that in the actual century numerous liberal democracies proposed civic education programs. On one hand, this intention had envisaged increasing of political participation, to raise awareness among the students and citizens in general about rights and duties, to ensure their loyalty and support and/or to address political challenges and not only (like the migration issues, refugees or other). On the other hand, even this social and civic education programs existent on the national level, in the actual European context, when the nation-state is based on different values, the particularities of the EU are a real challenge to the concept of civic education which is traditionally thought in the framework of the nation-state.

Even though it can be seen that the civic education is a constant presence in schools at the European level, one of the challenges educators face is how to help not only the young, but adult citizens as well to develop a more realistic understanding of today's world in which they live and to try to manage the complex global problems which affect them.

The evidence of recent elections (not only in Romanian state), including low voter turnout and voters' lack of knowledge of issues, underscores the importance of why we need to strengthen effective civic education in schools. A lack of understanding, among large sectors of the general public, of the complexity and interrelationship of economic, political, and social issues confounds the democratic process and places popular sovereignty in jeopardy. The willingness of the populace to remain detached from domestic and foreign policy issues can only be detrimental to the national and global outlook of today and into the future. Worse still, we regularly see the public opinion that is based on the incomplete or inaccurate information. Citizens frequently lack the analytical skills on which to evaluate sources of information. Civic education is one small but critical step toward promoting good decision-making skills and civic engagement as we work toward a better understanding of global issues, war and peace, economic stability, and international justice.

In conclusion, we reiterate the comments of Zeid Ra´ad Al Hussein, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, who wrote in the Council of Europe Report: "…We should never consider human rights and democratic citizenship as "optional extras" or routine obligations - they are vital undertakings to sustain social cohesion, promote inclusion and participation and prevent violence and conflict in our societies. They are an investment in our present and in our future which we cannot afford to overlook" (Kidwell, 2005, b, p. 10).

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Aspects regarding the relationship between teachers teaching style, job satisfaction and motivation

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Abstract: *The purpose of the research was to discover the associations between teaching styles and teachers' job satisfaction and motivation. In this respect, The Teaching Styles Inventory (CORD, 2005), Job satisfaction questionnaire, an adaptation of Professional Satisfaction Scale of Warr et al. (1979) by authors Travers and Cooper (1996), and The Work Preference Inventory (Amabile et. al, 1994) were used. 285 teachers composed the investigated sample. We identified a statistically significant difference between the instrinsic motivation factor and the D teaching style, described by logical learning and the applied representation of concepts (applied teaching).*

Keywords: *teacher's activity; educational style;, job satisfaction;, motivation;*

1. Introduction

It is well known that each teacher has his own temperament, personality, life and professional experiences, beliefs and expectations that all configure his or her ways of interacting and behaving in class, so the teaching style. Practically, there is no bad or good style, right or wrong style, but there are styles that can really ensure the efficiency of the entire activity - either by reference to the teacher's teaching performance or by reference to the pupils' school results.

There is no doubt that teaching activity involves numerous measures taken to achieve learning among students (Dewey, 1933; Smith, 1987; Robertson, 1987). Educational interactions between the teacher and the students are illustrated by the teaching styles, so the intentions of engaging students in educational activities that result in the achievement of a set of specific objectives and in close connection with them, the achievement of some school performances (Mosston & Ashworth, 2002; Rink, 2002). Irby (1995) defines teaching style as the manner, method or resources by which teachers strive to convey information in the sense of influencing pupils' behaviors to desirable, understanding and implicit learning. Grasha (1996) argues that the teaching styles are the pattern of knowledge, belief, behavior and performance of teachers when they are involved in teaching activities. The same author defined teaching style (2002) as consistent and continuous behaviors of teachers in their interactions with students during the educational process, which includes teaching and learning activities.

Certainly, satisfaction is one of the factors of the overall efficiency of work performed, being configured as a result of the relation between what individuals actually get from work (in terms of salary, status, appreciation, etc.) and their projected results. This construct can be defined as the events that give rise to a subjective feeling of relief, pleasure, which may be expressed or described by the individual who is experiencing it, but cannot be seen from the outside by another person (Mathis, 1997). According to Locke (1976), job satisfaction is a positive or pleasant emotional state resulting from a person's appreciation of his/ her own job.

Likewise, job satisfaction is conceptualized as a psychological disposition that people show to their work (Schultz, 1982); insofar as expectations that an individual has in relation to his work overlapped with what he really obtains performing the job (Capotescu, 2006). These meanings refer to job satisfaction in a general sense, which does not prove to be the most

appropriate way to measure whether or not people feel job satisfaction. Therefore, when aiming to reflect job satisfaction levels is necessary to identify and analyze the attitudes that constitute the sum of it (Schultz, 1990), ranging from job to another.

The problem of teachers' motivation is a topical one, given that the high expectations regarding the educational activities developed by them, as well as the school results obtained by their pupils. In this respect, a motivated and determined teacher in the class wants to achieve all the personal and institutional goals at a higher quality level. But what is the motivation? In Huffman et al. opinion (1991, p. 381) motivation is "the inner factors of the individual that stimulate, maintain and direct behavior in relation to a purpose." Also, motivation designates a dynamic and fluent process that involves initiating, energizing, stimulating, directing and maintaining a behavior that is manifested to content needs, called goals. Thus, as Johns argues (1998, p.150), the motivation represents "the extent to which a persistent effort is directed to achieve a goal." So, in this respect, we are wondering: what are the mechanisms capable to direct the teacher actions towards a sustained and persistent effort in relation to his purposes - an efficient and qualitative educational process, pupils with higher school results and motivated in their turn? In the present study, attention is directed towards the two dimensions of motivation, intrinsic and extrinsic, and towards the extent that they are manifested by the teachers included in the research group.

2. Objectives and research question

Based on the theoretical premises of the paper, the research is centered upon 2 objectives:
- To identify the teaching styles of the teachers included in the investigated sample using *Teaching Style Inventory* elaborated by CORD 2005;
- To identify aspects regarding teachers' job satisfaction and motivation relative to teaching style.

The general question of the study is: which teaching styles confer high levels of job satisfaction and motivation?

3. Method

3.1. Measures

Determination of teachers' educational styles involved identifying the four structural elements thereof. Thus, to identify teaching style was used *Teaching Style Inventory* elaborated by CORD 2005. Regarding teachers' satisfaction, in this study it was used *Job satisfaction questionnaire* - an adaptation of Professional Satisfaction Scale of Warr et al. (1979) by authors Travers and Cooper (1996). The scale consists of 15 items scored on a Likert type scale with 7 steps and it measures the degree of satisfaction recorded in work, ranging from the *extremely dissatisfied* to *extremely satisfied*. In order to determine motivational preferences, defined on two main dimensions: intrinsic (which includes several major elements like self-determination, competence, task involvement, curiosity, enjoyment and interest) and extrinsic (concerns with competition, evaluation, recognition, money, and constraint by others) it was used *The Work Preference Inventory (WPI)* which contains 30 items (Amabile et al., 1994).

3.2. Participants

The investigated sample included 285 teachers who teach in schools belonging to the Romanian educational system. According to gender, the distribution of teachers included 96 men and 189 women. Teachers' ages ranged between 24 and 60 years old.

4. Results

The typology of the teaching style that we will focus on is the one offered by the Center for Occupational Research and Development (CORD 2005), which captures a complex structure of it. Thus, this model analyzes teaching at the level of two dimensions: teaching goals and teaching methods.This model helps to identify the teaching style in terms of two dimensions: goal and teaching method.

Regarding the teaching goal, it is divided into two overtones: learning which is seen as being on the rote to understanding the continuum, and concept representation which is being seen on the abstract to applied continuum.

The second dimension of teaching style, teaching method is divided into cognitive processing which can be enactive or symbolic, and interaction which can be individualized or group work. After analyzing the data obtained through the questionnaires, for each dimension separately we can identify teaching styles. For the first dimension – teaching goal, the styles are: style A - rote & abstract; style B - applied & rote; style C - understanding & abstract; style D - understanding & applied. For the second dimension – teaching method, the setup of styles is: style A – symbolic & individual; style B – symbolic & cooperative; style C – enactive & individual; style D – enactive & cooperative.

Finally, the teaching style of the teacher consists of the combinations of the two dimensions (the purposes and methods of teaching), resulting in a typology that includes 16 teaching styles which can be grouped in four major categories (Bota, 2017). A particular interest is manifested for the last category (Category IV) which is the most relevant and significant in educational activities through its positive and constructivist characteristics: Style DA *understanding learning – applied concept representation&symbolic cognitive processing – individual study;* Style DB: *understanding learning - applied concept representation& symbolic cognitive processing – cooperative group;* Style DC: *understanding learning – applied concept representation & concrete cognitive processing – individual study;* Style DD: *understanding learning – applied concept representation& concrete cognitive processing – cooperative group* (Bota, 2017).

Regarding the first objective of the study, the teaching styles of the teachers included in the research group are:
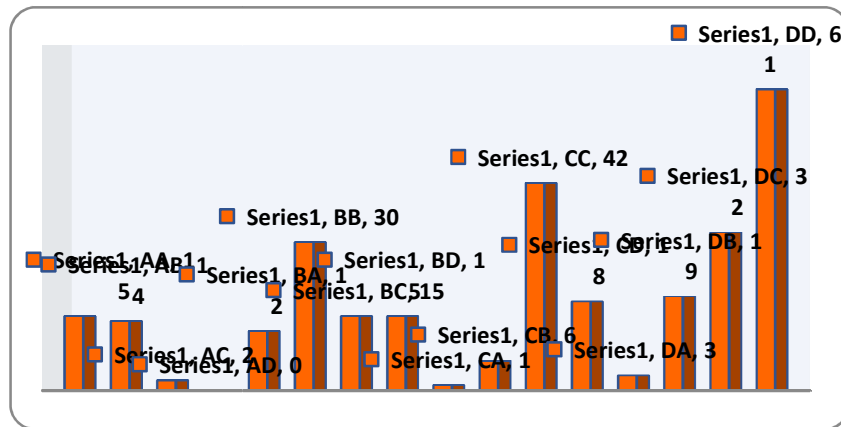
Figure 1. The teaching styles distribution

Using *Teaching Style Inventory* elaborated by CORD 2005, we discover for the teachers included in our study the frequencies of the teaching styles. Data analysis reveals the dominance of the DD teaching style (logical learning - applied representation of concepts/applied teaching & cognitive processing interpreted - cooperative groups) with a

frequency of 61 subjects out of the total of 285. In second place (N= 42) the CC teaching style (logical learning - the abstract representation of the concept/theoretical teaching & interpreted cognitive processing - individual study) and the third position is represented by the DC teaching style (logical learning - applied representation of concepts/applied teaching and interpreted cognitive processing – individual study (N= 32). Figure 1 shows the distribution of all teaching styles. An approach to teaching styles by Alias and Zakaria (2008) highlights a situation similar to our group of subjects. Thus, the dominant style identified by these authors is DD teaching style (with 43.6%), followed by DB teaching style (12%) and DC teaching style (12.1%).

A study by Centeno (2012) highlights the students' preferences for teachers' teaching styles. Thus, the vast majority of students prefer teachers who aim in the teaching activity to stimulate and involve thinking, therefore critical analyzes in memorizing or understanding information. They also prefer situations where teachers organize appraisal didactic sequences focusing on learning through cooperation and using exploration and action methods. In terms of the relationship between student preferences and teaching styles of teachers, the study developed by Arora, Leseane and Raisinghani (2012) emphasizes the following results: students particularly prefer applicative/concrete teaching of knowledge through the use of a set of exploration and action methods stimulates superior cognitive abilities. Also, students are particularly interested in activities that involve learning cooperatively. In other words, DD teaching style is among the students' preferences.

The second objective of the study was to identify relationships between elements of teaching styles, such purposes of teaching and teaching methods, and aspects regarding job satisfaction and motivation. First of all, there were established significant differences between the most important variables of the study, as shown in Table 1.

The issue of motivation at work is frequently addressed through the implications for individual and organizational performance and is a psychological feature that dynamizes and energizes the individual in pursuit of an action in accordance with the proposed goals.

Table 1. Significant differences in job satisfaction and motivation of teachers in relation with gender identity

Variable	Gender	No. of subjects	Mean	Standard deviation	Value of t	Significance
Job satisfaction	Masculine	96	5.21	1.11	1.64	NS
	Feminine	189	4.98	1.11		
Intrinsic motivation	Masculine	96	36.07	9.11	0.04	NS
	Feminine	189	36.02	8.44		
Extrinsic motivation	Masculine	96	34.47	9.06	-2.46	p<0.05
	Feminine	189	37.30	9.21		

The statistical analysis made it possible to identify significant differences between the averages obtained by the two groups of female and male teachers compared to the results obtained with the extrinsic motivation factor. Thus, we noticed that female teachers have a significantly higher extrinsic motivation than male colleagues. As far as our target group is concerned, we concluded that female teachers are more motivated by the desire to get recognition and rewards for the work they are doing than the possible challenges or rewards that the work can bring. As ways of encouraging teachers to achieve success or reward can be the main factor contributing to sustained efforts to ensure the quality and efficiency of the teaching process. Regarding intrinsic motivation and professional satisfaction, there were no significant differences.

Referring to the teaching style, we will analyze the relationship between the first dimension of style - the purposes of teaching - and the variables work satisfaction and motivation.

Table 2. Significant differences in job satisfaction and motivation (intrinsic and extrinsic) in relation with purposes of teaching - Post Hoc comparisons

(I) Purpose of teaching	(J) Purposes of teaching	Mean Difference (MD) (I-J)		
		Job satisfaction (Hochberg GT2)	Intrinsic motivation (Games-Howell)	Extrinsic motivation (Hochberg GT2)
Style A	Style B	0.09	3.66	-2.56
	Style C	0.12	0.54	0.07
	Style D	-0.05	0.37	-0.06
Style B	Style A	-0.09	-3.66	2.56
	Style C	0.03	-3.12	2.64
	Style D	-0.15	-3.29[*]	2.50
Style C	Style A	-0.12	-0.54	-0.07
	Style B	-0.03	3.12	-2.64
	Style D	-0.18	-0.17	-0.13
Style D	Style A	0.05	-0.37	0.06
	Style B	0.15	3.29[*]	-2.50
	Style C	0.18	0.17	0.13

*significant at $p < 0.05$

In this sense, we identified a statistically significant difference between the instinctive motivation factor and the D teaching style: logical learning & the applied representation of concepts (applied teaching). In explaining this determinism we started from the substrate of intrinsic motivation: the profound interest, the pleasure and the challenge that motivates the individual to carry out the actions, which we are looking at here in the form of the teaching activities. The teaching style, approached from the point of view of teaching purposes, is connected to the internal factors of motivation, in the sense that the teacher schedules according to the inner desires a series of learning situations in which knowledge is expressed with a pronounced applicative/explanatory character what determines their understanding and learning by students. Thus, teachers are oriented towards achieving goals, accompanied by perseverance and the desire to identify and address the most appropriate teaching strategies. Whether or not the desire to contribute to the formation and development of students, in the deepest sense of the word, comes from within.

As a result of the analysis regarding the second dimension of teaching style – teaching methods - we found that there are no statistically significant differences in terms of satisfaction and motivation in relation to teaching methods. A possible explanation is considered to be the relatively similar combination of the organization of the pupils and the teaching strategies used by the majority of the teachers in our group.

5. Conclusions:

The main objective of the study was to identify possible relationships between teachers teaching styles and motivation and professional satisfaction. Thus, investigative concerns were first directed towards the identification of teaching styles (CORD vision, 2005) most often manifested by the teachers in our research group. Data analysis revealed increased

frequencies for Teaching Style DD (understanding learning - applied concept representation & concrete cognitive processing - cooperative group) (N = 61). In the following, we analysed the particular aspects related to the establishment of the motivational type manifested mainly by the teachers in the educational activity, as well the level of professional satisfaction. Analysing the data, we found that the female teachers manifest in the educational activity characteristics of extrinsic motivation, being thus most often motivated by the desire to obtain recognition and rewards for the work unfolded. Last but not least, the analysis revealed a positive association between the Teaching Style D (focused on teaching purposes), which implies the stimulation of the logical learning and the applied teaching of the information, with the intrinsic motivation of the teachers. In this situation, teachers are supported by internal motivations such as self-determination, competence, task involvement, curiosity, enjoyment, and interest, which is an indispensable tool for all teachers.

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Attitudestowards children with intellectual disabilities in the primary cycle

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Abstract: *Attitude is the expression of man's opinions and experience of certain objects, personal phenomena It is influenced by the person's ancestral experience, relationships with others and the individual value system of each. In childhood the attitude is copied after that of the parents, the critical system and the one of its own values are not sufficiently strutted.*
The author concludes a study on a group of 50 primary school children about their attitudes towards children with disabilities. The findings show that negative attitudes can be skipped, because there are correct counsellors who change the way children think and understand disability.

Keywords:*school children; attitudes; children with disabilities;counselling;*

1. Theoretical framework

By attitude is meant a psychic predisposition to act in a characteristic face in different situations. Opinion is the verbal expression of attitude. Defining attitudes is that they refer, both implicitly and explicitly to values, to a well-defined axiological system.

G. W. Allport in 1935 proposes the first definition of the concept of attitude. In his view, attitudes are "the predispositions learned to react with consistency to an object or class of objects in a favourable or unfavourable manner." From this unanimously accepted definition, we note that attitudes are learned, not instinctive, that attitude is a predisposition for manifestation of a certain behaviour, that the responses are oriented positively or negatively and last but not least that attitudes are lasting (apud Thibaut, 2017).

From a psychogenetic point of view, attitudes and character traits are formed and structured in the context of relationships that originally establish between child and adult; during adolescence, a group of equal or co-elderly acquire a particular significance. From the same perspective, the attitudes are formed on the basis of the activities, being a form of generalization of the affective experience of the subject in direct connection with the notions and ideas regarding the interpersonal relations (Lewin, 1964, apud Moldovan 2015, p.186).

Attitudes present a series of features that manifest themselves as invariant properties. include:

-*Valance* refers to the affective dimension of attitudes. An attitude may be favourable or unfavourable, positive or negative to a particular object.

-*Intensity* is the power of the affective component. The more an approach approaches one of the extreme poles of a "favourable-unfavourable" or "positive-negative" bipolar scale, the greater its intensity.

-*Centrality* refers to the position of an attitude in all the elements that characterize an individual: social belonging, values, aptitudes etc.

- *The degree of differentiation* of beliefs is the number of beliefs that are present in attitude. The lower the number of convictions, the more attitude can be changed.

-*Specificity or generality* is the way in which an attitude toward an object or a whole category of objects is oriented. For example, we can develop a negative attitude towards a brand of soft drinks or all brands of soft drinks (Verza and Verza, 2017).

Functions of attitudes are presented differently from author to author, this being especially possible because attitudes are very important in the whole of an individual's psychic life, being directly or indirectly connected with all the processes and components of the personality and interaction between individuals in a social context.

In the literature, attitudes are considered to have four functions:

- *The cognitive function* is accomplished by attitudes formed by the individual experience that hierarchizes and orderings perceptions.

- *Utility function* Attitudes also exert an instrumental or utilitarian function. Attitudes also form a social adaptation function. By doing so, we express attitudes that allow us to receive the approval of others.

- *The function of expressing the value*. attitudes are a means of expressing self, self-reliance and self-development.

- *The self-defense function.* the indi- vidual forms certain attitudes to defend himself from external threats or internal deficiencies (apud Craciun, 2005).

Intellectual disability, one of the major psychiatric dysfunctions, is a concept that is still undefined with precision, involving many aspects of a medical, psychological, pedagogical, sociological and even legal nature. Generally, intellectual disability (synonymous with mental deficiency) means a significant reduction in mental capacities that causes a series of disruptions of responses and adaptation mechanisms of the individual to the conditions of continual change of the environment and to the standards of social cohabitation in a which places the individual in a state of incapacity and inferiority, expressed through a state of disability in relation to the other members of the community to which he belongs (Chircev, 1989).

Intellectual disability is understood as a global deficiency that significantly influences socio-professional adaptation, personal and social competence and autonomy, affecting the whole personality: structure, organization, intellectual development, affective, psychomotric, adaptive-behavioural.

In the United States, the American Association for Intellectual Disability considers that this deficiency exists whenever there is significant intellectual activity significantly below average associated with adaptive limitations in two or more areas: communication, self-care, social networking, community services, situational orientation, health and personal security, knowledge applicable in everyday life (Sima, 1998).

In our country, the first rigorous definition of mental deficiency belongs to Alexandru Roşca (apud Buică, 2004), for whom this abnormality represents a state of restricted potency or a stop in the cerebral development, after which the person reached is unable to mature adapt to its environment, to the requirements of the community, so that it can maintain its existence, without oversight and external support.

Ionescu and Radu (apud Bonchiş, 2000) understand by mental deficiency the type of deficiency determined by a complex of etiological factors with unfavourable action on the brain during the maturation period, having two main consequences: to stop or slow the pace of evolution, especially of the functions cognitive and diminishing social competence.

Bonchiş (2002) states that mental deficiency refers to the phenomenon of organic damage and/ or functional impairment of the central nervous system, with negative consequences on the process of mental maturation, development under different aspects of the individual concerned. Mental Disability is the disadvantage that mental deficiency creates in the context of adaptive and integration relationships of the individual in the social environment to which he / she belongs.

In some specialty circles, a distinction is made between the mental deficiency, which indicates an abnormal level of organization and mental functioning, with direct implications on the organization and structure of the individual and the deficiency of intellect, a term that

denotes the inability of the individual to deal with tasks included in the act of learning, as a consequence of the inadequacy of these tasks, often overloaded in school, to the specific and actual potential of the child. In other words, mental deficiency - which is an impairment of evolution and development due to the pathology of organizing and functioning of psychic structures, differs from the deficiency in the intellect where, even under the conditions of a normal mental organization, the individual cannot exceed certain limits adaptation and learning (Bonchiş, 2004).

Specialty literature uses a number of synonymous terms to describe mental deficiency, of which the most common are: mental retardation, mental retardation, oligophrenia, mental retardation, mental impairment, mental retardation, mental retardation, mental disability, mental debility, behavioural alteration adaptation, alterations in learning/ social skills/ maturity, etc. (Cosmovici, 1999). Due to the fact that these terms, with the exception of the last two, have a blatantly pejorative nature, the specialists have decided in recent years to use the term intellectual disability.

Most of these terms are mostly used in the psychiatric field. In recent years, medical terms, specific to psychiatric, classical and modern nosology, are used less in the field of special psychopedagogy, with strong recommendations from practitioners in this field to abandon medical terminology due to the effects induced by the psychological nose label and negative public perceptions / representations about this category of people (Ghergut, 2016).

This attitude is of great importance, especially from the point of view of the socio-professional integration of individuals and the removal of the mentalities and prejudices that constitute real barriers to the understanding, acceptance and valorisation of those persons.

To support the theoretical foundation of mental deficiency, specialists have proposed several theories most frequently cited (Vrasmas 2004):

- *Etiological theory:* explains the nature of mental deficiency through the multitude of factors that determine it;

- *Symptomatological theory:* defines mental deficiency by reference only to certain mental processes and phenomena (thinking, intelligence, affectivity, will); Within this theory there were several currents:

    - Seguin (apud Ghergut, 2016) characterized the mentally deficient as a subject of will;

    - Intellectual currents emphasize mental insufficiency, reduced mental level in defining mental deficiency;

    - Lewin and Vigotsky formulate the dynamic theory of mental debility, integrating mental deficiency into the complex system of mental processes and phenomena, with all the consequences on the development and evolution of the personality of the subject;

- *Theory of specific syndromes:* it is supported by a series of theses, among which we refer to the thesis of heterogeneity, heterogeneity, heterodevelopment, social incompetence, the theory of genetic viscosity, the thesis of inertial cognitive processes, thesis of stiffness of brain structures and others;

- *Psychoanalytic and Psychosocial Theory:* It explains the appearance of mental deficiency as an effect of lack of affectivity (especially of the mother) in the early years of life of the child, favoring the installation of a pronounced inhibition at the level of the thalamus, lacking affective stimuli and leading to a structural-functional failure of the bark due to the suppression of stimulus intake at this level; it is known that through the genetic program in the early years of life, the development of nerve links by increasing the number of synapses is based on a high incidence of cerebral stimuli and the concomitant occurrence of neuronal anatomo-physiological structures responsible for the acquisition of the information (Holdevici , 2000);

- *Integrated theory:* This theory, supported by Paunescu *(apud* Gherguţ, 2006) explains mental deficiency as a pathology of organization and functioning of mental structures and personality as a whole.

Recovery programs for mentally disabled seek to harness the intellectual and aptitude potential of the mentally disabled child, assuming that any progress made in recovering and developing personal and social autonomy will allow a higher level adaptation and integration in the family and community environment as a condition for normalizing the lives of these categories of people (Dikel, 2015).

Here, we can also mention the Declaration of the UNESCO World Conference on Special Education at Salamanca (1994). This document sets out fundamental changes in the education policies of the signatory states for an inclusive education approach, enabling schools to serve all children and, in particular, those with special educational needs.

The set of rules developed and promoted by the United Nations provides each country with responsibility for ensuring equal opportunities for the education and professionalisation of people with disabilities.

2. Research Hypothesis

It has been assumed that a proper counselling of parents and children can change their attitude toward children with disabilities.

3. Sample

Two Second Classes of Children from the General School no. 19 Arad, comprising a total of 25 children each participated to the study. In the whole group of 50 children there were 5 children with intellectual disabilities.

4. Methodology

A Likert scale of 5 items was built, to which the children had to respond, giving values between 1 and 5, 1 meaning no, never, and 5 very often. The Likert Scale has been applied to children to highlight their attitude towards children with intellectual disabilities that they have as peers. At the same time the Likert scale was also applied to a shoulder of 42 parents of children who accepted to partake in research.

In the experimental phase, counselling was provided from the perspective of the social assistant, both of the children and the parents, to make them understand the disability better and change their attitude towards it. This stage lasted two months.
In the last phase the Likert scale was applied again to see the results obtained in changing the attitude of the children and parents after counselling.

5. Results and discussions

Table 1 and Figure 1 give the frequencies of responses to the five items of the Likert scale for children.

Table 1. Children's responses to Likert scale items

	Items	1	2	3	4	5
a	Staying with me in the bench	37	5	3	-	-
b	Be on my team	40	3	2		

c	Play with him	39	2	4		
d.	Come to the party	44	1	-	-	-
e	Go with him in a trip	42	2	1	-	-

It is noticed that most of the answers are in the category at all or never. This meant that children do not want to have any connection with disabled children: they also do not want to stay with them in the bank or join their team or play with them and participate in a party or trip. This child respiration attitude can be explained in two ways: on the one hand, it is inherent in age that children do not accept anything that is not similar to what they know is normal and ordinary, and on the other hand their attitude reflects in great attitude, the attitudes they have taken from home, from parents.
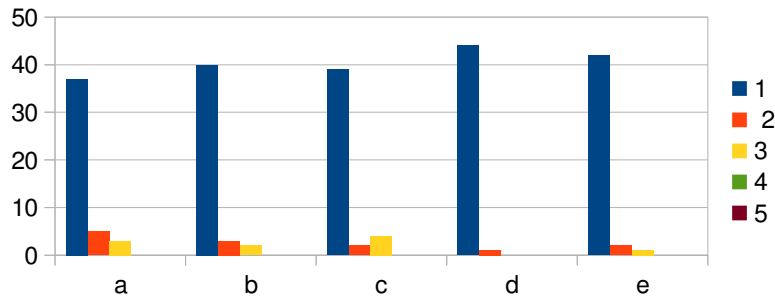
Figure 1.Children's responses to Likert scale items

Even though I feel a kind of sense of mercy towards children with disabilities, it is quickly seduced by the attitude of the other children who also show their rejection towards this category of children. Our task as social assistants is to ensure that the pupils' class will have a good integration of children with disabilities. This makes them accept and quote in various activities by their classmates.

The parents' responses to the Likert scale are illustrated in Table 2 and Figure 2. We mention that of the parental sphere approached only 30 wanted to participate in our research.

Table 2. Parents' answers to the first application of the Likert scale

	Items	1	2	3	4	5
a	Staying in the bench with my baby	12	8	5	4	1
b	To be teamed with my child	9	9	8	3	1
c	To play with my baby	10	10	4	5	1
d.	Come to my baby's party	13	7	6	3	1
e	Go on a trip with my baby	11	8	5	4	1
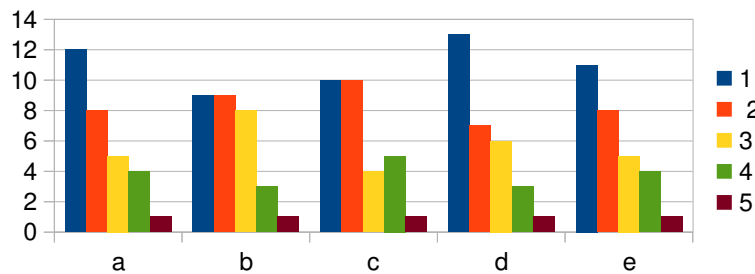
Figure 2. Parents' answers to the first application of the Likert scale

It is found that parents' responses are more diverse than children, but they also dominate the answers on the left of the chart, reflecting the attitudes of rejection of children with disabilities. A single parent agrees to accept unconditionally the presence of children with disabilities. We are no longer surprised by the answers of the children, if the parents' attitudes are those presented in the table and figure above. The children took the attitude of rejection from their parents. Parents, from a misconception of protecting their child, are reluctant to dissuade children with disabilities, so that their children may not be bothered.

The two-month counselling phase followed. With the children, the counselling was done during class hours, and it was explained to them that children with disabilities are just like them, that they feel inferior when they are rejected, that they would like to hear from all their hearts to participate in all activities with the others and even the madrids are invited to a party or on a trip.

Table 3. Children's responses to Likert scale items after counseling

	Items	1	2	3	4	5
a	Staying with me in the bench	2	12	10	6	15
b	Be on my team	3	2	9	12	19
c	play with him	1	1	10	14	19
d.	Come to the party	3	5	9	17	11
e	Go with him in a trip	2	2	11	12	18
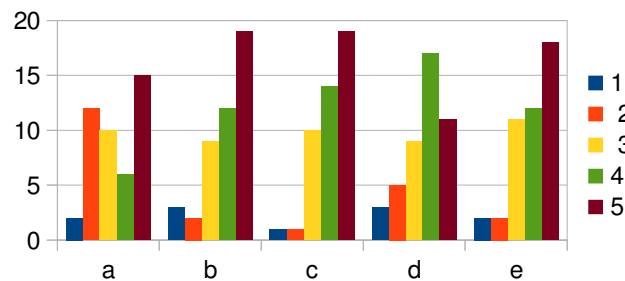
Figure 1. Children's responses to Likert scale items after counseling

With parents, the counselling was done at the end of the hours, when they wanted to take their children from school. Generally, the parents participated in a shoulder of 6 honeymoon sessions during the two months, while with the children 12 sessions were held. At the end of the counselling, after the passing of the two months, both children and parents were again asked to respond to the items of the Likert scale. Children's responses to Likert scale items after counselling are shown in Table 3 and Figure 3.

The table shows an obvious shift of children's responses to the quoted pole number 5 with very often. This means that children have changed their attitudes towards children with disabilities and are trying to get them into their activities. There are still some retirements in terms of accepting children with disabilities at their birthday parties or accepting them as bank colleagues. In addition, the children were receptive to counselling, understood the feelings of discomfort and sadness that children with disabilities are living when they are retired and strive to make them feel as good as possible by including them in their activities during school hours.

For parents, the answers after counselling are presented in Table 4 and Figure 4.

Parents also show an improvement in attitudes towards children with disabilities, though not as spectacular as children. This may be due to the fact that in parents, attitudes are formed for a long time and have become habits that are more difficult to modify. However, the progress made makes us believe that in the future they may also get a proper attitude towards this category of children.

Table 4. Parents' responses after counselling

	Items	1	2	3	4	5
a	Staying with me in the bench	7	7	4	4	8
b	Be on my team	5	5	4	3	13
c	play with him	7	10	1	1	11
d.	Come to the party	8	6	3	3	10
e	Go with him in a trip	6	7	2	3	12
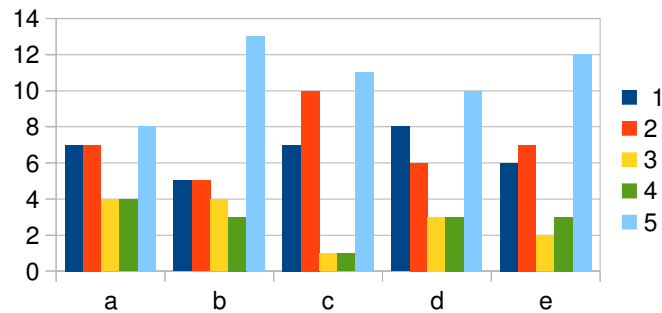
Figure 4. Parents' responses after counselling

6. Conclusions

The research has highlighted the fact that both children and parents have a number of negative attitudes towards children with disabilities, attitudes that can be explained by the misunderstanding of their disability and the erroneous interpretation of their need for integration. The social worker, in team with the psychologist and the primary education teacher, must ensure the conditions of maximum integration of these children in the school table. Let's not forget that the collective of the class is a social microgroup that reflects the society later on. That is why the integration of children with disabilities into the classrooms of the students is a prerequisite for their future integration into society. This integration starts as early as possible, because as our rate and research do, children are more likely to change attitudes than adults. A proper counseling for both parents and children can lead to a good integration of children with disabilities and thus to their assimilation into the future society.

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INFLUENCE OF THE PRESENCE OF THE CHILD'S DISABILITY ON THE QUALITY OF FAMILY RELATIONS

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Abstract:*The present paper focuses on depicting relationships – from behavioral patterns, interaction and communication, to personality factors - within families in which a child with disability is present. Following complex analyses involving three cases of families with disabled children and three cases of families with typical children (no disabilites), the comparative results show that some particularities regarding communication, behavior and schizothyme/cyclothyme personality factor exist within families with disabled children. These case studies have enabled us to better understand the ways in which family members represent each others' place and roles, differently in families with disabled children compared to typical families.*

Keywords: *family relationships; families with disabled children; child with disability;*

1. Introduction

In families where there is a disabled child, often times, parental roles suffer changes. In this special situation, the parents are involved in many and various activities and have numerous additional tasks, in order to offer the child everything, he or she needs.Generally, the mother tends to focus only on the complex needs of the child, to feel responsible at a too high degree, so that she begins to neglect herself and the other members of the family. This is one of the contexts in which conflicts between parents arise, since the mother feels that she bears all the responsibilities, and the father, on the other hand, believes he is the one doing all the tough work, by trying to ensure all the financial resources for the family. Because of this discrepancy between the perspectives of the two regarding the situation (the mother feels alone and misunderstood, the father feels he is the one managing the entire situation and, in his turn, that he is not being adequately valued), corroborated with the presence of a deficit in communication, conflicts emerge between the two parents and thus, definitive ruptures may appear in the family relation. Parents are confronted with a multitude of problems and are forced to make compromises in the relationship between themselves and the social and institutional environment, to develop real strategies for integrating their disabled child into daily life without it affecting their family, social or professional life.

2. The coordinates of the research

The research questions - in order to reach the objective of analyzing the influence of the child's disability on the quality of family relations - are the following:
1. Does the presence of the child's disability influence family relations?
2. What is the communication between family members like?
3. How do they spend their time together?
4. Are there differences between the activities that take place in a family with a child with S.E.N. and a family with a typical child?

2.1. The research objective

The present research aimed at analysing the influence of the presence of the child's disability (DSA) on the quality of family relations.

The quality of family relations may be analysed through the following measurable aspects:

- Communication relations between partners (frequency and depth ~content~ of the communication, resolution of conflict situations through communication).
- The communication relation between family members.
- The activities that the family members perform with the child.

2.2. The research design

We opted for a design of the ***case study*** type, for reasons pertaining to the nature of the investigated subject (it is a theme with a high degree of intimacy, which requires greater focalization of the research attention on in-depth aspects) and the research possibilities (the investigation of a larger number of cases was not possible, at this time).

Given the case study type design, the starting point was not an aprioristic hypothesis (formulated before the field experience), but rather the previously mentioned objective.

In the present research, the subject lot is made up of 6 families.

There are 3 families in which there is a child with special educational needs and 3 families with typical children. The subjects were chosen so as to have similar ages, between 6 years and 8 months and 8 years in the case of children, and their parents are aged between 29 and 34, with the same familial composition.

The data was collected throughout 6 months, with periodic meetings, both with the children and their parents. Meetings took place both in the family environment, individually with each parent, then with both parents, and with the child, as well as within the centre in which the children with S.E.N. undergo therapy.

The data was collected through several methods: anamnesis, in which socio-demographic data was collected, interviews performed individually with each parent, but also with both parents, which helped to collect information regarding the communication between parents, the communication between parents and child, the quality of the communication, the activities they perform together, the specificity of each family.

2.3. Research methods and instruments

The case study method entails a detailed approach to the subject, in order to understand the components and attitudes that it manifests.The case study, being a synthetic method, is constituted with the help of several research instruments, such as: observations, interviews, tests, activity products analysis, autobiography, document study.The purpose of this method is to capture the specificity of the person and it entails a strong documentation on the case, collecting data from as many sources as possible.

The research instruments used in the present research are:

- an anamnesis guide,
- two interview guides,
- the "Family drawing" projective test
- The Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF).

The first interview guide is addressed to parents of children with special educational needs and is made up of 21 items, and the second is addressed to parents of typical children and is made up of 24 items. The items focus on the quality of life in the two types of families, if any modifications have arisen and how their life is unfolding, the communication relations between partners, the communication relations between parents and children, the activities they perform together and also the resolution of conflicts through communication.

The family drawing is a projective test that favours the exhibition of unconscious tendencies and allows the acknowledgment of the real feelings and emotions that the child develops for his own family. The drawing, made spontaneously by a child, reveals his manner of perceiving reality and evinces his personality, his emotions, but also his thoughts and frustrations regarding his position and his role in the family. Through this drawing, we have global access to the subject's personality. The emotional reactions of the children while they do the drawing are also very important. The emergence of mood changes, such as the child's sadness, joy or anger during the drawing of a certain character is significant in establishing the relationship that the child has with the respective person.

The Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) is a personality test that investigates 16 personality factors, such as: schizothyme/ cyclothyme, intelligence, ego strength, submission/ dominance, liveliness, superego strength, threctia/ parmia, harria/ premia, alaxia/ protensia, praxernia/ autia, shrewdness, confidence/ culpable, conservator/ liberal, adherence to the group, feeling of self and ergic tension.

Two factors were selected in the present research, the first being schizothyme/ cyclothyme, and the second being the ego strength because these factors were considered relevant, since they capture the traits of the subjects and identify the inter-individual differences. The first factor, schizothyme/ cyclothyme, includes items for identifying the level of warmth, openness, attention to others and involvement or distance and detachments of the subjects. The second factor, the ego strength, contains items for identifying the level of emotional stability or instability. The first factor comprises 10 items, and the second one comprises 13 items.

2.4. Data analysis and interpretation

In the first case, we compared family O., in which subject V. is a D.S.A. child, aged 7 years and 2 months, the mother being 29 years old and the father 31 years old, with family C., in which subject A. is a typical child, aged 7, both parents being 30 years old. Both children have the same gender, namely male.

Figure 1. Family drawing made by O.V.

Subject O.V. was open when he received the task of making the family drawing. Throughout the task, he did not present states of agitation or restlessness. The family drawing made by V. is represented by 3 elements, the members of his family. He placed the two parents on the right side of the paper sheet, the mother toward the edge and the father in her proximity. We identify a distance between V. and his father, but he chose to represent him cheerful, whereas the mother is sad. In the family drawing, V. chose to represent the members of his family in the center of the paper, without other specific elements. He chose to represent the 3 elements using the same color, blue. The members of V.'s family do not have a complete body scheme. At the end of the drawing session, V. presented the members of his family to me, adding that he and his father are happy, while the mother is sad.

Following the drawing made by V., the scores obtained by the parents in the two factors are confirmed. We notice that V. is closer to his father than to his mother.

Figure 2. Family drawing made by C.A.

The subject C.A. was receptive to the task of drawing his family and throughout it, the child evinced a state of peace and delight.

In A.'s drawing, there are more specific elements, not only the 3 members of the family. A. represented the parents to his right, the first being the father, then the mother at the same distance. Even if A. spends a great deal of time without his father, he placed him in his immediate vicinity, and this can induce the fact that he misses him and wants him close to him.

The family members are represented as cheerful, and A. chose to represent his pet as well. They are close to a house, which means he is aware of the concept of home, family. A. chose to use many colours specific to each element, as we find them in nature, such as the yellow sun and the green grass.The position of the mother's feet is directed toward the father and the child, which confirms the parents' words from the interview, namely that all 3 have a very good communication relation.At the end of the drawing, A. recounted what he had drawn, presented his parents and mentioned the fact that all 2 are happy.

In the second case, we compared a family with a child with D.S.A., aged 6 years and 8 months, the mother being 29 years old and the father being 32 years old, with a family with a typical child, aged 6 years and 10 months, the mother being 31 years old, and the father being 33 years old. The child with D.S.A. is male, and the typical child is female.
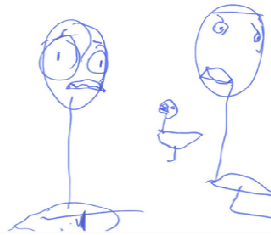
Figure 3. Family drawing made by T.A.

Subject T.A. did not present states of irritation, sadness or frustration when he received the task or throughout the performance of it.

Subject A. chose to represent both his parents and himself as birds. The only elements on the sheet of paper are the members of his family, with no other specific elements. A. placed himself close to his father, but with his back turned to him, and facing the mother, who is at a distance from himself. Subject A. chose to use a single color, blue, although he also had others at his disposal.

After finishing the drawing, A. recounted that his family is a family of geese, of which he is the gosling, the mother is screaming, and he and his father are scared. This is confirmed by the low score obtained by the mother in the ego strength factor, being a person with states of irritability and reduced tolerance to frustration.

The subject P.E. was receptive to the task assigned to her, both upon hearing it and throughout its performance, E. was cheerful, calm, with a positive attitude. There were no states of irascibility, anger or fear present.

Figure 4. Family drawing made by P.E.

Subject E. chose to place herself between her parents, all 3 holding hands. E. chose to represent herself as similar to her mother, with the same color dress and shoes, which means she identifies with her and they have a very good relation. All the family members are represented as cheerful, in the center of the page, with an equal distance between them. E. placed herself exactly in the middle, between the mother and the father, which confirms the fact that all 3 succeed in communicating very well and have a very close relation. Subject E. represented several elements. Beside the 3 family members, she integrated into the drawing a house, sun, trees, butterflies, birds and also flowers. She used many colors and managed to integrate the family in a beautiful spring scenery.

In the third case, we compared a family with a child with D.S.A. aged 8, and a younger sister aged 6, the mother being 33 years old and the father being 34 years old, with a family with a typical child, aged 7 years and 6 months and a younger sister, aged 6, the mother being 32 years old and the father being 33 years old. Both children are females.

Figure 5. Family drawing made by M.O.

When subject M.O. received the task of making the family drawing, she refused to do it, and the task was rescheduled. The second time, she refused again, and the third time, she accepted, but throughout the completion of the task, she presented an agitated behaviour, filled with anxiety, and her face mimicry transmitted anger and sadness.

Subject O. made 4 elements I the family drawing, namely the members of her family. Her parents are placed on the left side of the sheet, whereas she is in the extreme right, together with her sister. The mother is to the extreme left, then the father, who is placed close to the younger sister, then O. The subject represented the two parents in tears, whereas she and her sister are smiling. Subject O. chose to use the colour yellow for the two parents, while for herself and her younger sister, she chose to use red. O. drew her own hands yellow, while her sister's hands are red.

Subject O. chose to place the father near the younger sister, which means that O. is aware of the fact that he seeks the company of the younger daughter and spends more time with her than with O. Even though the mother is the one who spends the most time with them, since they remain in her care, O. placed her in the opposite side to her, thus we may conclude that she does not feel close to her and the communication between them is not made easily.

After finishing the drawing, O. mentioned the fact that she gave grades to each member of the family; her parents received –F, which means they do not have a strong bond and she does not feel close to any of them, and she gave A+ to her sister and her own representation, hence we may observe that, out of the entire family, the only person she appreciates and feels close to is her sister.

When subject A.I. received the task, she was delighted and throughout the completion of the drawing, she was calm, cheerful, with no states of anxiety or fear. The family drawing made by I. comprises several elements. The 4 family members placed to the left of the page are surrounded by other specific elements, such as a house, a tree, a rabbit, the sun and butterflies.

Figure 6. Family drawing made by A.I.

The subject represented the 4 family members holding hands. The first representation is of the mother, the younger sister is to her right, then I. standing by her father. I. together with her mother and her sister are wearing the same dress model, but the colours are different. All the family members are represented by I. as cheerful, and from the fact that they are holding hands we may notice that they are a nuclear family, the girls being in the middle, protected by both parents. Subject I. chose to use several colours, not just one.

After finishing the drawing, I. described every element, mentioned the fact that her family is happy and is enjoying a walk in the vicinity of the house.
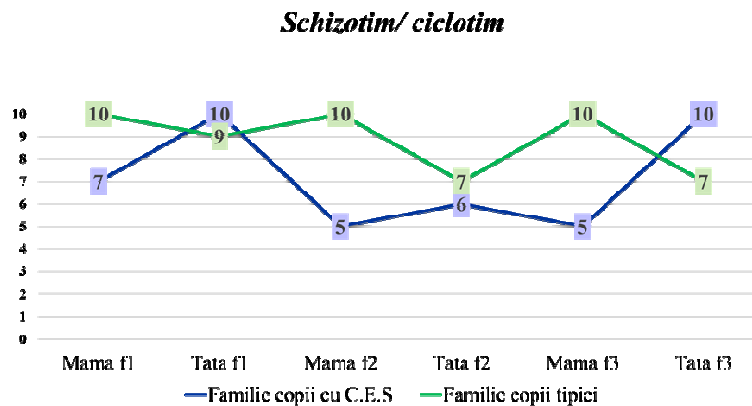
Figure 7. Scores obtained by the parents of children with D.S.A. compared to the scores of the parents of typical children in the schizothyme/cyclothyme factor

Figure 7 represents the scores obtained by all the parents involved in the present research, both of the children with D.S.A. and of the typical children. The first factor of the parents' personality that was investigated was schizothyme/ cyclothyme and refers to the warmth, the social skills or the distance and reserved attitude that they hold.

As it may be observed in this chart, the parents of typical children have higher scores than the parents of children with D.S.A. Nevertheless, the mothers of typical children are the ones who have higher scores than the fathers of typical children, whereas the mothers of children with D.S.A. have lower scores than their fathers.

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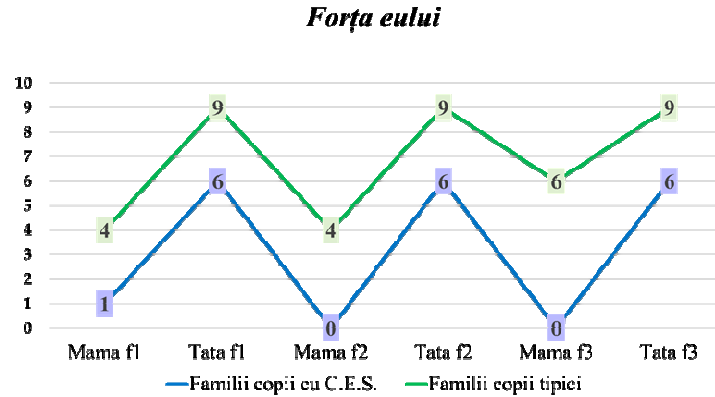
Figure 8. Scores obtained by the parents of children with D.S.A. compared to those of parents of typical children in the ego strength factor

This means that the parents of typical children and people who present a desire to establish relations with people, have highly developed social skills, are confident in their own strengths, active and communicative, mothers at a higher level than the fathers. The parents of children with D.S.A. obtained low scores, especially the mothers, which means that they are people who prefer to have a small circle of people to communicate with, do not have highly developed social skills, are secluded and distant.

Figure 8 represents the scores obtained by all the parents involved in the present research, both of the children with D.S.A. and of the typical children. The second personality factor investigated in the present research is the ego strength, which refers to emotional stability or instability, resistance to frustration, states of anxiety, concern, irritability, discomposure or anger. As observed in the above chart, the parents of typical children have a higher emotional stability than the parents of children with D.S.A. Nevertheless, there is a considerable difference between the scores obtained by the mothers of typical children compared to their fathers, and also between the scores obtained by the mothers of children with D.S.A. compared to their fathers.

Mothers, both of typical children and of children with D.S.A., present lower scores than the fathers, which means that the female gender is more prone to states of emotional instability and has difficulties in managing crisis situations, whereas males present high scores.

3. Conclusion

Following this research, with the help of the used tools, we highlighted the fact that there is a difference between the families of children with special educational needs and those of typical children, from the point of view of the communication relationship between the partners, the communication relations between the partners and the child, and also from the point of view of activities performed by the children together with their families.

With the help of the family drawing, we discovered real things, such as the way the children feel inside the family, who they feel closest to and also with which of the parents is the communication more easily performed.

In the interview, for the people who said they had a good communication relation both with the partner and with the children, it was confirmed with the help of the schizothyme/cyclothyme personality factor, but also through the family drawings made by the children.

Following the investigation of the parents' personality, through the

74

schizothyme/cyclothyme factor, it was noticed that mothers of children with D.S.A. present a reduced desire for contact and do not have high communication skills.

In the second factor, the ego strength, both mothers of children with D.S.A. and mothers of typical children obtained lower scores compared to the fathers.
The present study does not claim to have exhausted the multiple and complex aspects of interpersonal relations in families in which there is a child with disabilities. However, what we have tried to do is to enter this study on a trajectory of debate, so that it may participate in the social endeavour to understand the problem of the adaptation of families with SEN – with the purpose of improving the integration process.

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LEARNING PATTERNS AND SELF-REGULATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A ROMANIAN STUDY

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Abstract: *The article aims to highlight the psychometric properties of Vermunt's (1994) Inventory of Learning Styles (ILS). A Romanian higher education sample was used in order to determine the psychometric properties of ILS. We also aimed to analyse relationships between learning patterns and academic performances. The results showed that the reliability of most ILS scales is satisfactory. The factorial structure of the ILS determined through exploratory factor analysis showed a partial superposition with the original model. The best represented factor was active meaning-directed learning pattern, including mainly the learning processing and the regulation strategies. Considering the cultural differences and the high degree of similarity between the factor structure obtained in this research and that presented in other researches we can conclude that the Romanian version of the Inventory Learning Styles is a valid and reliable instrument.*

Keywords: *learning; learning orientations; learning patterns; mental models of learning; processing strategies;*

1. Introduction

The management of learning within and across learning contexts is a widely researched topic in the educational psychology including concepts which sometimes tend to overlap such as styles, approaches to learning, or patterns of learning. As Evans and Vermunt (2013) stated, some of the overarching questions facing the styles, approaches, and patterns research domain are examined in relation to three main issues: dimensionality (research evidencing on the multi-dimensional models and on the inclusion of self-regulation), measurement (various contributions focusing mostly on appropriate methodologies to explore differences at the individual level), and contextuality and changeability (researchers debating the relative stability versus variability of dimensions in student learning).

In the past, the majority of student learning research focussed on cognitive processing strategies and motivation while little was known about the relations among regulation activities and the way students used these startegies (Vermunt & Vermetten, 2004). Recent research tried to integrate learning components, metacognitive aspects of learning, cognitive processing strategies and study motivation focusing on their interrelationships (Entwistle & McCune, 2004; Vermunt & Vermetten, 2004). Representations of these models are the model of self-regulated learning elaborated by Pintrich and his collaborators (Pintrich, 2004) and the model of Vermunt (Vermunt & Vermetten, 2004). At the beginning, these patterns of behavioral, belief, and motivational components were labelled learning styles (Vermunt, 1996). However, the term learning style has a broader meaning, considered by some of the researchers unchangeable, innate and deeply rooted in personality, therefore the term was changed to a more neutral term, learning patterns (Endedijk & Vermunt, 2013).

The instrument which operationalise the model of learning patterns is the Inventory of Learning Styles (ILS) (Vermunt, 1994). Although the ILS uses the concept of learning style, it measures mostly patterns of learning. The instrument includes four components of learning in higher education: processing strategies, regulation strategies, mental models of learning and

learning orientations. Based on the combination of this four components, several patterns of learning can be identified: meaning-directed, reproduction-directed, application-directed and undirected learning. Although the ILS has been widely used in the international literature, it is relatively new in the Romanian literature.

The ILS was developed within the context of higher education and distinguishes three levels of learning processes: the executive level (including the processing strategies), the control level (including the regulation strategies) and the conceptual level (focusing on the learning orientations) (Van der Veken, Valcke, Muijtjens, Maeseneer, & Derese, 2008). Its origin is in a qualitative research conducted by Vermunt and van Rijswijk (1988) who distinguished between the processing activities that students and the regulation activities. The interviewees' responses were used to construct items of the ILS. A more detailed analysis of the interview led to the identification of different mental models of learning and learning orientations (Vermunt, 1998). The model of Vermunt is a constructive model of learning also called the "onion" model of learning styles; the model explaining that the choice of processing and regulation strategies is influenced by the learning context - the first or second layer, instructional preference and information-processing style; learning orientations and conceptions or mental models of learning are relatively stable, they are personal characteristics, belonging to the innermost layer – the cognitive personality style (Richardson, 2011).

Research showed that the ILS is an efficient instrument integrating both motivational and cognitive elements, with applicability in different educational settings (Vermunt, 1998).The ILS dimensions could be linked to innovative instructional approaches (Van der Veken et al., 2008), to personality traits (Vermetten, Lodewijks, & Vermun, 2001), to students perceptions of their academic environment and to their conceptions of learning and their conceptions of themselves as learners (Richardson, 2011). The ILS allows to differentiate between excellent and average students (López, Cerveró, Rodriguez, Félix, & Esteban, 2013) and its dimensions were associated with the academic performances (Boyle, Duffy, & Dunleavy, 2003; Lopez et al., 2013). The present research will present an overview of the ILS psychometric properties after its translation in Romanian.

2. Method

2.1. Aims

The main aim of the paper was to determine the psychometric properties of the Romanian version of ILS. Reliability, construct and predictive validity were estimated. We also aimed to analyse the relationships between learning patterns and academic performances.

2.2. Sample

The sample included 400 first year university students from three universities in Romania, Transilvania University, University of Pitesti and University of Bucharest. The sample included only Psychology and Education sciences students from the three universities mentioned above, 46 boys and 354 girls, with a mean age of 20 years (SD =3.2) The questionnaires were administered in a paper-pencil format during the courses, the participation being voluntary and unpaid.

2.3. Instruments

The Inventory of Learning Styles (ILS) (Vermunt, 1994) consists of 120 items grouped into four dimensions: Processing strategies (Deep processing, Stepwise processing, Concrete processing), Regulation strategies (Self-regulation, External regulation and Lack of regulation), Learning orientations (Personally interested, Certificate oriented, Self-test oriented, Vocation oriented, Ambivalent) and Conceptions of learning (Construction of knowledge, Intake of knowledge, Use of knowledge, Stimulating education and Cooperative learning). Overall, the ILS comprises 20 subscales with good psychometric which will be presented below.

Academic performances were also measured by the grade point average at the end of the first academic year.

3. Results

3.1. Reliability of the ILS

Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for all the subscales ranged between .65 and .89 (Table 1). Although some values are rather low, there are similar to those reported for the original version of the instrument.

Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the ILS

Subscales	No of items	α for the Romanian version *	α for the original version **
I. Processing strategies	**27**		
Deep processing	**11**	**.85**	
1a. Relating and structuring	7	.82	.83
1b. Critical processing	4	.71	.72
Stepwise processing	**11**	**.79**	
2a. Memorizing and rehearsing	5	.76	.79
2b. Analysing	6	.73	.63
Concrete processing	**5**	**.70**	
3. Concrete processing	5	.70	.71
II. Self-regulation strategies	**28**		
Self-regulation	**11**	**.81**	
4a. Learning process and outcomes	7	.76	.73
4b. Learning contents	4	.69	.73
External regulation	**11**	**.76**	
5a. Learning process	6	.66	.48
5b. Learning outcomes	5	.67	.65
Lake of regulation	**6**	**.65**	
6. Lake of regulation	6	.65	.72
III. Learning orientations	**25**		
7. Personally interested	5	.65	.57
8. Certificate oriented	5	.74	.76
9. Self-test oriented	5	.70	.84
10. Vocation oriented	5	.71	.69

Subscales	No of items	α for the Romanian version *	α for the original version **
11. Ambivalent	5	.77	.82
IV. Conceptions of learning	**40**		
12. Construction of knowledge	9	.75	.78
13. Intake of knowledge	9	.75	.77
14. Use of knowledge	6	.78	.70
15. Stimulating education	8	.85	.88
16. Cooperative learning	8	.89	.89

Note: *$N = 400$; ** Vermunt (1998)

The test-retest reliability was also computed, the inventory being administered and data collected on two occasions approximately two-month apart. For all the subscales, and especially for those measuring learning strategies, the correlation coefficients were strong and statistically significant ($p < .001$) demonstrating the long-term stability of the responses (Table 2). The lowest stability was obtained for the Conceptions of learning, a possible explanation being the changes of individuals' beliefs as a consequence of their learning processes.

Table 2. Pearson correlation coefficients between test-retest scores

Subscales	r Test - Retest
1a. Relating and structuring	.66
1b. Critical processing	.55
2a. Memorizing and rehearsing	.68
2b. Analysing	.61
3. Concrete processing	.58
4a. Learning process and outcomes	.57
4b. Learning contents	.66
5a. Learning process	.65
5b. Learning outcomes	.59
6. Lake of regulation	.45
7. Personally interested	.70
8. Certificate oriented	.80
9. Self-test oriented	.69
10. Vocation oriented	.36
11. Ambivalent	.54
12. Construction of knowledge	.71
13. Intake of knowledge	.57
14. Use of knowledge	.54
15. Stimulating education	.65
16. Cooperative learning	.72

Note: $N = 175$

3.2. Construct validity of the ILS

The exploratory factor analysis on the 120 items highlighted a solution with 16-20 factors, explaining 50% of the total variance. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO=.87) coefficient showed that the sample was adequate to the exploratory analysis, the Bartlett sphericity test being also statistically significant ($p < .001$). However, due to the differences between the original version of ILS and the Romanian version (some items had loadings in

several factors) and the small sample size, we decided to test a four-factor solution, using the Varmiax rotation, on the 16 scales of the original ILS. The four-factor solution explains 61.24 of the total variance: factor I (23.7%), factor II (13.54%), factor III (13.42%) and factor IV (10.53%) (Table 3).

Table 3. Exploratory factor analysis for the ILS

ILS scales	Factorial loadings				Communalities
	F1	F2	F3	F4	
Processing strategies					
Memorizing and rehearsing		.725			.624
Relating and structuring	.788				.734
Critical processing	.734				.654
Analysing	.700	.425			.690
Concrete processing	.696		.348		.615
Self-regulation strategies					
Learning process and outcomes	.796				.701
Learning contents	.728				.545
External regulation of process	.513	.631			.663
External regulation of outcomes	.649	.439			.627
Lake of regulation				.622	.463
Conceptions of learning					
Intake of knowledge			.443	.336	.665
Use of knowledge			.722		.611
Construction of knowledge	.520		.581		.668
Cooperative learning				.682	.481
Stimulating education			.498	.588	.610
Learning orientations					
Certificate oriented		.707			.640
Self-test oriented		.550	.379		.507
Vocation oriented		.327	.693		.684
Personally interested			.586		.440
Ambivalent	-.385			.658	.629
Eigenvalues	4.74	2.70	2.68	2.10	
% of variance	23.7	13.54	13.42	10.53	

The first factor is highly saturated in scales referring to the Processing strategies and Regulation strategies, the results being similar to those reported by other researchers (Law & Meyer, 2010; Vermunt & Vermetten, 2004; Ajisuksmo & Vermunt, 1999). According to Ajisuksmo and Vermunt (1999) this factor was labelled *Active meaning-directed learning pattern*. The second factor has mixt interesting structure, but approximatively similar to the structure of one of the factors reported by Ajisuksmo and Vermunt (1999) and Law and

Meyer (2010). The factor consists in scale such as External regulation, Certificate oriented learning, or Memorizing and rehearsing strategies. This factor was labelled by Vermunt (1998) *Reproductive-directed learning pattern*. The third factor covers most of the scales related to Conceptions of learning (Construction of knowledge Intake of knowledge Use of knowledge) and two scales related to learning orientations (Self-test oriented and Vocation oriented). There is no saturation in any of the processing or regulation scales, which is why the factor was labelled *Passive idealistic learning pattern* (Ajisuksmo & Vermunt, 1999). The fourth factor has high loadings in scales measuring Lake of regulation, Ambivalent orientation of learning, Cooperative learning and Stimulating education. This factor is also similar to the factor labelled by Ajisuksmo and Vermunt (1999) *Undirected learning pattern*.

The exploratory factor analysis confirmed partially the initial structure of the instrument. The best represented factor is the Active meaning-directed learning pattern. However, the results should be interpreted cautiously because of the high homogeneity of the participants, all of them being psychology and education sciences students.

3.3. Predictive validity of the ILS

In order to estimate the predictive validity of the ILS we used the academic performances at the end of the first academic year (GPA's). The Pearson correlation coefficients obtained between the ILS scales and the GPA were statistically significant for the following scales: Relating and structuring ($r = .26$, $p = .001$), Deep processing ($r = .23$, $p = .003$), analysing($r = .27$, $p = .001$; $p < .001$), Stepwise processing ($r = .30$, $p < .001$), Concrete processing ($r = .22$, $p = .003$), Self-regulation ($r = .23$, $p = .001$), External regulation ($r = .22$, $p < .001$), Personally oriented learning ($r = .11$, $p = .03$), Vocation oriented ($r = .30$, $p < .001$), Construction of knowledge ($r = .21$, $p = .017$), Use of knowledge ($r = .25$, $p < .001$). The highest predictive value was obtained for the self-regulation strategies and for the learning orientations (Tab. 4). The model including as predictors Self-regulation of learning process, External regulation, Construction of knowledge and Use of knowledge explains 30% of the variance of the academic performances, the model being statically significant $F(4, 324) = 13.01$, $p < .001$. The results highlighted that ILS is a valid instrument for measuring self-regulatory learning strategies and that using self-regulated learning strategies predicts academic performance.

Table 4. Predictive validity of the ILS – Multiple linear regression analysis

Predictors	R	Δ R2	β	B	SE b	t
	.54	.30				
Self-regulation of the learning process			.15	2.23	1.7	1.31
External regulation			.34	3.37	0.09	3.74**
Construction of knowledge			-.25	-3.93	1.76	-2.22*
Use of knowledge			.36	7.92	2.05	3.85**

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, $N = 357$

4. Conclusions and discussion

The results of the current study confirmed previous studies on the ILS showing that four dimensions in student learning can be discerned: undirected, reproduction-directed, meaning-directed, and application-directed learning patterns (Vermunt & Vermetten, 2004). Considering the cultural differences and the high degree of similarity between the factor structure obtained in this research and that presented in other researches, we can conclude that the Romanian version of the Inventory Learning Styles is a valid and reliable instrument. The

results suggest that the ILS has reasonable psychometric properties after its translation into Romanian. The small number of male respondents and the high homogeneity of the sample could be considered limitations of the present study which has negative implications on the external validity of the learning patterns model. The learning patterns should be explored in more contexts and populations beyond the first years of higher education. Although there are many studies referring to the validity of the ILS on different populations (Vermunt, Bronkhorst, & Martínez-Fernández, 2014), the consistency and variability of learning patterns across cultures continues to be an interesting issue.

Our results showed that the factor scores accounted for a relatively small amount of variability in academic performance. ILS has a limited role in predicting academic outcome, the results being convergent with other studies (Boyle et al., 2003). Other studies showed that the learning styles were associated positively with academic success and the undirected learning style correlated negatively with academic success (Busato, Prins, Elshout, & Hamaker, 2000).

Future research should extend these findings, by estimating also the convergent validity of the instrument. The exploratory factor analysis should be followed by a confirmatory factor analysis for a more deep analysis of the structure of ILS. Therefore, the further exploration of the construct validity of the learning patterns model is needed. In addition, a deeper analysis of the associations between learning strategies, learning orientations or conceptions about learning could allow us to extend our understanding of effective learning patterns. The original assumption that the influence of students' mental models and learning orientations on their processing strategies was largely mediated by their use of different regulation strategies (Vermunt, 1998) could be also tested on a Romanian student sample.

Despite the limitations mentioned above, our study showed that the ILS could be used a diagnostic instrument for detecting learners with inappropriate views of and orientations to learning, who use inefficient learning strategies, all these aspects being predictors of maladjustment, underachievement or drop-out. The existence of different learning patterns offers the opportunity to find qualitative differences between them (Vermunt & Vermetten, 2004). Assessing the learning patterns of the students could provide a relevant view of the dominant student learning patterns and to linked them with other variables such as the teacher conceptions about learning and teaching, cognitive development of the student, previous performances, personality and achievement motivation etc.

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DISTURBING FACTORS IN SCHOOL LEARNING AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

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Abstract: *Disturbances in personality development and high school student failure have become a problem and at the same time a challenge for the psycho-pedagogical community. By conducting questionnaires, a study was carried out, attended by 224 teachers and 760 students from 68 high schools from 21 counties. There have been identified some problems faced by high school students and the factors that produce them. Factors that determine school failure are found in three categories: internal factors that are related to the pupil, external factors related to educational policies and the family environment. In the present paper, starting from the educational realities identified in high schools, we are trying to identify aspects that are worthwhile being taken into account in the initial and professional development programs (teachers' degrees, training courses, masters, postgraduate courses) of teachers, inorder to improve the existing situation.*

Keywords:*school failure; remediation;counselling; tutoring; mentoring*;

Theoretical foundation

Teenagers achieve results below expectations, expectations of teachers and parents, an effect that (in the form of a second-degree impact) has repercussions on their overall attitude to school activity, balance, and personality development.

For some teenagers, at this stage, a downward spiral begins, overall, at the level of attitude towards school, an attitude often leading to academic failure and school dropout.

This was addressed by Simmons and Blyth (1987), who found a sharp drop in school performance in teenagers as they moved to high school. Moreover, the extent of this decline has been predictive of school failure and school abandonment. The study mentions that decline, motivation, and school outcomes is due to the fact that adolescents are in a situation where they have to cope with major transitions: pubertal change and school change, and with it the physical context of the relational system.

According to JS Eccles, JS Lord, S. Midgley, C. (apud, Hunt, 1975), behavior, motivation and mental health are influenced by the matching of the characteristics that individuals bring with them in social and the characteristics of these social environments. More specifically, matching between the needs and motivational orientations of individuals on the one hand and the requirements and characteristics of social media on the other is supposed to influence motivation, success and mental health. Individuals are not likely to do very well or to be very motivated if they are in social environments that do not match their psyche, expectations and cognitive needs.

In the early 1980s, a new pedagogical trend emerged, called School Effective Research (SER). The central idea of this trend is that the school is able to influence the access and success of individuals in education. Research on this paradigm analysed the characteristics of the SER school, which are able to provide a quality education to their students: the school facilities, the particularities of the teaching staff, the relations between the teachers, the relations between them and the pupils, the relations between the teachers and the

school leadership, teachers / teachers, the degree of security / safety offered by the school, the strategies used by teachers in school activities, says G. Neagu (apud Duru-Bellat, 2003)[i].

Studies conducted up to now, from this perspective, have shown that all these characteristics of the school correlate positively with the quality of the education provided by the school and are able to significantly influence the students' educational performance of G Neagu (apud Dumay, 2004).

In the conclusions of the research carried out within the project School Effect on Students Performance, G. Neagu argues that the initiation and development of additional remedial education programs proved to be factors with a major impact on the increase of pupils' educational performance on those from social, cultural disadvantaged backgrounds, and beliefs supported by X. Dumay (Dumay, 2004).

According to the research called *Standards for Middle and High School LiteracyCoaches*, made by International Reading Association in collaboration with National Council of Teachers of English, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Science Teachers Association National Council for the Social Studies, in The USA, one out of four students in secondary school (8th-12th grades) is a functional illiterate; he cannot identify the main idea in a paragraph or cannot understand the information from a text (Joftus, 2002); one out of four teenagers cannot read properly enough (Kamil, 2003).

Mentioned in the same study, ACT, a major college admissions examiner, shows that about 50% of high school graduates in 2005 do not have the necessary reading skills to succeed at college (Arenson, 2005).

According to the most recent data presented by Eurostat, taken over by the *Tribuna Invatamantului* newspaper, for an article - School abandonment, a phenomenon that creates havoc in Romanian education, in Romania, in 2016, 37% of 15-year-olds are functionally illiterate[ii].

Functional illiteracy is a fairly predictive factor of lagging behind in learning, failure and school dropout. According to Hunt and Duru-Bellat's theories presented above, the causes that generated this situation should be identified at the level of school institutions in which teenagers learn.

A short research

In creating this paper, we started from the data obtained from an empirical study, to identify the factors that generate the problems faced by high school students, was based on this paper. The study consisted in administering questionnaires to teachers and students.

A total of 224 teachers and 760 students from 68 high schools from 21 counties responded.

School factors mentioned by teachers that affect learning outcomes:
- 74.1% of the teachers consider the main factor, a large amount of knowledge taught at each discipline, which leads to the overwork of the students;
- the use by teachers of the didactic strategies, dominantly oriented towards the theoretical part, that of learning, to the detriment of practical, applicative character - 63,4%;
- school teaching facilities - 50.4%.

Family factors that teachers consider to be involved in school results:

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[i] http://www.revistacalitateavietii.ro/2011/CV-3-2011/02.pdf
[ii] http://www.tribunainvatamantului.ro/abandonul-scolar-un-fenomen-care-face-ravagii-in-invatamantul-romanesc/

- 83.9% of teachers appreciate that the family's lack of interest in school activity is the main factor affecting the pupils in the school where they work;
- parents who have left abroad, in a percentage of 79.5%
- lack of moral support from the family - 66.5% of the teachers.

Among the internal factors that affect the quality of learning, the most often mentioned are:

- large gaps in previous years' acquisitions, with the highest share, score 226 and 83%;
- attitude of indifference and low motivation for learning, score 213 and 77.2%;
- basic intellectual (basic reading, written, accounted) intellectual skills, 149 score and 71.9%.

Interpreting student responses generated the following data:

Among the aspects that make learning harder, the students mentioned:
- high volume of knowledge taught at each discipline, which leads to over-stressing, is stated in the proportion of 57.5%, with the highest weight, score 555;
- teachers' orientation towards the theoretical part of learning, at the expense of the practical-applicative character, score 509, in proportion of 54.5%;
- inappropriate dosing of the required effort, subsistence or overloading, score 387, percentage 50.9.

Among the family factors that affect the quality of learning, students often mention:
- 47.4%, mentioned - the lack of moral support from the family, but with the lowest share, score 290;
- 47.2%, mentioned - tense family climate, but with the score of 588;
- 45.8 % but with the highest severity, expressed by those of the score of 637 - the parents who left;

Among the internal factors identified by the teachers: large gaps in previous years' acquisitions, precarious elementary skills, low motivation are the result of cumulative factors related to educational policies, school factors, family factors and subjective internal factors, add the factors mentioned by the students: a great deal of knowledge taught at each discipline, teacher's orientation towards the theoretical part of learning, to the detriment of practical applicability and inadequate dosing of the required effort. These are the main issues that have generated the problems faced by high school students: *functional illiteracy, dysfunctions of the process of thinking, indifference and low motivation for learning.* These affect the quality of teaching activity, they determine students' failure and dropout.

It is difficult to establish a cause-effect relationship between these issues, but what is certain is that the educational system, the teaching staff training departments, have the task of finding ways of intervening to improve the situation.

Improving educational aspects is a challenge for the educational community in Romania and for which the specialists in education sciences have the responsibility of research and intervention through the initial and continuous training of teachers.

Possible solutions

"Teachers," says John Hattie, in his book *Visible Learning*, „are the factors with the most influence on learning" (2014),

In the National Education Law no1/2011, in Chapter IV, the curriculum of pre-university education, Article 66, states that "for each discipline and field of study, the curriculum covers 75% of the teaching and evaluation hours, leaving 25% of the time allocated to the discipline / field of study concerned. Depending on the characteristics of the pupils and the school strategy to which they belong, the teacher decides whether the 25% of the time allocated to the discipline / field of study is used for remedial learning, knowledge consolidation, or stimulation of high performing students according to some plans of individual learning programs developed for each student"[iii].

As a response to this need expressed in the National Education Law, teachers should use that time budget to perform differentiated activities with the purpose of development or improvement, remediation.

Remediation programs are aimed at eliminating the gap between what they know and what the students are expected to know. Teachers can provide students with learning and practical experiences according to their skills and needs. Remedial activities can be done through classroom differentiation or small group activity as additional activities. Teachers can also create tailor-made educational programs with intensive remedial support to help students build their core knowledge in different subjects, master learning methods, build confidence, and enhance learning efficacy[iv].

If this intervention does not work, another type of intervention with additional evaluation services and additional psycho-pedagogical assistance may follow.

What is the reality in Romanian schools?

Teachers were not trained to ensure this type of curriculum.

Departments of training teachers, both in initial development and long-life learning, have the responsibility of preparing teachers above the high school students' needs.

It is necessary for teachers **to make a change** in their professional attitude and in the way of organizing their schooling, assuming their role as tutor-teacher!

The tutor-teacher is able to track the impact that teaching has on each student. The tutor-teacher becomes more concerned about how students learn and tracks the extent to which learning becomes visible. Students helped by tutor-teachers could engage in deliberate effort and could take responsibility for their own learning. When pupils fail to learn, they do not need "more" but something else than that which makes visible learning (Hattie, 2014). It is therefore desirable for teachers to be prepared to act so that students who need remedial action feel that they belong to a school community, to be convinced that they can succeed, understand the meaning / purpose for which they are learning, and last but not least, to believe in their ability to succeed with class teachers. To cope with these tasks, initial training and ongoing training is necessary for teachers to avail themselves of the training, the support of a mentor to provide counseling and advice.

Tutor-teacher training

Tutoring is understood as a one-to-one or small group activity in which a person who has knowledge and expertise in a particular area of content or discipline provides guidance, guidance, help, support[v].

The purpose of the tutoring as a pedagogical action is to help students increase their motivation for school activity and become independent in learning.

[iv]http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/edu-system/special/resources/serc/irtp/book-3.html#10
[v]http://www.dictionary.com/browse/tutoring

Tutoring differs from ordinary teaching, in that it involves both the tutor and the person being taught, in a personalized and flexible learning process, a process in which the tutor has the role of orienting and supporting the student.

The tutor accepts the idea that backsliding and school failure can be generated by a multitude of factors (internal or external), school or family factors, and acting in accordance with student needs, depending on the factors identified. The tutor-teacher has the task of identifying, for each pupil at risk, the factors that can lead to school failure, he intervenes, in a personalized way, through remedial activities to diminish their impact on the development and progress of students.

The tutor-teacher's possibilities to change something at the family level is limited, but cooperation with parents is essential as it can increase the degree of safety, security and psychological comfort of students. Learning will be more effective if it takes place on a psychic comfort background, because only a learning experience ending with a state of safety, security and satisfaction tends to repeat itself. Otherwise, if the state of uncertainty, dissatisfaction or lack of security persists, there is an opposite behavior, that of rejecting learning.

The tutor-teacher searches the source of motivation for each student and his / her aspiration level so that he / she finds the proximity of the aspirations in line with thepotential. Thus, the teacher-student relationship provides the latter with methodological support in organizing the individual study and supporting the use of the resources needed for learning.

At the level of competencies, the training activities for the future tutor-teacher would have the following ends:

- diagnosing each student's problems / needs;
- identifying the type of learning the learner needs;
- facilitating learning for the learner: selecting and adapting learning materials, accessibility of content, and choosing action strategies for learning autonomy;
- support for knowing the learner's level of performance in order to adjust the level of aspiration, in order to increase motivation and self-esteem;
- recovering tutors among students.

The role of tutor can also be successfully taken up by a class mate, where we speak of tutors among the students, the educational benefits being for both pupils.(Jean-Pol Martin, 1998). The tutor practices what he has learnt (we know that the highest retention rate is produced by teaching others), and the assisted receives support and is satisfied with the need for affiliation. About student tutoring and the benefits offered, also speaks Hattie in his study and book *Visible Learning* (2014). An advantage for this type of educational partnership is that the vocabulary used by the colleague tutor, but also the interests are closer to the assisted level.

Conclusions

In order for the system to meet the teenagers' needs, it is first and foremost necessary to be concerned with the training of teachers able to respond to these challenges.

It is necessary, mentoring, that could provide advice and counseling to future teachers and debutants.

It is necessary for the future teacher to have the support for the formation of practical skills, so that, in turn, he could be able to provide support to his students.

It is necessary for the teacher to be trained himself by the mentor and to:

- reflect on personal didactic behavior;

- capitalize on their own teaching style in order to avoid behavior that can create problems for students, making creative use of the feedback received from students;
- look for appropriate methods and tools to make a correct diagnosis of pupils and their needs;
- act proactively, in a differentiated and individualized way to help students overcome the "helplessness learned" state;
- help students to set goals in their own learning and apply self-assessment strategies to measure success rate;
- adapt and direct their own teaching style to promote learning based on each student's personal action and effort;
- contributes to establishing common goals and a common work plan between: teachers, executives, pupils and parents;
- participate in group meetings, teachers, to share best practices;
- act on the idea that they can help students by accepting the change of role, from a teacher who teaches to a teacher who provides learning for each pupil (adaptation of Hattie, 2014).

Reconsidering of mentoring, during the continuous training and institutionalization of mentoring, for the debutant teachers are possible solutions for the training of tutor-teachers.

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*** National Education Law no. 1/2011

THE INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH OF ARTS AND CRAFTS ACTIVITIES AS A PREREQUISITE FOR OPTIMIZING SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

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Abstract: *The interdisciplinary approach to school activities, although frequently practiced in primary school, does not have the expected impact. This study started from the premise that the optimization of school performance can be achieved through the interdisciplinary teaching of artistic and plastic activities. The investigation was conducted on second grade pupils from the Secondary School Aron Pumnul Cuciulata (the experimental group) and from the Crihalma Gymnasium School (the control group). The results obtained emphasized the role of drawing in the accessing complex notions in fields such as mathematics, grammar or natural sciences, and led to the confirmation of the hypothesis.*

Keywords: *artistic and plastic activities; school performance; interdisciplinary;*

1. Introduction

Interdisciplinary teaching has emerged in the educational process as a sine qua non condition for adapting to the demands of society to solve the great problems of the contemporary world (UNESCO). Frequently practiced in primary school in subjects such as mathematics (Velicu, 2016) or Romanian language group and literature (Norel, 2010), interdisciplinary teaching does not have the expected impact (ICOS report). In theory, integrated teaching is currently at the core of the primary school curriculum. In practice, the teaching-learning-evaluation process follows the classic pattern. How could this strategy, which requires radical reconsideration both in terms of content organization and in the context of teaching and learning, be improved? (Ciolan, 2008). Given the natural need of the small schoolchild to explore the closest environment (Bocoş & Chiş, 2012), starting from the elements that stir their interest and the almost obsessive tendency to express themselves through the artistic and plastic language (Davido, 2017), drawing seems to have a good potential to be explored in integrated teaching, contributing to the optimization of learning.

The plastic language (Botez & Solovăstru, 2008) consists of elements and means that can easily be matched with mathematical notions (point, line, shape, volume), with physical notions (spectral decomposition of light), with semantics (sense, significance, etc.). The techniques and materials underlying plastic imaging (Cioca, 2007) can also be correlated with information from fields such as natural sciences, geography, physics, chemistry. The complexity of approaching a plastic image creates a feasible context for an integrated type of activity.

2. Purpose of the study

Elaborating an artistic image lies between science and art and the finished product is considered to belong to art. The confluence of many areas in drawing / painting makes it possible to use the plastic image as a structure for crystallizing many notions from a complex set of disciplines. Considering this aspect, this study started from the premise that the

optimization of school performance can be achieved by the interdisciplinary teaching of artistic and plastic activities.

3. Method

3.1. Sample and procedure

The investigation was carried out on a group of pupils in the second grade, coming from The Aron Pumnul Cuciulata Gymnasium School (the experimental group) and Crihalma Gymnasium School (the control group). The experimental group consisted of 16 respondents (9 boys and 7 girls) and the control group, of 13 respondents (8 girls and 5 boys). Respondents from both groups come from disadvantaged backgrounds with poor educational conditions. From the analysis of the school documents it was found that the two groups were homogenous in terms of performance in skills development.

3.2. Material and Methods

The methods used in the investigative approach were:
1. Tests for measuring school performance with different degrees of difficulty, in the pre-test and post-test phases. The tests included: 10 items regarding visual arts and crafts (2 items), communication in Romanian (4 items) and Mathematics and Sciences (4 items); performance descriptors; scoring grid on a scale of 0 to 30 points, 3 points for each item, on three levels: 1 sufficient, 2 good, 3 very good.
2. Product Analysis Grid - drawing; structured on 5 dimensions of 3 indicators each (dimensions: execution, artistic plasticity, dexterity, artistic expressiveness, accuracy); scale of 0-5 points.
3. Didactic experiment (42 interdisciplinary artistic and plastic activities, observing the curriculum of visual arts and crafts). In the design of each activity, both the teaching objectives and the research objectives were considered.
4. Study of documents - to monitor school performance results.
5. Study of students' individual portfolios.

4. Findings and results

The results obtained in the pre-test phase are shown in Table 1. The maximum points for an item are 3 points, on three levels: 1 - sufficient, 2 - good, 3 - very good. The maximum points per item for the experimental group, where N = 16, is 48 points. The maximum points per item for the control group, where N = 13, is 39 points.

From the analysis of the data obtained, we found that the two groups were homogenous, with a slightly higher level for the control group (at a difference of means of 0.4 - the mean for the pre-test for the experimental group was 1.62, while the mean on the pre-test for the control group was 2.02).

Table 1. Synthetic table with the results obtained in pre-test,for the experimental group and the control group

Items	Experimental group			Control group		
	Points / group	Percent	Mean	Points / group	Percent	Mean
Item 1	32	66.67%	2,00	27	69.23%	2,07

Item 2	32	66.67%	2,00	25	64.10%	1,92
Item 3	25	52.08%	1,56	21	53.85%	1,61
Item 4	28	58.33%	1,75	22	56.41%	1,69
Item 5	27	56.25%	1,68	24	61.54%	1,84
Item 6	22	45.83%	1,37	20	51.28%	1,53
Item 7	21	43.75%	1,31	19	48.72%	1,46
Item 8	26	54.17%	1,62	24	61.54%	1,84
Item 9	23	47.92%	1,43	19	48.72%	1,46
Item 10	25	52.08%	1,56	20	51.28%	1,53

The results obtained in the post-test are shown in Table 2. The maximum points for an item are 3 points, on three levels: 1- sufficient, 2 - good, 3- very good. The maximum points per item for the experimental group, where N = 16, is 48 points. The maximum points per item the for the control group, where N = 13, is 39 points.

From the analysis of the obtained data, we can see that now there are differences between the two groups, with a slightly higher level for experimental group this time (at a difference of means of 0.37 points more for the experimental group; the mean on the post-test for the experimental group is 1.84, while for the control group is 1.47).

Table 2. Synthetic table with the results obtained in post-test, for the experimental group and the control group

Items	Experimental group			Control group		
	Points / group	Percent		Points / group	Percent	
Item 1	33	68.75%	2,06	27	69.23%	2,07
Item 2	35	72.92%	2,18	22	56.41%	1,69
Item 3	34	70.83%	2,12	18	46.15%	1,38
Item 4	29	60.42%	1,81	15	38.46%	1,15
Item 5	31	64.58%	1,93	11	28.21%	0,84
Item 6	24	50.00%	1,50	16	41.03%	1,23
Item 7	26	54.17%	1,62	22	56.41%	1,69
Item 8	32	66.67%	2,00	17	43.59%	1,30
Item 9	27	56.25%	1,68	24	61.54%	1,84
Item 10	25	50.00%	1,56	20	51.28%	1,53

The drop-in performance for the control group in the post-test phase demonstrates the difficulty in acquiring new competencies according to the second-grade curriculum. The difference is significant, in a negative sense, between pre-test and post-test for the results of the control group results.

In the experimental group there is a breakthrough between the results of the two tests, a progress which can be attributed to the experimental intervention in this group.
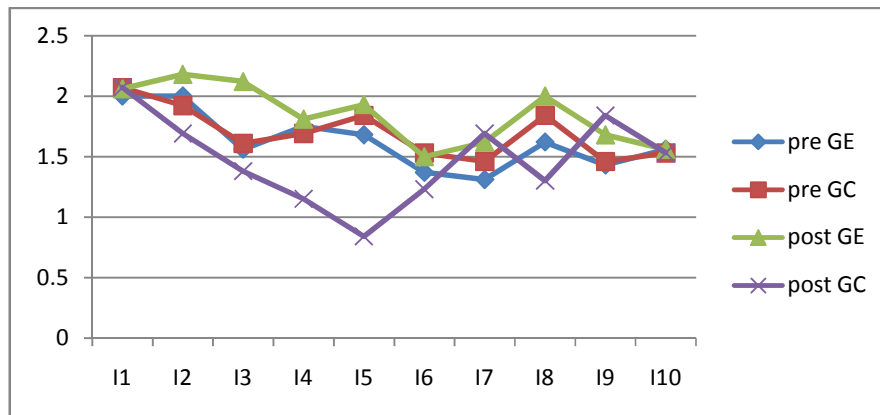
Fig. 1 – Comparison of the pre-test and post-test results, for the experimental group and the control group

5. Conclusionsand Discussion

The rhythm of acquisitions was not a spectacular one. The control group had even regressed, which led us to believe that the difficulty of assimilating new knowledge caused this. Probably the same phenomenon would have happened to the experimental group, given that the two groups were homogenous at the beginning of the investigation (both from the socio-economic and the educational points of view).

After analysing and interpreting the data, even if the differences are not strongly significant, we can say that the optimization of school performances has been achieved as a result of the experimental-ameliorative research. Interdisciplinary teaching of artistic and plastic activities can be an option for optimizing the learning process.

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ADOLESCENTS' PERCEPTION OF VIOLENCE, WELL-BEING, SATISFACTION AT SCHOOL, AND TEACHERS SUPPORT

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Abstract:*Adolescents involved in school violence, as bullies, victims or bystanders, experience problems in multiple areas. They reported lower life satisfaction and psychological well-being and others unfavourable consequences. This study aims to analyse relationships between perception of violence, well-being, satisfaction at school, and teachers support, using a correlational approach. The findings show that the reported well-being (mental and social), school satisfaction, student grades and teachers' support are directly associated. Aggression, victimization, indirect exposure to violence and violence in the community are negatively associated with teachers' support. Satisfaction at school can be explained by gender, student-teacher relationships, student form-teacher relationship and violence in community. Adolescents' social well-being is poor explained by investigated variables. Mental well-being, expressed by negative indicators, may be explained by father education level, age, student-teacher relationships, student form-teacher relationship and violence in community.*

Keywords: *satisfaction at school; students-teacher's relationships; well-being, violence;*

1. Introduction

Adolescence is a period of life characterized by changes in pleasure seeking and reward processing, intensification of emotional experiences and decision-making, organization, and impulse control. Adolescents' thinking about present and the future evolving and these changes affect the perception of risk, as increasing self-harm or socially disruptive behaviours. In addition, adolescence is not only a critical stage, but it is characterized by accumulation of risks (Casey et al., 2010).

1.1. School violence

Being a very public health issue, school violence, named some time bulling, is associated with direct consequences on the school environment, personal and social impacts for students (Flynn, McDonald, D'Alonzo, Vicky Tam & Wiebe, 2018). Past and recent studies found that adolescents who are involved in school violence experiences problems in multiple areas, as family, peer group, school, and neighbourhood or community (Swearer & Espelage, 2004). Victimization, violent behaviour and exposure to violence at school are associated (Flannery, Wester, & Singer, 2004).

Some studies showed an association between being a victim of bullying and lower health, poor quality of life, symptoms of depression and a lower self-esteem (Van Ouytsel, Ponnet, &Walrave,2017) higher odds of physical relationship abuse, low school satisfaction (Rivara & le Menestrel, 2016). Contrary, lower odds of adolescent relationship abuse are associated with increased school connectedness, caring relationships with adults and perceived safety in school (Jain et al., 2018). The victims of school violence reported emotional instability, lower energy and vitality, limitations in physical activities, lower psychological wellbeing (Analitis et al., 2009). They are more anxious compared with not bullied students (Flaspohler, Elfstrom, Vanderzee, Sink, & Birchmeier 2009; Frisén &

Bjarnelind, 2010; Foody, Samara, &O'Higgins 2017). Recent findings indicate that victimization was positively associated with aggression and internalizing symptoms, and negatively with self-esteem and future optimism (Evans, Smokowski, Rose, Mercado-Crespo, & Marshall, 2018).

The violentbehaviour has been investigated in associations with individual characteristics (gender, age, personality traits, and education level), family's socio-economic status, and school location. Many studies reported that boys are more likely to engage in bullying than girls (Steward, 2008; Varjas et al., 2009), while others indicated a little gender difference in relational aggression (Goldstein, Young, A., & Boyd, 2008).A decrease of school violence is reportedwith age (Rivara & le Menestrel, 2016; Flannery et al., 2004), and from the early to the middle stage of adolescence (Troop-Gordon, 2017). Researchers found that the frequency of violence increases during middle school years and decreases during high school years. Middle school students are more likely than elementary school students to experience violence and perceive their school as unsafe (Dinkes, Kemp, Baum, & Snyder, 2009) but there are the opposite results (Varjas, et al., 2009).Others studies showed thatthe majority of schools across country experience different levels of violence (Flynn et al., 2018).In a multilevel study of socio-economic inequality and school violence among youth, findings indicated that youth from families of low socio-economic status reported becoming frequently a bullying victim(Due et al., 2009).

The perpetrators of school violence are irritable, have frequently a negative mood and lower life satisfaction, have difficulties in emotional regulation and impulse control (Foody, Samara, & O'Higgins, 2017; Kerestes, 2006; Flannery et.al., 2004).

Psychological well-being is defined as satisfaction or desirable state of being happy and health and is considered a component of quality of life (Borgonovi & Pal, 2016). Well-being is associated with strength of personality, and an optimistic self-concept and self-esteem (Ben-Arieh et al., 2014). The well-being in school is related to achievement motivation, perseverance, and can predict academic performance (Cocoradă, Fărcaş & Orzea, 2018; Soutter, 2011) and can be predicted by relationships with teachers(Ratnik, & Rüütel, 2017).

Satisfaction with school seems to be higher in the older age group (Ratnik & Rüütel, 2017). Some studies suggest that school satisfaction is directly related to satisfaction with teachers and classmates, but is poorly associated with general life satisfaction (Casas, Balţătescu, Bertran, Gonzalez, & Hatos, 2012). Well-being, aggression behaviours and victimization correlate negatively, while social support and satisfaction at school correlate positively (Alcantara et al, 2017). Past and recent studies show that the higher quality of teacher–student relationships can predict lower levels of violence and is associated with a greater subjective well-being (Suldo, Friedrich, White, Farmer, Minch, & Michalowski, 2009).

School violence affects one in three children in US (Smokowski, & Kopasz, 2005). The prevalence rates for traditional violence in school are higher than cyber bullying, and the both are highly correlated (Rivara & le Menestrel, 2016). Differences between countries in the prevalence of victims of bullying have also been found in studies. It has been argued that these differences may be attributed to cultural and social differences and distinct implementation of policies and programs related to bullying prevention (Craig et al., 2009).

In this context, our research aims to analyse relationships between well-being, social status, school satisfaction, violence, gender, academic outcomes and student-teacher relationships among Romanian adolescents in the urban area. The frame for the analyses is the ecological model that presents the interplay of individual and contextual factors: micro level(school connectedness, and school environment), meso level (teacher involvement), and

exo level - (exposure to violence, neighbourhood environment) (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; La Salle, Meyers,Varjas, & Roach, 2015).

2. Methods

To achieve proposed objectives, we have designed a quantitative study.

2.1. Hypotheses

The research hypotheses are as follows: (H1) reported well-being (mental and social), school satisfaction, student grades, and violence are associated; (H2) well-being, school satisfaction, student grades, and violence vary according to gender; and (H3) well-being and satisfaction at school can be explained by student-related variables, family, teachers relationships and violence in school and community.

2.2. Tools

Six scales are used to validate the research hypotheses.
The Well-Being Scale (Birleson, 1980) contains 18 items, measured on a 4-point Likert-type scale (1 = almost never to 4 = almost always). The factorial analysis identified two factors: (i) Well-being positive indicators (regarding joy, enthusiasm and positive social relations with α =0.93 for 10 items) and (ii) Well-being negative indicators (regarding crying, loneliness, sadness or physiological ailment, with α = .0.89 for seven items). The first factor explains 70% of the variance, the second – 30% (Cocoradă, Fărcaş, & Orzea, 2018).

School Satisfaction Scale (experiencing positive emotions, school belonging) contains eight items and has a good internal consistency (alpha Cronbach coefficient = .88). Examples of items: 'I'm happy to go to school.' and 'I like school.'

Student–Teacher Relationships Scale (admiration for the professionalism of teachers, valorization of students by their teachers, attractiveness of teaching hours) includes 14 items and a higher alpha Cronbach coefficient (.92).

Scale of Headmaster's Involvement in School Life (headmaster involved in school life, available for students) contains seven items and has a good alpha Cronbach coefficient (.87).

Student–Form Teacher Relationships Scale (empathy, involvement in solving students' socio-emotional problems) include seven items and has a good alpha Cronbach coefficient (.86). The last four scales have the items measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = (*totally untrue*) to 5 = (*totally true*)). They have been extracted from the School Climate Questionnaire - SCQ (Cocoradă, Cazan & Orzea, 2018).

School Violence Questionnaire - SVQ (Cocoradă & Cazan, 2013) contains 21 items, measured on a 4-point Likert-type scale (1 = *almost never* to 4 = *almost always*). The items regard the presence of different violent behaviours in the last 4 weeks. SVQ has four scales: Others Aggression (7 items and Cronbach coefficient = .84), Victimisation (5 items and Cronbach coefficient = .73), Indirect Exposure to Violence (6 items and Cronbach coefficient = .82). All these scales regard verbal and physical altercations in school settings. Perception of Verbal Violence in the Community contains 3 items (i.e. 'How polite are the individuals in …') and have an acceptable alpha Cronbach coefficient (.69).

Socio-demographic questions regard age, gender, school level, school grades in the semester prior to the survey. All data has been collected by the author. Tools were administrated in pencil-paper format, during the school day, after the oral informed consent of school manager and students. The participation was anonymous and unpaid.

2.3.Participants

The conventional sample comprise 289 students, girls (56.1%) and boys, mean age 16.8 (SD = 1.22). They are enrolled in secondary education, in urban area.

3. Findings

To test the first hypothesis we computed the Pearson correlation between the investigated variables (table 1).

Table 1. Correlations between the investigated variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Others aggressions	1												
2. Victimization	.698**	1											
3. Indirect exposure to violence	.510**	.512**	1										
4. Violence in school (total score)	.863**	.825**	.847**	1									
5. Verbal violence in the community	.209**	.238**	.209**	.257**	1								
6. Student-teacher relationships	.001	.013	-.104	-.059	-.270**	1							
7. Student form-teacher relationships	-.167**	-.132*	-.263**	-.242**	-.278**	.592**	1						
8. Headmaster involvement	-.069	-.019	-.171**	-.114	-.236**	.831**	.510**	1					
9. Teachers' involvement (total score)	-.066	-.042	-.189**	-.136*	-.329**	.971**	.693**	.914**	1				
10. Grades mean in the research previous semester	-.161**	-.090	-.144*	-.174**	-.133*	.09	.09*	.056	.091*	1			
11. Social well-being	-.069	-.085	-.026	-.064	-.205**	.071	.148**	.073	.102*	.184**	1		
12. Mental well-being (negative indicators)	.050	.043	.072	.064	.151*	.225**	-.065	.174**	.166*	-.088	-.490**	1	

13. Satisfaction at school	-.143*	-.183**	-.255**	-.232**	-.308**	.665**	.501**	.571**	.671**	.08	.116*	.087	1

*Note: * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*
*   ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*
Coefficients in italic fonts are identified between the scales of the same tool.

To verify the second hypothesis, we use the test *t*. Results show gender statistically significant differences only for violence, the scores being higher for boys compared with girls, and satisfaction with school, which girls score higher. For the most part of the significant differences, the effect size is medium, with the exception of satisfaction at school, having a small effect size(Table 2).

Table 2. Gender differences

	Gender	Mean	Std. Dev.	t	p	Cohen's d
Others aggression	M	**9.96**	3.95	2.87	.002	.37
	F	8.72	2.70			
Victimization	M	**6.79**	2.52	3.5	.001	.44
	F	5.85	1.64			
Indirect exposure to violence	M	**10.18**	3.99	2.56	.01	.32
	F	9.00	3.44			
Violence in school (total score)	M	**27.04**	9.02	3.56	<.001	.46
	F	23.45	6.46			
Violence in the community	M	**8.25**	1.96	2.84	.01	.35
	F	7.54	2.14			
Satisfaction at school	M	20.07	6.71	1.967	.05	.18
	F	**21.26**	6.64			

To test the third hypothesis, the three hierarchic regressions are computed for the three dependent variables, using a set of variables organized in four blocks: 1. age, gender; 2. age, gender, mother and father education level; 3. age, gender, mother and father education level, others aggression, victimization, exposure to violence, violence in community. For the 4th model, we added student-teacher relationships, student-form teacher relationship, headmaster involvement (Table 3). Although the regression models for mental well-being and social well-being are statistically significant, the variables used explain only 13% and 6%, respectively, of the total variance.

Table 3. Regression for variable well-being and satisfaction at school

	Dependent variables		
	Mental well-being	Social well-being	Satisfaction at school
Models Summary			
R	.37	.34	.69
R^2	.14	.11	.48
ΔR^2	.13	.06	.47
F and sig. F change	20.07***	4.05**	129.12***

Independent variables for 4th model	β	t	β	t	β	t
Gender	.001	.015	-.033	-.76	.07	1.97*
Age	-.08	-1.93*	.234	5.5**	-.015	-.45
Mother education level	.03	.597	.057	1.13	.014	.36
Father education level	-.09	-1.98*	.026	.53	-.026	-.69
Others aggression	-.01	-.182	-.021	-.35	.013	.3
Victimization	-.02	-.358	-.07	-1.11	-.05	-1.17
Indirect exposure to violence	.02	.39	.081	1.58	-.066	-1.68
Violence in community	-.13	-2.9**	-.150	-3.4**	-.080	-2.34*
Student-teacher relationships	.40	5.2***	-.041	-.526	.509	8.49**
Student form-teacher relationship	-.29	-5.45**	.16	3.01**	.13	3.2**
Headmaster involvement	-.007	-.01	.03	.39	.07	1.28

*Note: * sig. < .05; **; sig. < .01; *** sig. < .001*

4. Discussions and conclusion

This paper presents the relationships between well-being, school satisfaction, violence, gender, and student-teacher relationships among adolescents, using the framework of the ecological model. The more findings are convergent with other studies, another are divergent.

4. 1. Significant correlations

Our study confirms the association between the violent behaviour, victimization and exposure to violence in school and high perception of violence in community as past researches (i.e. Varjas et al., 2009). In other words, being victim or bystander at violence may be intensifying aggressive behaviour(Flannery et al., 2004). The violence perpetrators obtain poor grades and have lower satisfaction at school. Students that report higher victimization have lower satisfaction at school convergent with recent studies (e.g. Foody et al., 2017). In the Romanian sample, they have poor relationships with their form-teacher. Probably these adolescents are weak interpersonal relationships, negative emotions and feel themselves lonely (Lennarz et al., 2016).

The students that report a good teachers' involvement in school life report lower school violence, and higher social well-being and satisfaction at school. In line with other studies, we can highlight that the students' well-being is affected by the school's social support (e.g. Alcantara et al, 2017). The students that reported mental problems (as stomach pain, tendency to cry, nightmares, or the impulse to run away from home) have a higher perception of violence in community, lower social well-being and poor grades. They reported good relationships with their form-teachers. We must highlight the special position of the form-teachers in the Romanian school: they provide emotional support for students, help them overcome some problems, and are an interface between students and other teachers. In some cases, they can contribute to the attenuation of student-parent conflicts (M. E. C. I., 2009).

Scholl satisfaction is lower for the students being violence perpetrators, victims and bystander, but is higher for the students that declare them having higher social well-being. Unexpected, school satisfaction and students' grades is not associated.

4.2. Gender differences

Gender differences concern all dimensions of violence: male students report more aggressions, victimizations, indirect exposure to violence, and perception of violence in community. Female students obtain higher scores only to school satisfaction confirming others studies, but not for well-being. Hypothesis concerning gender-related perception of student-teachers relationships is not supported by the data.

4.3. Explanatory variables for well-being and satisfaction at school

Mental well-being, social well-being and satisfaction at school can be explained in various proportions by the different students' and environment traits. Mental well-being is explained, in our study, by student-teacher relationships, student form-teacher relationship and perception of the violence in community. Social well-being is few explained by age, perception of the violence in community and student form-teacher relationship. Regarding the students social well-being, it is reasonable to assume that there exist other variables which are not been included in the model, such as relationships with colleagues and parents, or personality traits.

Satisfaction at school is explained by student-teacher relationships, followed by the student form-teacher relationship, and gender. Perception of the higher violence in community negatively influences students' satisfaction at school.

The perception of verbal violence in community is present, as predictor, in all forms of well-being, general and at school. Concluding, it can be seen that well-being and satisfaction at school are explained by the individual and contextual factors that belong to the micro-, meso- and macro- levels, according to the ecological model.

Although they bring new information, these results should be viewed with caution: the data collection is done through self-reports and can be biased by social desirability and self-awarenessdeficiencies. The comparisons with others studies may be difficult because they differ with regard to the reference period used in measuring violence (last four, last six weeks, last month, last 12 months etc.). The well-being is by excellence subjective and the participants responses depend on personal standards and perceptions of school and life experiences.

4.4. Conclusion

The findings confirm the connection between subjective well-being, school satisfaction, violence, and student-teacher relationships. These findings are important to design public policies at interventions in violence diminishing and well-being and school satisfaction increasing in adolescence. To increase the school satisfaction for learners should pay attention to the support of significant adults in school life, teachers, and form-teachers and to the headmaster involvement in school life.

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LINGUISTIC AND PEDAGOGICAL NOTIFICATIONS ON DIDACTIC DESIGN

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Abstract: *Changing the framework objectives and benchmarks to competences in the school curriculum shows a new educational philosophy, which recognizes, among others, that one cannot anticipate precisely what kind of knowledge and skills the student should have at the finish of education, the instruction's purposes being redefined according to the tremendous changes of the society. The trainees' needs (disregarding their age) change rapidly also, especially because the school has to educate in order to ensure the graduates' insertion into a society that one doesn't know what directions is developing in. The need of rethinking the pedagogy correlates to the need of building a structured and coherent theoretical frame that is able to ensure the tools for an efficient and stimulative didactic activity. The aim of this paper is to propose some notifications on the traditional didactic design that could help the future teachers to assume the new dimensions of the third millennium education. The notifications, though general, will use examples from new Romanian language and literature curriculum, primary and secondary.*

Keywords: *skills; objectives; design; adaptation; operationalization;*

1. The Skills

The structure of the didactic approach according to the competences that the students develop in school gave rise to some controversy in the public space, in the context in which the Romanian society was accustomed to the definition of the notion as "someone's ability to pronounce on something, on the basis of a deep knowledge of issue in question "(DEX).In this context, the design of the didactic act on such a dimension can be absurd, for it is assumed that the student has little capacity to pronounce on a thing, in the context of a limited knowledge.On the other hand, in the context of new technologies, the democratization of access to information, favoured by electronic resources, the easy access to information sources (one click away) can raise the issue even in the light of the dictionary definition.However, European Union documents define competence differently, closer to the terms of Chomsky's linguistics (competency refers to the ideal speaker, performance is the way in which he puts into practice his competence):"Key competences are a transferable and multifunctional package of knowledge, skills and attitudes that all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, for social inclusion and professional insertion.These must be developed until the end of compulsory education and must act as a foundation for further learning as part of lifelong learning."This quotation is about key competences, but the definition is also applicable in the context of general competencies or specific competencies as a dimension of their materialization in the curriculum.By customizing, the competence is a student's ability, ability to achieve an action or product, to solve a problem, using certain knowledge, skills, and skills acquired through teaching-learning.General competences describe complex capacities that can be formed in relatively long periods of time through the contribution of various educational factors that can even act from the informal environment. Specific competencies are basically staging in the development of general competencies that can be monitored, evaluated and optimized both from a (trans) disciplinary perspective and from a temporal perspective, being associated in the school curricula with shorter time units.

For example, in the Romanian language and literature programs, one of the general competencies is to understand the written text: it is defined as understanding a variety of written messages in known communication contexts (CP - II), Receiving written messages in various communication contexts (III-IV) Writing texts of various types (V-VIII). When detailed within specific competencies, they reveal their nature.

Example for „to understand the written text" – general competence in the Romanian language and literature program (sequence)

CP – II	III-IV	V-VIII
CP: 3.1. **Recognizingcommon words** from the near universe, written in large and small print 3.2. **Identifyingthe meaning of an image** that presents happenings, phenomena, familiar events 3.3. **Identify the meaning of symbols** that transmit immediate messages from the familiar universe	III: 3.1. **Extractingdetailed information** from informative or literary texts 3.2. **Formulatingan emotional response** to the literary text read 3.3. **Making an opinion** on a story/the characters in the story	V: 2.1. **Identifying important information from literary** and non-literary texts, continuous, discontinuous and multimodal 2.2. **Identifying** the theme and the main and secondary ideas from various texts 2.3. **Formulating a personal response and / or a creative response** to texts of different types, with familiar themes

Specific competencies associate a range of skills to achieve a general competence: identification of explicitly transmitted information, making inferences to understand the text, synthesizing, in a personal response, the meaning of the read and understood text. The skills related to the work on the text are duplicated by the suggestion of some elements of the language (primary cycle), attitudes (the preoccupation for reading / understanding of texts, in the primary and the gymnasium cycle), the assessment of their reading performance (gymnasium cycle). The lectoral competence will thus involve for the students to identify the information, make connections, formulate personal responses as a consequence of the text comprehension and preoccupation for reading/ understanding the text. Significantly, from the primary to the gymnasium, lectoral competence evolves from message to text, which means that in the small classes the major concern is the understanding of the content of a text, while in the middle school the understanding is tied by observing the structure of the text. From the study of the Romanian language and literature curriculum, one can observe that the first competence grows gradually from the recognition of usual words, in the first column, to the discovery of detailed information, in the second, respectively to the identifying of important information in a text (3.1); 3.2 and 3.3. in the first column correspond to 3.4. in the second and to 2.1 or 2.2. in the third. The examples may continue, but as the table shows, the competences are connected one to each other, in order to enhance students' reading – comprehending capabilities.

2. Objectives - mediator between competences and learning activities

Developing skills involves organizing learning activities that are likely to generate progress in the student's development. Their definition is neither easy nor insignificant in the architecture of the educational approach, the competence being a general aspect of it, the learning activity being the concretisation of the competence that takes places during the

lesson. In this context, defining objectives has the role of facilitating the building of learning activities, focusing on precise and coherent work tasks. For example, with the lecturing competence highlighted above, one of the specific competencies is *Extracting detailed information from informative or literary texts* (III-IV) or *Identifying important information from literary and non-literary, continuous, discontinuous and multimodal texts* (V-VIII).Beyond the observation that one can notice the graduality of the competence from the primary school to the gymnasium, by diversifying the typology of texts, the operationalization of the competence involves the initiation of text reading activities, explanation of unknown words, re-reading (in chain, selective etc), division into paragraphs, and the formulation of the main ideas, the idea-based replication - in other words, the use of the explanatory reading method. The learning activities are anticipated by the objectives the teacher proposes: to read the text correctly and expressively, to explain the unknown words, to divide the text into paragraphs, to formulate the main ideas, to replicate the text based on the idea plan. Objectives configure a series of learning activities where students read the text (individual, frontal), explain the unknown words (individual, frontal), divide the text into paragraphs and formulate the main ideas (individually, by group), rewrite the text individually. The didactic approach becomes so coherent, the idea that animates it is that of penetration into the text's intimacy, depending on the level of education and class.

3. Operational objectives or learning objectives

Apparently, a simple distinction in terms, the difference between operational objectives and learning objectives hides an attitude related to the act of teaching-learning-evaluation. Operational objectives, by their nature, focus more on the teacher's work, while learning objectives are configured as a student-centred approach. Even though both syntagms can be explained on the basis of a common conceptual foundation - the objectives being defined as statements or statements describing the results of time-based didactic approaches - each of them contains a substrate specificity that should prompt reflection. One of the stages of pedagogical design materializes into objectives by answering the question, "What will I do?". Although the interrogation seems to be built to focus only on the teacher's activity in the teaching process, its purpose reflects its complexity in the next stages of design, designed to complement and tune the vision of the instructive-educational actions to be carried out: will I do? "," How will I do? "and" How will I know if I have achieved what I have proposed? ". The formulation of the objectives as an answer to the first question cannot and should not only focus on aspects that the teacher can use / control simply because the other questions force him to anticipate resources, reactions, behavioural changes and feed-back. More specifically, the analysis of the available educational resources, followed by the elaboration of the teaching-learning and evaluation strategies, extracts the teacher from his own individuality and puts him in relation with the class of students whose specific needs he has to adapt to. Under these circumstances, operational objectives, in a learner-centred approach, can only include learning directions that are demonstrable through observable and measurable behaviours. So, operationality must derive from what pupils will be able to achieve as a product of learning activity, and not from general or ambiguous outcomes, described as actions with limited personalization capabilities.

4. Announcement of objectives?

In pedagogical terms, objectives are the initial elements of the approach, while competencies designate the results. In this context, announcing operational objectives at the time becomes superfluous, meaningless for the pupils. Instead, announcing the learning

activities or content units that are targeted at didactic work is designed to create a waiting horizon for students who can better control their own activity in this way. For example, in a Romanian language and literature lesson, to state objectives such as: to define the adjective, to classify the adjective, to identify the adjective, to enumerate the grammatical categories of the adjective, to analyse syntactically-morphologically different adjectives, to explain the stylistic role of the adjectives, all these can be quite abstract and boring in relation to the announcement of the actual activities in accessible terms. In a lesson of Romanian language and literature, the announcement of learning activities or content units in relation to goals is even more significant: it allows students to pursue their work, focus their interests on some of them, even draw the attention of the teacher if it happens that, in the context of digressions that literary time favours, to lose sight of one of the proposed activities.

5. Managing or coordinating / facilitating learning

Traditional education was conducive and lacking of flexibility, the educational ideal being detached from the Enlightenment, where the encyclopedicism was the main feature. Students received a sum of knowledge they reproduced, often without applying, analysing, evaluating, arguing etc. The culture (and the culture of a specific scientific domain) was favoured at the expense of innovation, creativity, dimensions that were difficult to quantify and manage. However, in the context of pupil-centred teaching, in the curriculum vision of learning, through the acquisition of skills, the control of learning is no longer relevant. From a star, memorization has become ashes, deductive learning, previously privileged, gradually leaves room for discovery, experience and experimentation. That is why the teacher can no longer be the conductor of the orchestra, but his role becomes more interesting and challenging at the same time, only now fulfilling his vocation as a modelling destiny person. Thus, if the traditional didactic project proposes the direction/control of learning as a vision of the didactic act, the current context calls for another approach - coordination or learning facilitation. From the master, the teacher becomes a counsellor, supporter, the coordinating act is putting him in the position of training manager, the facilitator approach - in the one of a counsellor. Moreover, in the present society, the teacher can no longer be associated with the unique holder of information and scientific truth, as long as the sources of information multiply and propagate continuously among the pupils. As a result of technological evolution, they develop a certain type of pragmatism early: they are concerned rather with a fragmentary and spontaneous absorption of the necessary reality than with the profound, causal, scientific reality analysis. In this context, the good teacher is not the one who rejects, by didactic means, the predispositions of the "pupils of today" but the one who adapts, empathizes and uses the evolutionary elements for didactic purposes. As a result of technology, the development of the visual-practical learning style should not be perceived as an impediment to the epistemic concepts, but as an opportunity to include them in the practical experience of the students. Therefore, the role of facilitator of learning that the current teacher must assume lies in the ability of content flexibility so that pupils feel valued by infusing their personal experience into the learning process. It has been proved in practice that communication-based, exploratory and discovery-based teaching strategies can provide the activities of the school with the dynamism that "postmodern" students need. Moreover, facilitating learning by methods involving students in the educational act is able to stimulate an optimal self-esteem and meet the personal needs of knowledge and training. All these elements do not totally elude the guiding direction of personal evolution during childhood and adolescence - formal education is essentially an organized and guided action according to pedagogical objectives - but it must be flexible, personalized, integrated into the learning monitoring activity. In terms of designing the lesson, the "learning direction" stage no longer justifies its existence as long

as learning takes place from the beginning of unit, by integrating the experience already acquired by students into new content and by capitalizing, in all stages, of the information gathered from adjacent / complementary sources.

Changing the terms therefore involves a change of attitude and perspective: for example, the study of a fairy tale was supposed to involve students in learning the structure of fairy tales, text typology, motifs and meanings, epistemas being associated with the discovery of a truth beyond the reader. The new vision primarily proposes contact with the text, the discovery of meanings, and the building of meaning. Therefore, the pupil will be in a position to observe recurrences, specific features, structures, narrative voices etc., the purpose being not to know content (except to the situation in that they are necessary for the understanding of fairy tales), the use of these recurrences, voices, structures for understanding the world of text, and building meaning. In other words, the content that previously occupied the central place in training is now becoming a tool for lectoral competence development. With their help, the student builds the world of the text, as he discovers in an investigative approach that allows experimentation, association with his life experience and not only allows access to the text and its universe, but also to the world the text came from.

6. Retention and transfer, retention, or transfer?

Retaining and transfer are two different components of the didactic approach: the first aims the enhancing the knowledge in the context of a learning-based education, the second involves the application of the new content within new contexts during the lesson. From the point of view of competence training, the second component is fundamental. This does not imply that we can build skills without having enough content, but it also does not allow the instructional - educational approach to be limited to them, the sequence involving the transfer of knowledge to new contexts, just as school education is transferred in a social context.

Conclusions: traditional didactic project – openings

The traditional didactic design is detailed and cand be thought as being rigid. Instead, its sequential development draws it as a suitable tool in training young teachers, involving the class management as well as the management of the contents and that of the methodds. As the organizational moment reminds to the young teacher that the preparing for the lesson means handdling the context of the learning, the other stages admit inovations and experiments, all of them in order to adapt the didactic act to the specific students and their needs.

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ARE GENDER STEREOTYPES STILL RECOGNIZED IN YOUNG CHILDREN OF NEW GENERATION?

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Abstract: *Everybody is talking about how young generation is more open, more aware of the diversity, more willing to try, to change, to cross barrier. They are described as iGen (Twenge, 2017) or Linkster Generation (Johnson & Johnson, 2012) and the specialist anticipate important differences in how this generation experience life. In the present research we were interested to check if well recognized gender stereotypes are still identifiable in children or if they are blurred in the light of technology. The results showed that the stereotypes are found both in 5-6 years old children and in 10-11 years old, with only minor differences. Also, the gender of the respondents is not a significant criterion in differentiated the frequencies of the stereotypes. Implication of the findings are also discussed as more in-depth research on the field are necessary.*

Keywords: *gender stereotypes; pre-school children; male and female;*

1. Introduction

There is a large agreement that everything around us and even in us is changing and the change is much faster than our ability to understand its consequences and to anticipate it course. The last two decades brought in our attention social, economic and political changes that transformed our world and the generations to come. The children born in mid '90s and later were labelled as iGen (Twenge, 2017), or Linkster generation (Johnson, & Johnson, 2012) and describe as spending all their teens age in contact with smartphones, social media and laptops. Their relationships are formed differently, they seem to be predisposed to anxiety and depression, but in the same time, are more open to tolerance, condemn inequality, have original planes for their career and reject social taboos.

In this light we were interested to check if well recognized gender stereotypes are still identifiable in children or if they are blurred in the light of technology.

1.1. Stereotypes in children

Children are exposed to behaviour models since they are born and their parents are the main agent in promoting learning, especially social behaviour. Children learn by imitation, and they observe their parents and significant others in order to form ways of communication and meaning of their day to day experiences.

One of the most important development tasks for preschool children is to make a positive commitment with colleagues while managing emotions in the interaction with and responding to the social expectations of people other than their parents. Disputes must be resolved so that the game can continue, enjoying each other and supporting interactions (Denham, 2007).

In middle childhood, groups are formed between children who live close to each other or go to the same school (pre-school). We can add that most of these groups are of the same ethnic origin and similar socio-economic status. Children's age is close, and children's sex is usually the same (Pellegrini, Kato, Blatchford & Baines, 2002).

A positive aspect of the relationship with children of the same age is that they open up new perspectives and each child can make judgment independently. In Bandura's conception, children get a clearer sense of personal effectiveness, and they can assess their abilities. This relationship helps children to live in society, but also provides emotional safety (Papalia, Olds & Feldman, 2010). Another positive aspect is that same-sex groups help children "incorporate gender roles into their own self-image" and teach them gender-appropriate behaviours (Papalia, Olds & Feldman, 2010, p. 335). On the other hand, the negative aspects are the prejudices, which are unfavourable attitudes towards others, especially those with different ethnicity or race. Children tend to be subjective to those similar with them and consequently to held a more favourable attitude (Powlishta, Serbin, Doyle & White, 1994 in Papalia, Olds & Feldman, 2010). Social relationships are closely related with self-concept, which develop with age. Between the ages of 6 and 12, children describe themselves using psychological characteristics as being friendly, kind or popular. Children see themselves in an extended social space that they define by their relationship with friends and compared the others behaviour to their own person (Lassú & Serfőző, 2015).

All these interactions shape the way children perceive what is considered "normal" behaviour, or "acceptable" so they will act or form opinion that fit with the expectation of others. Soon, they will be part of a social network and vectors of beliefs, values, and so-called social norms.

Stereotypes are "A set of shared beliefs about personal attributes, usually personality traits, but often also behaviours, of a group of people." (Leyens, Yzerbyt, & Schadron, 1994, p. 11). Gender stereotypes, as well as other social stereotypes, reflect the perceptions of persons about what people do in their daily lives depending on their sex (Eagly & Steffen, 1984). Gender stereotypes refer to the psychological features and behaviours that are thought to occur with a differentiated frequency in the two gender groups (for example, men are more "aggressive," women are more "emotional"). Stereotypes are often used as a support for traditional sexual roles (e.g. women are nurses, men are construction workers) and can serve as socialization models for children (Ember & Ember, 2003).

Young children look for gender indicators - who should or should not do a certain activity, who can play with whom and why girls and boys are different. From a wide range of gender indicators gathered from their social world, children quickly form an impressive constellation of gender cognitions, including gender identities and gender stereotypes (Martin & Ruble, 2004).

Although biological gender differentiation is an innate process, patterns of behaviour, including the visible actions, interests, values and preferences associated with such biologic differentiation, seem to be largely governed by social learning conditions. And behaviours, interests and values are no stranger to stereotypes. And stereotypes are considered cognitive structures stored in memory that affect perception and group-level behaviour (Cernat 2005).

Adult stereotypes about their children can influence the development of gender in many ways. Adults can reward and punish children in a differentiated way based on their stereotypes (Mischel, 1966 apud Martin, 1995). In addition, stereotypes provide a standard against which children's behaviours are judged (Kohlberg, 1966 apud Martin, 1995). Children's self-concepts can also be influenced by adult stereotypes (Martin & Halverson, 1981). For example, a child starts to consider his/herself as feminine, because other people are looking at him/her this way.

Studies on gender roles in children have suggested that boys traditionally have an active stance and girls are passive (Adler, Kless & Adler, 1992). The role of boys includes tough play, competition with colleagues and a certain firmness designed to demonstrate independence and masculinity. Traditionally, girls' behavior includes focusing on relationship

and intimacy, emotional care and survival, as well as a preoccupation with the development of femininity.

Miller and Budd (1999) studied the stereotypical beliefs of UK children aged 8, 12 and 16 over certain professions and attempted to discover if children's stereotypes are reflected in their assessments of engaging in these occupations. The subjects answered questions about their views on who (men, women or both) had to do certain occupations and how much they would like each occupation to be their job. The results revealed that the youngest age group had stereotyped views on who should work in different domains, and in relation to their own preference. Manea (2013) evaluated pre-school children from Romania and France, asking them to assign 5 different situations to one of the two characters (a boy or a girl) according to the psychological and moral characteristics they consider specific for each of the two genres. The results showed that girls tend to be considered kind, friendly and diligent, while boys are usually considered intelligent and courageous.

2. Methodology

2.1. Objectives and hypothesis

The purpose of the research is to investigate the differences between age and gender of the respondents regarding gender stereotypes.

The research objectives are as follows:
1. The research aims to verify whether there can be noted gender stereotypes in children.
2. If they exist, we are interested in checking whether the stereotypes differ according to the age of the children.
3. The third objective is centred on identifying differences in gender stereotypes depending on the respondent's gender.

Hypothesis stipulate that:
1. There are differences in choices made by children for different activities formulated to illustrate gender stereotypes.
2. The younger a child, the more gender stereotypes.
3. There are differences in gender stereotypes depending on the respondent's gender.

2.2. Subjects

In the present research there were involved 53 subjects, of which 25 are children from pre-school, ages 5 to 6, and 28 pupils of the 4th grade, aged between 10 and 11, age average being 8.45 years old. Of the subjects, 22 were boys and 31 were girls, of which in the pre-school class: 11 boys and 14 girls, and 4th class subjects: 11 boys and 17 girls.

2.3. Instruments and procedure

The materials used were two dolls (a girl and a boy as in figure 1), a score sheet and a writing tool.

Fig.1.: Dolls used in questioning children about activities, characteristics and profession

Fourteen questions have been used to illustrate gender stereotypes, ten for day-to-day activities or characteristics, and four regarding professions for which there is unequal perceptions about the gender of those who choose those professions in society.
1. Which doll do you think cooks?
2. Which doll is stronger?
3. Which doll does clean the house?
4. Which doll goes to work?
5. Who dolls likes to go shopping?
6. Which doll does sport?
7. Which doll washes the laundry?
8. Which doll earns more money?
9. Which doll takes care of the children?
10. Which doll drives the car?
11. Which doll can be an engineer?
12. Which doll can be a doctor?
13. Which doll can be a cop?
14. Which doll can be an educator?
The data were collected during a couple of weeks, while the examiner went in the educational institutions to interact face to face with each participant in the research. Parents were asked to give their permission for their children, and the short interview took place in a quiet corner of the class. The children were invited to take a sit and received instruction. They had to choose one of the two dolls (girl or boy), or even both dolls, to show whom they consider as a fitting answer. Most of them did not report to the genre of doll in general, but they said: "In our family mother/ dad is doing this. Generally, 4th grade children responded very quickly to the questions by picking up the doll they chose but wanted to study the dolls before they started answering the questions and the kindergarten also benefited from additional time to play a little extra time with the dolls.

3. Results

3.1. Testing the occurrence of gender stereotypes in children

The frequency of responses wasanalysed using Chi-square test between answer that pointed to male/ female or both as an appropriate answer.
The "Both" option was more selected for the questions: Who does more sports? Who goes to work? Who earns more money? Who is taking care of children? and Who drives the car? showing the absence of stereotypes for these activities. A similar situation we encounter

for the police profession, where 24 children out of 53 responded "both" and for doctor (31 chose "both").

The share of answers for the other questions revealed differences. In the following five questions more than half of the answers was "girl": Who cooks? (46) Who cleans the house? (44), Who likes going shopping? (44) Who is washing the laundry? (47), and in the educator profession we have 35 answers out of 53. Only in two of the questions was found a higher rate of response for the male gender. These questions are: Who is stronger? (52 answer boy) and Who can be an engineer? (38 answer the boy). These differences indicate the presence of gender stereotypes.

3.2. Comparing gender stereotypes by age of the respondents

The results show that there are few differences between the two age groups, younger children seeing the female doll as the one who cleans the house and the male the one who go to work (some example with the results can be seen in table 1). They also see the medical profession as more feminine. Older children choose the woman as the one who wash the laundry, and see the educator profession as feminine. These choices may also be due to a longer life experience of four graders (they had more time to get in touch with female educators, doctors of both sexes, and find out that laundry is not a female affair).

Tabel 1 Gender stereotypes compared by the age of the respondent

5 – 6 years		10 – 11 years	
Who can be a doctor?			
	Frequences		Frequences
Male	1	Male	4
Female	12	Female	5
Both	12	Both	19
Pearson Chi – Square = .047			
Who goes to work?			
	Frequences		Frequences
Male	5	Male	1
Female	2	Female	
Both	18	Both	27
Pearson Chi – Square = .04			

3.2. Comparing gender stereotypes by sex of the respondents

A selection of the results is presented in table 2.

Girls participants were choosing the "girl" option in the following questions: Who cooks? (30) Who cleans? (26) Who goes shopping? (31) and Who can be an educator? (24). The "boy" answer appeared in the following questions: Who is stronger? (30) Who can be an engineer? (23) and the choice of "both" is predominant when asked: Who goes to work? (27). The results suggest that girls have stronger biased perspectives and stereotypes about who should do the job or work in a particular field.

On the contrary, from the male perspective, choosing the "boy" option appears in the questions: Who is stronger? (22) and Who can be an engineer? (15). Choosing the "girl" option appears in the questions: Who is washing the laundry? (18) Who goes shopping? (16) Who cleans? (18) and Who cooks? (16).

114

Comparing the responses of boys and girls, we can see that boys have fewer gender stereotypes, answering questions more balanced, while girls tend to choose more unbalanced.

Table 2. Gender stereotypes compared by the sex of the respondent

Boy		**Girl**	
Who is cooking?			
	Frequencies		Frequencies
Male	2	Male	
Female	16	Female	30
Both	4	Both	1
	Pearson Chi – Square = .035		
Who cleans the house?			
Frequencies			Frequencies
Male	2	Male	
Female	18	Female	26
Both	2	Both	5
	Pearson Chi – Square = .191		
Who likes to go shopping?			
Frequencies			Frequencies
Male	1	Male	
Female	16	Female	31
Both	5	Both	
	Pearson Chi – Square = .009		
Who goes to work?			
Frequencies			Frequencies
Male	4	Male	2
Female		Female	2
Both	18	Both	27
	Pearson Chi – Square = .220		

4. Discussions

Results revealed that half of the questions reflected the presence of gender stereotypes, while the other half did not. The activities such as home chores (cooking, washing, cleaning, going to shopping) received significant more selection as being a female activity, while being strong, becoming and engineer, are seen as more appropriate for males. The findings are in line with those of Manea (2013), and Barak, Feldman and Noy (1991).

The differences between age and the gender of the respondent, were only a few, meaning that between kindergarten and the end of primary school there are little change regarding stereotypes.

Our results showed that those in the pre-school level have more stereotypes than those in the 4th grade, but the differences appear for fewer situations than we anticipated. The results of this hypothesis correlate with the results of Miller and Budd (1999), who found that the younger the children, the more inclined are to use stereotypes when confronted with such choices.

The third hypothesis: There are differences in gender stereotypes depending on the sex of respondent, it is partially confirmed. Boys have fewer stereotypes than girls, their answers being distributed equally in almost all questions, while girls' choices are concentrated on just one answer.

The group of the present research was relatively small, and larger number would be more salient.

Other limitation that can be noticed is the unbalanced number of participants in term of gender and level of education. The place of testing should be in a separate room, where children can be more attentive about the question and only the researcher and the child are present. Also to give children time to think, because in most cases time was limited to 10 minutes, but also to be careful to not introduce any suggestions.

No data was gathered on the type of family to which they belonged, the level of parental education, which does not allow us to relate the results to family variables that can explain the choices of the children.

One direction that can add to understanding the development of stereotypes in children can be a repeated measure assessment, after the students enter every study cycle, until eighteen of age. Another track of research could relate to parents' opinion on gender stereotyping and their influence on children, since children have been taught by gender stereotypes from an early age (Martin & Halverson, 1981; Martin, 1995).

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IS TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING THE ONE THAT PROVIDES TRANSFORMATIVE CAPABILITIES?

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Abstract: *The article intents to present, to some extent, if the transformative learning, which has a powerful influence on promoting critical reflection on assumptions and interpretations to engage not just the intellect but affect, identity, worldview, beliefs and values (Mezirow, 2000; Sterling 2011), has certain contributions to students' transformative capabilities. Transformative capability, related to transformative learning, implies the capacity to learn, innovate and bring about appropriate change and it is connected with the „learning outcomes", seeded by the Universities in order to be similar with the „competences" required by the labour market.*

Keywords: *transformative learning; transformative capabilities;*

1. Introduction

One of the six „new pedagogical ideas" found after a study published by Ryan and Tilbury (2013) for the future of an increasingly „flexible" Higher Education which offer new pathways for graduate attributes or capabilities is transformative capabilities.

Amartya Sen identifies basic capabilities as a subset of all capabilities. Basic capabilities, in his approach, are „a relatively small number" of centrally important beings and doings that are crucial to well-being (Sen 1992, p. 44). The capabilities to be well-nourished and well-sheltered, to escape avoidable morbidity and premature mortality, to be educated and in good health, and to be able to participate in social interactions without shame, are all examples of basic capabilities. The capability to be educated is included among these fundamental capabilities.

The capability approach requires focusing on the contribution that the capability to be educated makes to the formation and expansion of human capabilities, and hence to the contribution it makes to people's opportunities for leading flourishing lives.

Transformative capability implies the capacity to learn, innovate and bring about appropriate change in social or economic environment. This notion of capabilities connects with the concept of flexibility in its focus on type of adaptive abilities required to apply knowledge and skills, plus the refinement and development of those abilities based on experience and learning from unintended consequences. The transformative capabilities have an educational focus beyond an emphasis on knowledge and understanding, taking the concept of capabilities as an amount of competences, resources and oportunities to apply it, in both familiar and unfamiliar circumstances. Transformative capability involves creating an educational focus, beyond an emphasis solely on knowledge and understanding, towards competence, using methodologies that engage the „whole-person" and transformative approaches to learning.

Several streams of thinking and practice contribute to this idea, with both longstanding and recent origins:

- traditions of experimentation and thought in progressive and alternative education, for example in Dewey, Montessori and Steiner, focused on „whole-person", experiential and situated learning;

- thinking and practice in the area of „transformative learning" and higher order capabilities, building on the work of Bateson (1972) and Mezirow (2000);
- aspects of the idea of „competence" relating to the ability to contextualise and adapt knowledge and skills to situations, foregrounded in discourses such as the „capability movement" in education (eg in the UK through the Higher Education for Capability Movement in 1988);
- capability frameworks for human wellbeing that serve as tools to promote equitable forms of development but have uses in rethinking education (Nussbaum 2011; Walker & Unterhalter 2007).

Education practice in this area also draws upon holistic models of human capability (including not just cognitive abilities but affective and spiritual dimensions) to equip learners with higher order capabilities to respond effectively to complexity, uncertainty and change.

Transformative capability is related to transformative learning which has a powerful influence on promoting critical reflection on assumptions and interpretations to engage not just the intellect but affect, identity, worldview, beliefs and values (Mezirow, 2000; Sterling 2011). So, transformative learning approaches in education prioritise the use of critical reflection, challenge existing assumptions and lead to the creation of alternative meaning schemes. It embraces „lifelong learning" – that takes place throughout the lifecycle –, and, in recent thinking „life-wide learning" – that takes place across different spaces and settings – which in HE includes both on and off campus –, in benefit of the learners (Jackson 2011).

It is desirable that by transformative learning to reach out the „learning outcomes", seeded by the Universities in order to be similar with the „competences" requiered by the labor market and more, to gather capabilities.

Transformative learning is a form of „third order learning", implying a paradigm change triggered by the experience of liminality (an in-between state of ambiguity or disorientation, Land et al. 2014) with a disruptive or restorative element (Lange 2004). This leads to "the experience of seeing our worldview rather than seeing with our worldview so that we can be more open to and draw upon other views and possibilities" (Sterling 2011, p. 23). By contrast, „first order learning" refers to reproduction of knowledge and "doing things better" and „second order learning" to critical reflection and "doing better things", mirroring Sterling's (2011) differentiation between conformative, reformative, and transformative levels of learning.

Some of the critical discourse around transformative learning argues that the potential for embedding "transformative capabilities" is very limited at Higher Education level, citing the obstacles presented by conventional academic structures and systems (Sterling 2011). In many ways, the issues have resonance with those around inter-disciplinary learning, in that the promotion of innovative approaches in this area is often limited by the constraints of the learning environment. The pedagogical need is therefore for adaptable tools that articulate these kinds of transformative capabilities and which can be put to work in various ways both within and outside the conventions of HE. Perhaps most importantly, the transformative capabilities theme puts the spotlight on the capabilities of the educator (as the "example") as critical to the effective development of these capabilities in the learner.

From this perspective there can be no transformative learning without transformative teaching, which should include among other elements an emphasis on personal experience; inter- and trans-disciplinarity; service-learning arrangements; self-organized engagement with knowledge, values and emotions; and living labs (Balsiger 2015). An educator's role shift is also necessary. Educators take on the role of coaches, guides, facilitating learning and co-learning among students but also between students and educators. In this paradigm, the educators need for teaching a holistic approach, envisioning change, and achieving transformation.

To generate a more applied and holistic framework of those requirements for the educators we can take into consideration the four principles of the „International Commission on Education for the 21st Century" Report to UNESCO (Delors et al 1996) „Learning: The Treasure Within" such as:

- Learning to know – refers to understanding the challenges facing society both locally and globally and the potential role of educators and learners (*The educator understands...*)
- Learning to do – refers to developing practical skills and action competence in relation to education for sustainable development (*The educator is able to...*)
- Learning to live together – contributes to the development of partnerships and an appreciation of interdependence, pluralism, mutual understanding and peace (*The educator works with others in ways that...*)
- Learning to be – addresses the development of one's personal attributes and ability to act with greater autonomy, judgement and personal responsibility in relation to sustainable development (*The educator is someone who...*)

These four principles are then elaborated, by the good educators, into three key elements or characteristics, viewed as critical to effective learning experiences, for providing transformative learning to learners and ensuring forming their transformative capabilities:

- ➢ holistic approach – which seeks integrative thinking and practice;
- ➢ envisioning change – which explores alternative futures, learns from the past and inspires engagement in the present;
- ➢ achieving transformation – which serves to change the way people learn and the systems that support learning.

In our study, we noticed that our students, if we use modalities to engage the whole-person of them in the way of transformative learning, gain transformative capabilities that reveal the educational facet of their development beyond an emphasis solely on knowledge and understanding. They have emotions that can be managed and focused into applications of their knowledge in different kind of learning situations with the reason of building transformative capabilities.

2. Objective

The main objective of this study is to pursue if the transformative learning has certain contributions to students' transformative capabilities.

3. Methodology

In our study, the research system's methods used for data collection were the following: observation, self-observation (my mirror), method of analysing students' activity products and students' portfolios analysis. For data collection and measurement we used, as tools: exams results, observation sheets, questionnaires and training portfolios.

4. Results and discussion

The sample of subjects taken into consideration for our study were the students from bachelor level: 128 from Pedagogy of Primary and Preschool Education (PPPE) study program, first year, and 40 from Special Psychopedagogy/Special Education(SP/SE) study program, first year; the students from master level: 27 from Policies and Strategies of Competences Training for Teaching Career (PSCTTC), first year and 33 from the second year,

41 from Interactive Pedagogy (IP), and the students from the postgraduate Psycho-Pedagogic Module (PPPM), 51 from the first level and 37 from the second level, totally 357 students.

They were guided and observed, during the last academic year, in subjects such as: the theory and methodology of curriculum, intercultural education, intercultural learning, e-learning in teacher training, information and communication technology and computer assisted instruction.

If we look at the effort made by the students during the semester (assiduity, contributions to their progress, quality of the training portfolio) and at the results of the exam (the written one) to "the theory and methodology of curriculum", for PPPE and SP students of the first year, it was found that the failure rate was 2.8%, the median 37.4%, good results 36% and very good 23.8%.

Table 1. The results at Theory and Methodology of Curriculum

mark	number	percentage
4	4	2.8
5	25	17.7
6	28	19.7
7	26	18.3
8	25	17.7
9	21	14.7
10	13	9.1
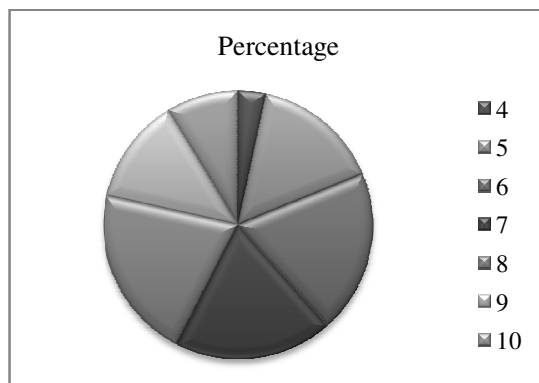
Chart 1. The percentage of marks of the students at Theory and Methodology of Curriculum

The percentage of good and very good results – 59.8% - is relevant enough for the efforts of educators and students to engage their intellect, affect and values for creating an alternative meaning schemes of curriculum concepts, that means differentiation between conformative, reformative and transformative level of learning. We think that the students who failed (specially) and with mediocre results have had a conformative attitude towards learning, trying to reproduce the notions and not to reflect on them, understand, apply, analyse, synthetize and evaluate them. That proves that for the student in the first academic year, the fingerprint of our secondary school system is their inside, being more transmissive, theoretical than applicative and transformative.

The items of the worksheet for the final evaluation (exam) were designed to reveal the capacity of students to learn, to innovate, to apply knowledge for gathering abilities based on experience and learning from intended situations, with the further intention to improve these abilities for applying them in unintended situations.

For this reason, during the semester, we tried to use interactive learning methods that induce transformative learning which put students in the position of communicating with themselves (through the self-observation files in what we call "my mirror") and with others (by observation sheets), reflecting, finding solutions to our questions and applying them. On the other hand, at our meetings (the courses as well the seminars) we gave them work tasks that revaluate their capacity of remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating (Bloom's revised taxonomy) notions related with curriculum. All these facts we gathered by questionnaires.

The same characteristics have had the requests for the training portfolios with the intention of growing up our students from reproductivity to creativity, by using critical reflection on assumptions and interpretation. Through the observations sheets we gathered data concerning the affect, beliefs, worldview and identity of the students.

All these are elements of transformative capabilities, knowing that transformative capability involves creating an educational focus, beyond an emphasis solely on knowledge and understanding, towards competence, using methodologies that engage the „whole-person" and transformative approaches to learning.

Considering that for the students in the first year of academic study it is a beginning of taking part in their process of training by transformative learning into a fundamental topic such as "theory and methodology of curriculum", the same sample of students were more flexibles, opened and innovative for bringing appropriate change in socio-economic environment following "the intercultural education" subject.

Table 2. The results at Intercultural education

mark	number	percentage
4	5	3.3
5	23	15.5
6	29	19.7
7	28	19.0
8	31	21.0
9	19	12.8
10	13	8.7
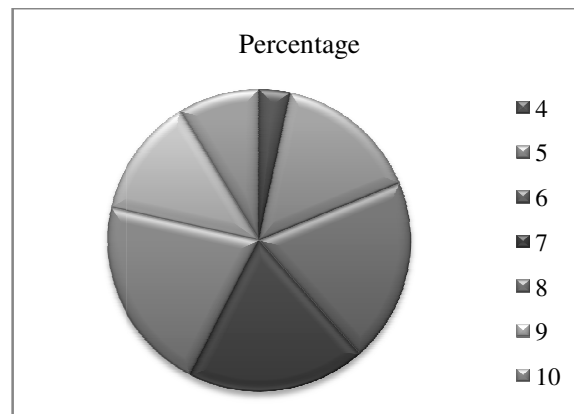
Chart 2. The percentage of marks of the students at Intercultural education

Looking at the results of the exam (including assiduity, quality of the training portfolio and the result of the written exam) to "the intercultural education", for the same students from

PPPE and SP of the first year, it was found that the failure rate was 3.3%, the median 35.2%, good results 40% and very good 21.5%.

For this topic, the percentage of good and very good results – 61.5% - was +1,7% more than for the first subject, students being more accustomed to the teaching methods used for implementing the transformative learning and, at the same time, more adaptable to reflect, to develop assumptions and to apply them in the learning situations, directly related with the real world. It's true that we have used complex methods for learning like World Café, Role Play, Project Based Learning, Gallery's Tour and so on... very attractive and challenging for our students.

In fact, the exam have consisted in designing, in groups of two, an intercultural project with the title: "Let us know our culture and the culture of others", for a target group at their choice, applying the notions learned during the semester, having some compulsory points: the target group, the objectives, the activities (with methods, resources and forms of organization of the target group, time of deployment, responsibilities and evaluation) to accomplish the objectives and the expected effect. At the end of the project, on a separate paper, each of the member of the group have had the task to fill in the lacunar text: I discovered that ...; The most important aspects learned were ...; I liked ... for observing and individualizing how they think and feel and thus, customizing them. It was a great challenge for our students but they were trained for this.

Table 3. The results at Intercultural learning

mark	number	percentage
7	4	14.8
8	4	14.8
9	5	18.6
10	14	51.8
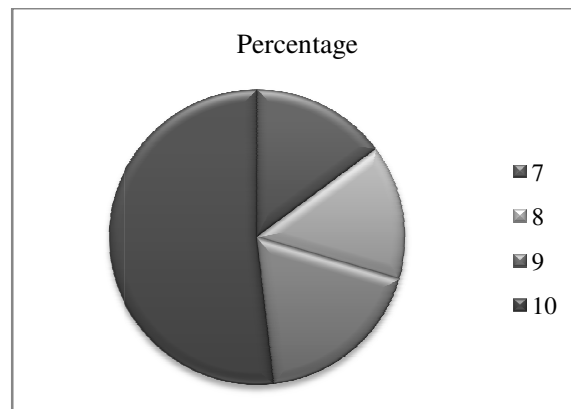
Chart 3. The percentage of marks of the students at Intercultural learning

As it can be deduced, it was a huge effort for us but also for our students, to lay the foundations of formation of students' independence of mind and the ability to make sense of information, rather than reproduce them, which is what Mezirow wants for any educable: "becoming critically aware of one's own tacit assumptions and expectations and those of

others and assessing their relevance for making an interpretation" in idea of real transforming it by learning, and in this way, gaining transformative capabilities.

Now we can move on to another level, namely the master degree students from first year of study who, at a similar subject – "intercultural learning" – but with more difficult tasks both during the semester and the final test, have achieved good and very good results, without failure.

From the beginning, we can see that this group of students, having had already three years of initial training, the quality of the grades obtained was higher. On the other hand, based on student observation sheets, it can be noticed another dimension of the impact of transformative learning, which confirms that it can build pillars of transformative capabilities (the capacity to learn, innovate and bring changes).

These were highlighted by the „In our Block" role play, in which each participant had to choose a role of a neighbour from a different culture, to create and then perform it, to solve the conflict caused by a foreign neighbour who bothers the whole block, every night. Thus, through this test, we traced out the intellect, affection, identity, the overall view of the world, the faith and the values of each participant. How? First of all, by our observation sheets and secondly through inter-observation sheets, completed by each participant for another one!

Therefore, transformative learning draws on the experience of learners and creates opportunities for participation and for the development of creativity, innovation and the capacity to imagine alternative ways of living. It encourages learners to reflect on the impact of their everyday choices in terms of sustainable development and transform theirselves.

Another example that we can take regarding the influence of transformative learning on the transformative capabilities of students from the master (PSCTTC, IP) and postgraduate (PPPM) study programs is the one offered in the subjects related to the use of IT (e-learning in teacher training, information and communication technology and computer assisted instruction). In these subjects, students were asked to undertake projects in electronic form under the title "Let your passion shine", which were presented in front of colleagues for peer to peer evaluation and for our evaluation.

At "E-learning in teacher training", second year students from PSCTTC, got the grades:

Table 4. The results at E-learning in teacher training

mark	number	percentage
7	5	15.15
8	12	36.36
9	9	27.27
10	7	21.22
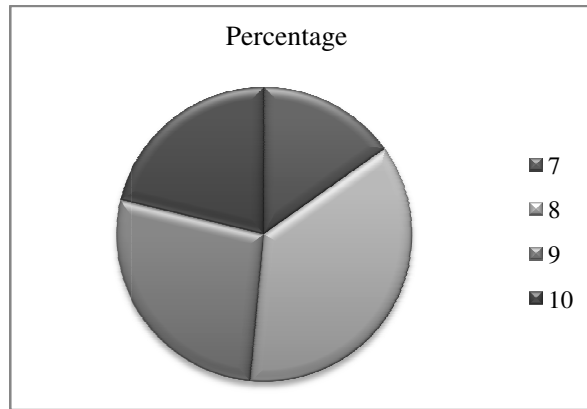
Chart 4. The percentage of marks of the students at E-learning in teacher training

At "Information and communication technology", second year students from IP, got the grades:

Table 5. The results at Information and communication technology

mark	number	percentage
8	9	21.95
9	18	43.90
10	14	34.15
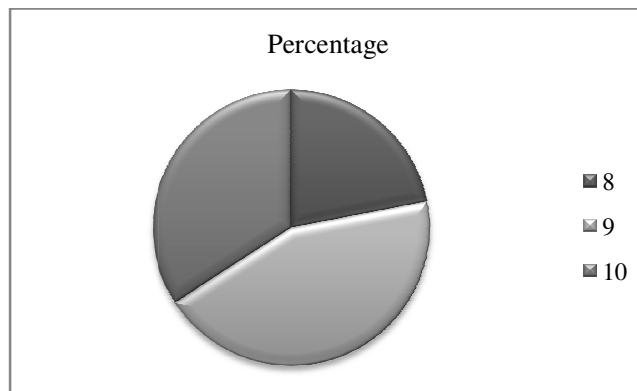
Chart 5. The percentage of marks of the students at Information and communication technology

At "Computer assisted instruction", level I students from PPPM, got the grades:

Table 6. The results at Computer assisted instruction

mark	number	percentage
8	12	23.53
9	21	41.17
10	18	35.30
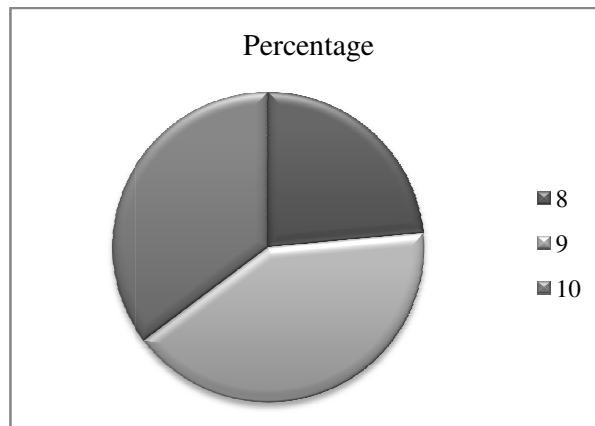
Chart 6. The percentage of marks of the students at Computer assisted instruction

Having these quantitative results and taken into consideration our qualitative evaluation (by observation sheets), we are in the position to say that the students have proved the capacity to innovate, to be flexible, to apply knowledge, to appeal skills, to have a positive attitude concerning the task and plus, the refinement of presenting their projects in front of the peers.

All these lead to the idea that transformative learning (which means all those features mentioned above, and more) have had an important impact for forming transformative capabilities that involve, as already mentioned in this article, creating an educational focus, beyond an emphasis solely on knowledge and understanding, towards competence, using methodologies that engage the „whole-person" and transformative approaches to learning.

Remarks and conclusions

The institutions of higher education play a crucial role in preparing future leaders and specialists in a variety of fields, including education. Initial teacher education institutions, as is our Faculty, have a crucial role in a democratic educational system for considering the competencies required by the employers as an important goal and trying to fulfill it by „seeding" learning outcomes into the students, in fact, learning outcomes equals with the competences.

Educators, from these initial teacher education institutions, are important agents for change within education systems. Effective educational transformation is dependent upon educators being motivated to bring about change, as well as being capable of and supported in doing so. We, as practicing educators, need to develop our competences in achievement and sustaining transformative learning if we want to transform the system, for the benefice of the students and for the benefice of the society.

From our paper we belief that is obviously seen that the building of positive relationships between us, as educators, and the students is essential and we believe that we must present ourselves as fallible human beings rather than people with all the answers. It is also relevant for us to have the ability to empathize with the views and situations of our students for growing up and developing together.

It can be also seen, from our paper, that we have turned to some of the universal learning ventures for fulfilling that desideratum – building in our students the transformative capabilities. What kind of universal learning ventures? Challenge something, make an observation, draw a conclusion, question something, revise a question based on observation & data, identify a cause and effect, explain the significance, transfer a notion or a concept from

one situation to another, adapt something for a new need or circumstance, examine an idea from multiple perspectives, etc. All these kinds of universal learning ventures help transformative learning to create opportunities for participation of the students into the learning process and for the development of creativity, innovation and the capacity to imagine alternative ways of living. It encourages learners to reflect on the impact of their everyday choices in terms of real life and this is from our point of view evidences of transformative capabilities.

We suppose that our paper has shown that the transformative capabilities are connected with the concept of transformative learning which is a form of „third order learning", implying a paradigm change triggered by the experience of liminality an in-between state of ambiguity or disorientation with a disruptive or restorative element, and makes the individuals as real thinkers of the digital age.

In the situation of the transformative learning approach and forming the transformation capability, we can say that there were between 21.5 and 23.8% of students of the first year from the bachelor level, 48.49% of first year students from the master's degree and between 70.4 and 78.05% of second year master students. At the opposite pole, in the „first order learning" - to reproduction of knowledge and "doing things better" - were between 38.5 and 40.2% of our students from bachelor level, the first year and no one from master level. In the middle, to the „second order learning" - to critical reflection and "doing better things" - we can post between 36 - 40% of the students from bachelor level, first year, 51.51% of the students from the master study programs, first year and between 21.95% and 29.6% from the second year.

In conclusion, a part of our students from bachelor study program and most of the students from master studies programs, guided and persuaded by the educators to follow the way of reflection for learning, applying the knowledge in diverse educational situations with positive emotions, and using their abilities with a proper attitude, have developed their transformative capabilities based on transformative learning approach. However, we will have more work to do with the rookie students to inoculate them the new way of learning to win capabilities.

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ENTERPRISE EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: *Entrepreneurship education has become an educational priority in Europe and beyond, and there exist various practical interpretations. Examining it from the perspective of the capability approach, the purpose of this paper is to analyse the concept and its implications in educational (and not primarily economic) terms as these relate to people's faculty to act and to the goal of human development, but also separate from the theoretical circuit of human capital and from a figure of self-entrepreneur. Consequently, this paper will focus on the importance of teacher-training aimed at supporting the rationale for enterprise education, relying on methodological proposals inspired by recent advancements in cultural historical activity theory.*

Keywords: *entrepreneurship education;enterprise education; capability approach; teacher training; cultural historical activity theory;*

1. Introduction: The Priority of Entrepreneurship in Economic and Educational Goals

The topic of entrepreneurship education has become a priority in Europe and beyond. From the *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning*, which listed sense of initiative and entrepreneurship as one of the eight key skills; to the European Commission's 2012 bulletin *Rethinking Education: Investing in Skills for Better Socio-Economic Outcomes*, which emphasised the definition and promotion of entrepreneurial ability; all the way to the 2016 bulletin *A New Skills Agenda for Europe*, which revisits the central role of entrepreneurial skills, the focus on entrepreneurship education in European policies has gradually and consistently grown.

The 2016 publication of the study entitled *EntreComp*, *Entrepreneurship Competence Framework* (Bacigalupo, Kampylis, Punie & Van den Brande, 2016) attests to this as well. Aimed at revisiting the 2006 *Recommendation*, the objective of this study was to provide a common definition of entrepreneurship and to establish the fundamental elements of entrepreneurship as a skill. Beginning with three interconnected areas of expertise – Into Action, Resources, and Ideas & Opportunities, each of which, in turn, made up of 5 specific skills – the framework goes on to develop these 15 total skills according to an 8-level progressive model and provides a list of 442 learning outcomes. In essence, *EntreComp* is a solid basis for learning-programs dedicated to entrepreneurship as a skill.

Italy was one of the first countries to adhere to *EntreComp* and, in keeping with this framework, as of several months ago, and with the involvement of approximately 40 stakeholders, produced a Syllabus (MIUR, 2018). The Syllabus is subdivided into 5 content macro-areas – Forms and Opportunities for Doing Business; The Idea Generation: Context and Social Needs; From Idea to Enterprise: Resources and Skills; Enterprise in Action: Contending With the Market; and Economic Citizenship – and includes information on preparatory topics for the structural introduction of entrepreneurship education in upper level secondary schools.

129

As in the 2006 description of key skills, *EntreComp* also uses entrepreneurship to refer to dimensions of non-economic development alongside economic ones, mentioning multiple times, for instance, personal development and the goal of creating not merely financial value, but social and cultural value as well. Despite weighing more heavily on the economic side of the scale and on the employment market, the Italian Syllabus also pays attention to the relevance of entrepreneurship for personal growth and for life.

Nevertheless, the design and practical translation of entrepreneurship education in Europe and in Italy is considerably affected by the preponderance of economic rationale, to which the use of the word entrepreneurship itself nevertheless contributes. (I will get back to this in a moment). National and international analysis on the topic shows educational intentions that are predominantly business-related (create business, do business, manage a business) (Costa & Strano, 2016). The same report by Eurydice (European Commission, EACEA & Eurydice, 2016) states that employability, as an objective of entrepreneurship education, vastly surpasses that of active citizenship or of creative enterprise. Even the same titles attributed to the macro-areas of the Syllabus describe for us the crucial nature of enterprise in the strictest sense.

All of this is to say that, if it is undeniable that the economic-productive sphere naturally and intrinsically weighs on the educational objectives inherent to entrepreneurship, it is just as undeniable that definitions can help to balance this scale, keeping in mind that educational milestones are in no way limited to this sphere and aim, rather, to transcend it. In fact, in 2006, it was stated that: «Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship refers to an individual's ability to turn ideas into action. It involves creativity, innovation and risk-taking, as well as the ability to plan and manage projects in order to achieve objectives. This supports individuals, not only in their everyday lives at home and in society, but also in the workplace in being aware of the context of their work and being able to seize opportunities. […]. This should include awareness of ethical values and promote good governance». And in 2016, with *EntreComp*: «Entrepreneurship is understood as a transversal key skill, applicable […] across all spheres of life. […]. It enables citizens to nurture their personal development and to actively contribute to social development […]. Entrepreneurship skill [… is] the ability to transform ideas and opportunities into action by mobilising resources [personal, material, non-material] ».

It seems clear then that there is much more at play than the feasibility of a mono-dimensional growth process. Rather, it is more the entirety of human development that is emphasised, through the fruitful interweaving of awareness and free management of resources and objectives, of identifiable potential and action, thus illustrating the extent of an educational design from which fertile economic-productive repercussions derive as well. It is upon this "as well" and, therefore, upon the non-exclusivity of the utilitarian rationale, that this discussion may continue, reflecting first of all on the need to specify the field of educational investigation and, consequently, the pedagogical idea of entrepreneurship that one intends to put forth.

2. Entrepreneurship Education as Business Creation and Enterprise Education

Returning to what was mentioned earlier, it is necessary to highlight that the generic use of the term entrepreneurship as an umbrella term (Mwasalwiba, 2010), both in scientific literature and in the vocabulary of European policy, accompanied by a unique and widespread technical use anchored to a finalistic horizon that is purely economic in nature (the aforementioned "business creation"), does not help to clarify the educational specificity of the activities possible and encourages a reductive understanding of the term itself. Jones and Iredale (2010; 2014) try to resolve this problem by establishing a clear distinction between

entrepreneurship education as business creation and entrepreneurship education as enterprise education, based on a comparative analysis conducted between different educational experiences that took place in the United Kingdom.

The first is catalogued and described as a type of education inclined to a theoretical approach and to the use of traditional didactic methods (regarding business courses in the faculty of economics and management, for example). Its immediate goal is the creation, organisation, and growth of a business, including the launch of a start-up, and its focus is on results rather than on the educational and learning process.

On the contrary, entrepreneurship education as enterprise education allows students to strengthen the virtuous interaction between the removal of conceptual obstacles and the discovery of opportunity and between the expansion of the means available and the strengthening of freedom of action, according to an approach that emphasises continuous cultural and cognitive-reflective enrichment and lifelong learning. This approach focuses on individuals' capabilities and on their potential for adaptation and reaction to different circumstances, as well for appropriate situational behaviour (not only in relation to workplace contexts), stimulating the development of malleable and transversal abilities, of *formae mentis*, and of a sense of self-efficacy that are useful in facing the challenges posed by both the present and future. Enterprise education encourages taking the floor and asking questions, active and dialogical participation, critical comparison, problem finding and solving, and learning by doing and through individual and collective thinking, beginning with action and experience, and the democratic management of learning (Draycott, Rae & Vause, 2011). It largely concerns primary and secondary education and vocational schools, it employs active and innovative didactic methods, and it considers the teacher to be a learning facilitator. Therefore, Jones and Iredale (2010) identify enterprise education with a true pedagogy, capable of creating an edifying bond between school and society, as well as between school and work, and of preparing young men and women to take on the sudden changes of a globalised world.

As Morselli observes, dissemination of the distinction introduced – currently present only in the United Kingdom while the documents of the European Commission, the OECD, and the World Bank continue to use the generic expression entrepreneurship education – could put an end to misunderstandings at the level of national policy and facilitate a loosening of interpretative restrictions, primarily economic in nature. Therefore, it could encourage a weakening of educational prejudices fuelled by the nexus between entrepreneurship and economic motivations and a greater awareness (also from a scholastic point of view) of the importance of enterprise education (Morselli & Costa, 2015).

Aside from the fact that there may be continuity between the two educational forms – from the transformation of ideas into action to using this ability to launch a business – it is clear that pedagogical attention must focus on sense of initiative and entrepreneurship as conveyed by enterprise education, which in Italian is non-literally translated with "imprenditività" education (Costa, 2016: 194; Costa & Strano, 2016; Morselli & Costa, 2015) or «entrepreneurial potential» education (Baschiera & Tessaro, 2015: 301).

Furthermore, as Morselli (2016) also maintains, the difference between entrepreneurship (in Italian "imprenditorialità") and enterprise education suggests the paradigmatic difference between a neo-liberal and economically efficient model and a liberal and educationally effective model.

In this sense, at least from a certain philosophical, sociological, and pedagogical perspective that focuses on the post-Fordist metamorphosis of work in relation to distortions that are not always recognised and objectified, one cannot neglect the plausible combination of entrepreneurship and self-entrepreneurship (d'Aniello, 2016; Foucault, 2004; Gorz, 2003), seen as self-alienation and self-enslavement of personal and interpersonal qualities in service

to instrumental and performance logic: entrepreneurship education as a prodromal stop in a management of the soul which hinges on individual potential as an apriori machine (Dardot & Laval, 2009). This, according to a precise reading of the economically and productivistically functional role of education, as provided by the neo-liberal theory of human capital.

On the other hand, enterprise education seems already to have the seeds of the capability approach within (Sen, 1999), moving beyond this theory, because it assumes as its horizon of meaning the expansion of an educational vision which, from a mere economic objective, pushes itself towards the broader objective of human development.

3. Enterprise Education and the Capability Approach

In particular, enterprise education seems oriented towards the promotion of entrepreneurial skill as a primigenial skill, or rather a skill to act, which comes before other skills and which goes beyond these to legitimise their implementation.

As mentioned earlier, entrepreneurial skill is needed, in general, to transform ideas and opportunities into action. The function of enterprise education is to release actions, broadening the range of creative opportunities aimed at these actions and at the opportunity for action in general. Therefore, according to the capability approach, providing educational support to this kind of entrepreneurial skill means supporting the attainment of agency freedom.

Sen (1987; 1999) asserts that agency freedom is often negatively conditioned and limited by the primacy of economic reason; that an agent is, rather, he who is unconditionally free to affect his own choices, decisions, and, therefore, actions; and that agency freedom is the freedom to achieve predetermined objectives by way of the means available. Additionally, agency freedom in no way corresponds with the arbitrary nature of action which favours only personal advantage and wellness, but rather pursues unselfish results which are completely different from those ascribable to the action of neo-liberalistically evolved *homo oeconomicus*. Consequently, agency freedom represents the effective possibility (capability) of achieving functionings that, shifted onto the pedagogical plane, can be identified within the scope of self-realisation, accessible thanks to the prior recognition of others' freedom and, therefore, of the educational relevance of human interdependency. It is for this reason that Sen (1982; 1999), stepping away from the logic of maximising individual benefits so as to look at that of maximising agency freedom, implicates concepts of commitment and obligation towards others.

To summarise, agency freedom is the ability to choose, decide, and designate the action process according to what one considers valuable (Sen, 1985), in which this value does not depend on self-referential evaluation, but on evaluation that emerges from a meaningful interaction with others, through that which we could pedagogically define as the democratic construction of education relationships characterised by reciprocal responsibility. It is within this exchange that the values which shape and direct action are negotiated and it is by way of this exchange and its significance that the action, rather than being aimed at an economic target, becomes first and foremost an educational and co-educational one.

As a result, enterprise education, conceived according to a pedagogically interpreted capability approach, ensures that before the technical-professional and economic-productive repercussions, in terms of innovation and creativity, comes the skill to act as agency freedom which contributes to subjective and intersubjective growth, materialising into life skill.

In essence, enterprise education appears within an educational training ground in which we work to develop capabilities and to clear the field of obstacles that prevent us from living the life that we could live (Sen, 1999), working towards our own success while maintaining respect for others. A training ground with a lifelong outlook, where the benefits

of learning, and of learning to act and act together, go beyond occupational and financial worries and ultimately focus, above all, on the formation of skills with which to handle the shifting and unstable scenarios of today and tomorrow. A training ground of environmental orientation, which teaches us to seize the human and material opportunities that an environment or multiple environments can provide in order to control our own lives rather than be victims of them (Wilson & Martin, 2015). A training ground in which the journey from idea to opportunity for action, passing through the reality of experience, becomes the means for actualising, with the other heuristic and hermeneutic attitudes, reflexive habits, interpersonal and emotional skills, and democratic propensities for participation and a dialogue that is primarily useful in fulfilling an educational plan. One could conclude by affirming that enterprise education is a stimulus for capabilities that can generate other capabilities.

4. Enterprise Education, Pedagogical Self-Entrepreneurship, and the Need to Rethink Teacher Training

If entrepreneurship education, deprived of its genuinely educational core in order to succumb to exclusively economic priorities, authorises a return to self-entrepreneurship as a functional depletion of self, then enterprise education authorises a return to pedagogical self-entrepreneurship.

As I have already pointed out (d'Aniello, 2017), contrary to the sense of the self-entrepreneur as one who cultivates oneself exclusively for work (Gorz, 2003; Moulier Boutang, 2000), who fosters personal skills and talents for the benefit of the productive sphere alone, being a pedagogical self-entrepreneur demands, first of all, that one develops oneself for the mere sake of development, a manifestation of oneself in the educational fullness of human qualities. These qualities support the tendency to intellectually grapple with an action whose development is articulated according to and concurrently with its own progress, nurturing a healthy symbiosis between action and reflexive thought, a symbiosis intertwined with the opportunities provided by interesting contexts and aimed at strengthening the individuals involved in view of actualising their various potentials. In other words, the manifestation of the human qualities required by pedagogical self-entrepreneurship supports the skill to act as agency freedom, which essentially nourishes itself on cognitive plasticity and, in turn, the skill to act as agency freedom provides expansive sustenance to the human qualities that support its implementation.

Therefore, enterprise education as pedagogical self-entrepreneurship is the education of personal wholeness, beginning with the action-reflection relationship and its mobilising force with respect to the enucleation of the other human functions at play, and this education, once again, cannot be divorced from the essence of becoming a person with others.

An education of this kind requires a revision of the teaching experience, and therefore teachers that can take advantage of specialised training. And, along with specialised training, it requires the affirmation of a school-community rather than a school-company (Baldacci, 2014), in which the director is a leader who pays attention to individual capabilities and not to individual performance; in which the existence of a learning context class within a learning context school that communicates with the surrounding learning environment can become a reality (Carneiro, 2011); in which there is a seamless continuity with the outside world, encouraging discussion of concrete issues and of the practical translation of knowledge (Nussbaum, 2010) and restricting its resemblance to a company with respect to an «open and limitless system» (Alessandrini, 2001: 180); in which combined capabilities are reinforced by fruitful environmental interaction (Alessandrini, 2014; Nussbaum, 2011). In short, a school that knows how to legitimise the aforementioned specialised training, but that is also assisted

by it to transform, opening itself up to be better able to handle the social and work-related challenges of a post-Fordist society.

In this regard, one cannot help but think of the recent developments in cultural historical activity theory (from here on referred to as CHAT). Instead, ignoring primary education and not entirely neglecting the work experiences in which high schools are regardless involved as well, in terms of educational offer (and therefore teachers) on which to focus attention, it seems that vocational education is to be preferred in this context, above all because it is more inclined to take advantage of solicitations from work-based, work-related, and work-integrated learning paradigms, or rather paradigms that are compatible with enterprise education.

5. Third Generation *Cultural Historical Activity Theory* and Teacher Training Development

While even scientific literature confirms the existence of a strong bond and even a sort of complementarity between enterprise education and vocational education (Badawi, 2013; Draycott, Rae t& Vause, 2011; Morselli, 2016), the preference given to CHAT is explained on the basis of its ability to promote the skill to act, which is the life blood of both the capability approach and the entrepreneurial mindset, as well as on the basis of its ability to develop multi-affiliation, the relationship between different subjects and activity systems and the opportunities for boundary crossing which can turn a school and its students into a multiverse that is open to the outside.

The fundamental hypothesis is that, in order to teach enterprise education, it is necessary to learn, first hand, a sense of initiative and entrepreneurship, and behaviour in line with the proactive nucleus of enterprise education. The CHAT framework includes the proper methodological tools for learning this sense and the agency freedom associated, so that each teacher can attest to their value and facilitate in their learning, using themselves as a reference model.

As explained earlier, enterprise education as pedagogical self-entrepreneurship, combined with the skill to act/agency freedom, includes the profound connection between action and reflection and the "educated" emergence of multiple aspects of personality that support this connection and its irrepressible insertion in a co-constructive relational dynamic of meaning and significance. The transition from useable means or resources to the increase or discovery of new means or resources, all the way to their conversion into opportunities for growth and development, in a broad sense, comes about through the questioning of reality, experiential learning and comparisons, identification of problems and their attempted solutions, reflexive and renewed representation of experiences, and proactive and retroactive processes. All of these are inevitable outcomes fuelled by the inexhaustible motor of intersubjectivity in action, which demands active attention and the ability to work as a group. If learning these attitudes is reasonably important to being able to teach them, using them to adopt a cohesive didactic method (European Commission, 2014), then third generation CHAT (Engeström, 1987) – after Leont'ev (1977) – can contribute to achieving this result, because it primarily shifts the objective of learning away from the individual and the context, and towards the relationship between activity networks and systems to create a close knit association between experience, action and reflection.

Moving beyond the restraint of contextualisation (Greeno, 1997) advanced by the theory of situated learning (Lave, 1988) and the challenges of knowledge transfer identified by Lave and Wenger (1991), CHAT highlights the fact that the verticality of teacher expertise (Lambert, 2013) must leave room for a horizontality animated by dialogue-based problem-solving (Engeström, Engeström & Kärkkäinen, 1995). This horizontality plays a significant

role in learning, further deepened by the concept of boundary crossing between activity systems (Engeström, Engeström & Kärkkäinen, 1995) and specifically between school and work (Tuomi-Gröhn & Engeström, 2013); a concept that was reflected, in a sense, by Wenger himself (1998), who referred to the learning value of the relationship between communities of practice (school and work) enhanced by the figure of the broker.

The stress placed on horizontality is needed to underscore the following: if enterprise education cannot remain closed behind the walls of a school, but naturally requires non-superficial interaction between school and work, then teacher training on the subject cannot remain confined to a single area of analysis and application either. Consequently, this training requires a deliberate alliance and cooperation between schools and the employment world, capable of sharing processes and objects and of generating expansive learning, whether or not it achieves a true boundary crossing.

According to the expansive learning theory (Engeström, 2004; Engeström & Sannino, 2010), always viewed from within the framework of CHAT, the spiral increase of learning has seven stages: questioning (calling into question existing practices and the emergence of their contradictions and of their conflicting elements); analysis of the situation (to begin an investigation that brings to light the principles or the explanatory causes of the problem or problems, explaining the origin and evolution of the situation and its systemic relationships); modelling (construction of an explanatory model of these relationships that is publicly observable and communicable); examination (the model is examined and verified with all of its merits and flaws); implementation (conceptual application, enrichment, and broadening of the model); reflection (reflection and evaluation of the entire process); and consolidation (the results obtained become new, consolidated forms of practice and action.

Without getting into the details of the expansive learning theory and of the subsequent methodological approach, the Change Laboratory – also a product of CHAT – was designed to develop cycles of expansive learning. The idea is to make use of tools, materials, and specially created stimuli to spark an abstract-concrete dialectic with the objective of collectively addressing the vulnerabilities of the practice/action, reflecting on these, and arriving at new models of practice/action (Virkkunen & Newnham, 2013). It is the systems of activity, and not the single activity alone, that fall back on themselves in order to find new ways forward. And it is this very comparison and dialogue between different and conflicting points of view that ignites a creative, purposeful, and innovative spark. The role of the researcher is to facilitate this common discussion, avoiding focus on the individual.

As stated, exploring the theoretical-methodological details is not of interest to this paper. What is of interest is that reflecting on the action leads to a reconfiguration of the action itself, turning problems into opportunities for transformative learning that expand agency freedom through the extension of its informative and evaluative foundation. What is of interest is that the mediation and negotiation of prospects, beginning with experiential specifics, can call into question the activation and exercise of different potentials and capabilities (cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, ethical) which, while they help to guide one towards the object of an action, also help the subjects of the action to grow from a human, and not just professional, standpoint. What is of interest is that teachers can learn to take advantage of a "teaching community" in order to translate ideas into empowered actions and corresponding new capabilities, educating themselves on the topic of initiative with the responsibility, or rather with the ability to answer to others regarding their ideas and actions.

6. Alternatives to the Change Laboratory for Learning and Teaching a Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship

Considering the procedural rigidity required for the creation of a Change Laboratory,

and considering the temporal challenges in completing an entire expansive learning cycle, some alternatives to this laboratory can be used for teacher training. For example, Morselli (2016) – in Finland for some time and in contact with the Engeström group – proposed a light version of the laboratory for an Italian technical institute, limited to the first two steps in the cycle (questioning and analysing) and comprised of ten weekly meetings of two hours each, dedicated specifically to training fifteen teachers to teach enterprise education. On that occasion, Morselli did not focus on true boundary crossing, but preferred introducing some boundary meetings in the manner of Wenger (1998) in order to diversify perspectives on the topic. So, in addition to the teachers and to the presence of the director (necessary for the subsequent implementation of the new educational methods of action found), several representatives from entrepreneurial associations, teachers from other schools, and one entrepreneur were also involved. Given that the initiation of expansive learning depends on an event that triggers the exploration of the old in order to establish a new course of action, the topic pre-chosen as the fulcrum of the laboratory discussion and trait of the union between school and work for the teaching of enterprise education was identified in the advent of the 2015 law reforming the Italian scholastic system, which made work experiences a structural aspect within all high schools and within the VET system. As of today, the event which triggered the dissemination of such laboratories may have been the publication of the Syllabus mentioned at the start of the article.

Meanwhile, another alternative to the Change Laboratory could be a boundary crossing laboratory, once again taking advantage of work experiences or the Syllabus. The inevitable weaving together of different environments required by work experiences or by the application of the Syllabus and the inevitable venture into other organisational fields, is what makes boundary crossing possible. As maintained by Griffiths and Guile (2003), the crossing of socio-cultural boundaries is a dynamic and two-way process. On the one hand, it ensures the acquisition of knowledge about other contexts, absorbing that which other people know or know how to do; on the other hand, it implicates the transformation of knowledge one already has and contributes to the creation of new knowledge within the contexts in question. Thus, a boundary zone can be established between school and work (Konkola, Tuomi-Gröhn, Lambert & Ludvigsen, 2007), similar to a no man's land, free from routine or from strict models, in which activity systems proffer their own beliefs, norms, rules, attitudes, and structures and ultimately teach new skills, generating something completely new. Therefore, the boundary crossing laboratory for the enterprise education of teachers adds value to the first alternative mentioned because it allows for greater multivocality and a socio-cultural discontinuity of action (Akkerman & Bakker, 2011) capable of enriching debate and reflection on enterprise education and its teaching. Basically, as mentioned earlier, the greater the conflict between points of view, the greater will be the result of the learning transaction. Furthermore, multivocality is described by Lambert (2013) as an essential factor in the training of teachers within that boundary crossing space which he calls the learning studio.

7. Conclusions: Enterprise Education and Teacher Training for the Expansion of Capabilities

What was just presented by way of example highlights, however, the need to educate critical thinkers, starting with the training of other equally critical thinkers.

Ultimately, enterprise education connected with the skill to act sees the youth of today and the adults of tomorrow as individuals who possess the means to master existence and not become engulfed by it, who are aware of their own limits and potential and of the limits and potential of the environment, and who are equipped with the appropriate tools with which to surpass these limits and increase potential, so as to truly be able to live a desirable life, in

pursuit of the recognition of personal freedom and of the interdependency between freedoms.

The subject of entrepreneurship education is balanced between opportunities for human development and references to performance, work, and economic functionalisation. In order for it to be considered enterprise education, it must be taught by people who have developed a critical vision of reality. A vision that can be defined by actively participating in a constructive dialogue whose objective is not only that of a change in method and action itself, but above all a change in terms of capability education, one's own and those of the students.

The collectively and the eco-systemic dimension at the centre of CHAT in general, as well as the crucial nature of interactive third spaces made available by boundary crossing and by its training laboratory, encourage this dialogue while also making it possible to hold various actors responsible regarding the bounty of educational opportunities to be implemented, creating an outlet for a sort of community involvement in which it is possible to truly verify the continuity between class, school, work, and surrounding contexts.

At the same time, while school initiates, both inside and outside of itself, a conversational and reflexive practice of a horizontal and vertical nature (with the involvement of directors) suitable for governing the complexity of a post-Fordist society, socio-cultural exchange between systems can make it possible to let go of partial and sectorial interests in order to satisfy those in which economic and purely educational needs can finally be met. In other words, it can allow for a cultural, neohumanistic regeneration capable of celebrating people's primacy and their authentic educability.

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THE ROLE OF ACTIVATED METHODOLOGIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NARRATIVE CAPACITY OF THE PRESCHOOLS LARGES

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Abstract: *In order to determine the influence of the activating methodologies in the development of narrative capacities in pre-school children, an attempt was made to outline an explicit and activating orientation in the structuring of activities towards the development of narrative capacities within the personal development activities.We have dealt with methodological development issues in this context the narrative capacities of pre-schoolers through self-created stories. We started from two questions:How can the didactic approach be conceived to foster the development of narrative capacity? and What is the impact of activating methodologies on developing the ability to create stories?We trained the children into an explicit program of self-development, a personal development program (ADP), demonstrating positive influence for the development of this capacity.As far as the results of the research are concerned, it is desirable to develop and continuously redefine and renew the activating methodologies used by the pre-schoolers.*

Keywords:activating methodology; narrative capacities; self-created stories;

1. Introduction:

In order to determine the influence of activating methodologies on the development of narrative capacities in pre-school children, an explicit orientation has been outlined in the structuring of activities towards the development of narrative capacities in the personal development activities.

The premise of approaching the methodical aspects from this activist perspective lies in the desire to use the unlimited resources of the child, his creative potential, and the exteriorization of the perception of the surrounding reality through the self-narrative, in a context that enables all children from the group. For this purpose, personal development activities are a time when all the children of the group can be activated in turn, in the context of the story, for example, possibly over several days, in which each preschool explains an opinion or exposes story.

The research allows us to contradict in a concrete manner the premises of an activating methodology (Norel, Bota, 2012, p. 26) regarding the use of self-created stories for the development of narrative capacities. This concept we understand as stimulating children's activism that we have outlined on two main coordinates: understanding one's own person and expressing one's own person. The way I structured the activities in which I used stories / stories about myself has three dimensions: imagining, explaining the imagined and telling the imagined ones.

The shaping of the didactic approach of ADP through the use of activating methodologies actively involves pre-schooling in situations involving the exteriorization of the inner world contained in thoughts, desires, dreams, experiences. These situations require the reconstitution of experiences by telling them to systemize and resister the perception of

the surrounding world and their own place in this external context, or to suppose the reinventing of reality, possibly the conquest of other worlds. Also, these situations involve the active and varied use of language in a context different from that involved in the Language and Communication Domain activities; it is a relaxed context, conceived as a moment of conversation between good friends, without rebelling, of course, from a correct expression**.**

We present in the following activities in the sphere of personal development activities as we have identified in the Italian literature.

„Il tempo del cerchio" (activity in circle) is the fundamental activity of psycho-emotional education, it is a moment of obedience, of respect, it is time for the group that meets to discuss (Vallario, 2009, p. 110). "For pre-schoolers, this moment is fundamental because it fosters knowledge and cooperation between children, children and educators, and the creation of that complicity based on mutual respect, in which each satisfies both the need for belonging and the need for individuality." (Vallario, 2009, p. 111). Speaking from the perspective of a learning / knowledge that children conquer and not transmitted, the author considers a type of learning where children are accustomed to listening and listening, speaking, asking, confronting their own perspectives with others. This way of living? the group as a community (vivono il group a community), allows the teacher to observe a group that is investigating, discussing a theme reveals (mettono in gioco) the emotions and things he believes in defending his beliefs, building hypotheses, and set up confrontations (setting confronts). This opens the way of the multitude of opinions and allows the mind to host the doubt. From this perspective, the author considers it important to give children systematic and regular (a systematic form of ritual) a space to speak (space) that enables them to formulate, express and listen to thoughts. The three-year-old children he worked with called this moment "the circle to speak the words" (cerchio per parlare le parole). This way of structuring the work provided information about the children's potential for reflection, self-awareness, the ability to ask questions or formulate hypotheses. Planned activity in this manner does not have a predictable course and requires a constant capacity from the educator (di mettersi in discussione) to open talks, to adjust the approach / meaning of the discussion (di aggiustare il tiro), to be in contact with variables that do not lead in the intended direction.

In his approach called "Freinet community classroom to conversational didactics," Vallario mentions that it is the duty of the teacher to observe in circle activities to stimulate and support conversation among children by listening to them words and emotions, and by actively asking questions to search for meaning for words spoken, spoken and heard. The author outlines the role of help questions as follows:

What the? defines the subject of the conversation;

Where? localized events;

How? determines how to present what has happened;

When? establishes a temporal sequence between events;

Why? reveals the causal relationship between events. "(Vallario, 2009, p. 111).

In the subject of research, we refer to activating methodologies and narrative capacities.

The stories and self-created stories represented the context in which the development of narrative capacities was targeted and they were an integral part of the activating methodology targeted in the research.

The research problem was formulated in the form of two questions:

- How can the didactic approach be conceived to foster the development of narrative capacity?
- What is the impact of activating methodologies on developing the ability to create stories?

Methodology used in research:

We illustrate the methodological framework of the research in the following table:

The research approach			
General objectives	**Hypotheses**	**Methods of research**	**Research Tools**
O1 Elaboration of tools needed for research to assess the narrative capacities of preschoolers	*I1 Engaging children in an explicit exercise program to build stories positively influences the development of this ability*	Conducting teaching activities	Conceiving observation grids
O2 Apply initial and final evaluation tests to determine: the level of use of verbal structures and the creativity of the oral language, as well as the weight of self-references in stories		Observation	Observation grid
O3 The progressive introduction of self-created stories within the ADP stages	*I2 If we use activating methodologies to capitalize on self-esteem at all stages of ADP, then pre-schoolers will invent stories about synet*	Running Activities	Observation
O4 Determining the presence of self-references in creating stories from the post-experimental stage		Investigate	Interview
		Observation	Observation grid
O5 Determining the narrative ability level following the explicit self-creation program		Observation	Observation grid

The results of the research aimed to outline in a personal manner the concept of activating methodologies and to put into practice the use of the self-created stories in the context of this concept as well as a continuous redefinition and renewal of the activating methodologies used by the 5-6-yearpre-schoolers, to conceive the whole pedagogical approach as a wonderful story.

The activating methodologies we refer to are those learning situations in which pre-school children are actively involved in self-discovery by narrating their own personality issues, but also by uncovering the members of their group by hearing their stories about them themselves. These situations of active learning imply the sharing of experiences and experiences with all their emotional and situational baggage, with positive valences in the life of the members of the group of pre-schoolers. I make this statement because I think, from the perspective of the child, that finding out from the story of your colleague how he thinks, what he wants, what preferences he has, what his feelings do, you get it differently in your heart. Otherwise, in the sense that you pass by the daily complaints (my colleague does not play nicely with me, his behaviour is more fierce, etc.) and instead of reacting through hysterical crying or blows, as it happens in general among the children, What is it that dissatisfies you and discussing what can be done. We plan to mobilize the energies of pre-schoolers to learn how to live in the gardens, enjoying each other, knowing more than a nominal level and thinking that the self-created stories have a significant contribution in this direction.

The way in which the context of the act of narration is conceived (to speak of) engages a whole set of activating methodology that results in the intersection of the means, processes and techniques used.

❖ The main method used was the story, which ranged from a progressive line, from simple narrations, to narratives about various aspects proposed, to stories. If they included fantastic elements, they turned into stories. The self-created stories represented the apology of the experimental stage, the whole proposed approach being oriented towards an exploration of one's own person from different perspectives:
how is the passing of years on our face and what accomplishments happen (the activity of my time line) every moment of his birth (activity as I came to the world), such as family life (activity beyond the windows of the cottage).

❖ The children were motivated in the narrative or story activities proposed in the final and final stages, by the presence of an impatient character to listen to them, a character who was initially a guest, but who later became a friend of the entire experimental lot; it is the FIFI puppet who is an ax (character from the cartoon Fifi and popcorn, unknown to this generation of children). FIFI has been a source of inspiration for children in a world of story, a world where many children, plants and animals have come to life for their children. The various teaching materials used also constituted a motor that triggered or sustained interest in storytelling or stories (worn out slippers, cordless mittens from the propeller's personal collection, various boxes, etc.).

❖ In the activation methodologies used in the research, the subject-book, respectively, the slip, object-symbol used in an inventory of stories carried out in the final evaluation stage, used to write the story of some roads. Seated in a library can be later borrowed, and comic stories can be reinvented by each reader separately. Speaking drawings are also part of all the activation methodologies used in the initial evaluation stage. They are graphic representations of imagined dreams or stories, and they have a special wealth in the high school preschool who will use them at the moment when they will tell their dream or narrate their invented story. The Miniature Story Theater is a way of concretizing the stories at a minute, a scene for the two characters chosen as props and around which a story of about one minute was invented.
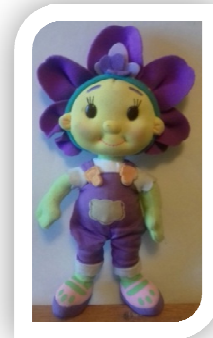
This whole set of methods, detailed in the above lines, is the personal manner in which we translated this concept of activating methodologies (Norel, Bota, 2012, p.26).

2. Description of the research:

In order to achieve the objectives, we have used the observation method. The observation as a research method consists in the intentional pursuit and systematic recording of the different behavioural manifestations of the subjects of the research, as well as the situational context of manifestation of that behaviour.

2.1. Stages in the research

The experiment has three stages: the experimental stage, the experimental stage and the final stage (post-experimental). In the preparatory stage the conditions under which the experiment will be conducted are investigated. For the initial assessment of the narrative

capacity we designed and carried out activities-samples that supposed the narrative act under different aspects, from explaining some images to the storytelling of invented stories.

After the initial assessment of the narrative capacity carried out during the observational stage and the recording of the results of both groups, experimental and control, in the observation grids, we outlined the activities to be applied to the experimental group in the experimental-applicative stage. As far as the final stage is concerned, it was the moment when the ability to narrate and narrative of invented stories was evaluated. By comparing the results from the end of the research with the initial results, we can highlight progress from one stage to the next.

In the table below, we present the evidence for the final and final stages as well as three of the total activities carried out in the experimental phase. The three activities selected from the total of the experimental stage complete the vertical and horizontal vision of the proposed research approach.

The research approach

	STATISTICAL STAGE		EXPERIMENTAL STAGE		STAGE FINAL	
	The type of activity	ACTIVITY	The type of activity	ACTIVITY	The type of activity	ACTIVITY
Sample 1	*Ora + practically*	*I deconstruct, stick, explain – collage (choose images)*	*Ora + practically*	*I stick, I explain about myself – collective collage (my time line)*	*Oral + graph*	*Explain about me (home - kindergarten)*
Sample 2	*Oral + graph*	*I draw, explain (dream - desire)*	*Oral + Sensory*	*Look, I explain about myself (how I came to the world)*	*Oral + graph*	*I draw, explain II (stories on the go)*
Sample 3	*Oral + graph*	*I create, I say (invented and drawn story)*	*Oral + Sensory*	*I create, I say II (beyond the windows of the cottage...)*	*Oral + Sensorial*	*I create, I say III (story at minute, invented and played)*

It can be noticed that at each stage there is a progressive vertically graduating of the applied samples in the sense that it was started from activities that required the selection and explanation of some images (sample 1), then it was then taken to illustrate (sample 2) some explanations about: a dream in the initial stage, an event in the experimental stage, and the road of a slipper in the final stage ending at the end of each stage in inventing stories with or without a given theme (sample 3). If in the final and final stages the applied evidence did not fully assume the self-referral, all the activities of the experimental stage assumed self-narrative in different contexts and stages of the personal development activities (presence, nature calendar, group sharing).

The activities have also been horizontally correlated, with common defining points between the stages. So:

→ *Sample 1* consisted of the first two stages in the collage construction completed with explanation of the results of these activities. In the initial stage after the collage, the images

were explained and their choice was motivated, and in the experimental stage the collective collage was followed by the individual presentation of the personal pictures and the age phases illustrated in these pictures. In the final stage, feelings and preferences related to home and kindergarten were expressed.

→*Sample 2* assumed in the final and final stages a graphic illustration of the proposed aspects of the discussion and an illustration of a motric-sensorial nature in the experimental stage.

→ *Sample 3.* We have foreseen a common activity at all stages (I create, I will tell), but the way of realization was different. In the case of sample 3, the original intention was to invent and draw stories about what we want, and the characters are invented by us or are chosen from known stories, and other stories will be invented for the chosen characters from familiar stories. In the experimental stage it was wanted to tell stories imaginable beyond the windows of the house, the characters being members of the family symbolized by the Shelly, Barbie and Ken puppets, the "window" being made of cardboard. In the final stage, the characters are chosen by the children in the boxes with characters made available (they contain marionettes of felt or metal, which have been removed from the string and which depict beings or animals, insects or plants, as well as various accessories: hats, hearts etc). We mention that the stories specific to the third test at each stage become stories in the context in which they display elements not specific to the real.

We also mention that the tests applied in the final and final stages were carried out in the context of the afternoon personal development activities. As far as the experimental stage is concerned, the story activities included in the experiment took place during the morning meeting, especially in the stage of the presence, timing and moment of group sharing, this moment being transformed into a storytelling time; the practical activities in which the elements that formed the basis for narratives and stories were prepared in the afternoon ADP.

2.2. In the experimental phase, children are trained in an explicit program of exercising the ability to create self-reported self-development programs (ADP).

At the stages of the morning meeting during ADP, the activation of pre-school children was constantly targeted by asking for short personal messages as follows:

Presence - how do you think of those absent, what do you think about those absent?

Nature's calendar - what do you transmit to the rain? What message do you have for the sun? What does the wind whisper in? and so on

To pass to the moment of group sharing, generically speaking, we have composed the transition:

<div align="center">

"Look now, right now

We'll get on the road.

I imagine, I'm still saying.

I can invent, I want to crawl

A world of stories

How do you not find another? "
</div>

The 10-15 minutes allocated to the storytelling time will be structured as time to tell at will, things of common interest to group members or will merge into the news of the day / news of the day / the message of the day. They were also the time at which reports were heard based on the materials made during AFP afternoon activities.

Example of sample applied at this stage:

Sample 1 – ACTIVITY: **Stick, explain about me** (my time line)
Scope:

- Strengthening the skill to create a story with your own means;
- Developing psychic processes: imagination, creative thinking;

- Developing the ability to nurture oneself.

Objectives
- To describe your personal photos;
- To tell about them at younger ages by selecting from parental information, memories or imaging different aspects of ages illustrated in photos.

Didactic task
- We create lines of personal time;
- We tell about ourselves when we were younger.

Methods and procedures: conversation, explanation, storytelling.

Teaching aids: Fifi mascot, pictures of children at different ages (0 years, 1/2 years, 5/6 years), double-adhesive tape, colored ribbons, extruded polystyrene panel, pocket needles.

Progress:
Every child will make up for Fifi, who wants to know her better, a line of her own time, using three personal photos and a ribbon on which the pictures will be glued with the double-adhesive tape fixed by ladies on her back. The order of the photos will be set to start from bottom to top, from the youngest, progressively to the highest. Ladies fix the ribbons with pictures on a panel that will form the basis for the discussion from the time of the story for the current week. This practical stage will be carried out during ADP during the afternoon, and the following days, at the moment of the group meeting of the morning meeting, the children will explain this journey of their life, and in a personal manner will make the passage of time in their lives. The preschool narrator answers any questions asked by colleagues. The color and pattern of the ribbon itself is a source of questions and answers for the little storytellers. Fifi will record these wonderful autobiographical stories in her book.

We mention that during the afternoon activities, the children, who during the morning narrated their time line, hear with the helmets the story When I was little by Mircea Sântimbreanu ("A Week with Stories and Stories by Mircea Sântimbreanu", the cd No. 2 of the CD BOXES AND ROMANIAN STORIES containing 6 CDs with selections from the radio show "Good night children" of the '61 -'71.

*2.3. In the final (post-experimental)*stage, besides observation grid observation, we used the interview-based survey method.
Sample 1 - ACTIVITY **Explain about me** (house-kindergarten)

Scope:
- Developing the capacity to express self-esteem.

Objectives
- To express verbally / denote experiences or activities loved by kindergarten and at home;
- To combine feelings / experiences with home and kindergarten concepts.

Teaching assignment
- Expressing feelings and preferences with reference to their own home and kindergarten.

Methods and procedures: cover, explanation, demonstration, interview.

Teaching aids: Fifi mascot, children's faces, house-nursery decoration.

Progress:
   In order to prepare the interviewing framework, a folded carton was prepared as a three-ply accordion; each picture was as follows: a photo of a house, a photo of a block, and the joy of the Kindergarten's Kindergarten. I also prepared white figures with the image of the children obtained from the cuts on the copy of a group photo, figurines to be coloured by the children after they were on the way from their home to the kindergarten. The children had to mention first of all where they live (house or block), to answer a few questions in which they were free to colour the figurine they represent. Before we started working with children, we demonstrated how to perform the task.

Questions asked:
- *Why do you like to come to kindergarten?*
- *How do you feel when you come to garden?*
- *Why do you like to stay at home?*
- *How do you feel when you go home?*
- *What is happening at home and gardening?*

CONTROL GROUP –before activity
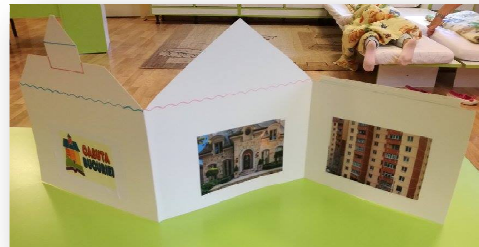
EXPERIMENTAL GROUP – the results of the activity
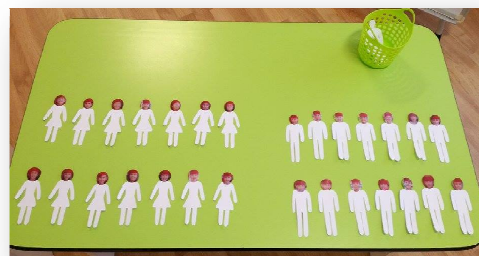
An analysis of the temates and subtems was also performed for the control group and the experimental group. We could see that there were a variety of answers, although the questions were identical. Each preschool expressed his / her own opinion, which gives us the opportunity to remark that for the same topic of discussion there are different ways of reporting from the participants in the interview.

Also, on both groups, analyses were performed on the type (the example is only for the experimental group):

Experimental group – Non-verbal analysis

Due to the fact that the interview took place in a game environment, the attention of each respondent was captured during the five questions, to which the pre-schoolers responded, with the smile on the lips upon receiving the figure with their own face. After offering the answers, a modest reward rewarded the efforts of pre-schoolers, namely to colour the body of their own figurine, dressing it for the way home from the kindergarten.

Experimental group – Answering accuracy analysis

NR. CRT.	INITIAL	QUESTION 1	QUESTION 2	QUESTION 3	QUESTION 4	QUESTION 5
1.	A. T.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
2.	M. S.	to the point	to the point	detailed response	to the point	to the point
3.	R. P.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
4.	N. E.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
5.	M. V.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
6.	M. L.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
7.	D. A.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
8.	B. B.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
9.	Ş. M.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
10.	T. V.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
11.	M. C.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
12.	N. S.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	did not answer
13.	A. R.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
14.	A. N.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
15.	A. F.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
16.	A. D.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
17.	B. C.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point
18.	I. T.	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point	to the point

This analysis illustrates the participants' involvement and gives an overview of the answers provided in this interview. Of the total of 18 interviewees, one alone did not answer one of the five questions. The responses were on the subject of what the participant implied, but also the fact that the questions were accessible for this age group.

Experimental group – Analysis of spreading

Nr. crt.	Initial	question 1	question 2	question 3	question 4	question 5
1.	A. T.	x	x	x	x	x

Nr. crt.	Initial	question 1	question 2	question 3	question 4	question 5
2.	M. S.	x	x	x	x	x
3.	R. P.	x	x	x	x	x
4.	N. E.	x	x	x	x	-
5.	M. V.	x	x	x	x	x
6.	M. L.	x	x	x	x	x
7.	D. A.	x	x	x	x	x
8.	B. B.	x	x	x	x	x
9.	Ș. M.	x	x	x	x	x
10.	T. V.	x	x	x	x	x
11.	M. C.	x	x	x	x	x
12.	N. S.	x	x	x	x	x
13.	A. R.	x	x	x	x	x
14.	A. N.	x	x	x	x	x
15.	A. F.	x	x	x	x	x
16.	A. D.	x	x	x	x	x
17.	B. C.	x	x	x	x	x
18.	I. T.	x	x	x	x	x

This analysis allows us to observe the participants' activity. Thus, we can say that all the participants have been involved in this interview. In one case the answer to a question is missing, while the remaining 17 participants answered all the questions.

Experimental group – Analysis of responses with emotional involvement

Of the total of five questions, four involve the emotional side, two directly: "What do you feel when (...)" and two indirect "Why do you like (...)"? Pre-schoolers are aware that they are loved by ladies or colleagues, and that they also have feelings of love for those with whom they spend classes in kindergarten. Children enjoy the joy of meeting with their colleagues, although for some of them it is a happiness "to go home and not to the ground" because the parents are waiting for their parents to whom they wish all day or the pet pets they feel attached.

Experimental group – Conversational analysis

Open questions gave free expression. Preschools were not in any way encouraged to provide answers, which resulted in missing answers. However, poetic responses have been highlighted: at home "everything is like a funny story", "my little house is like kindergarten, it's beautiful and good", "ladies love our children as our parents love". This kind of responses show a particular sensitivity, despite the young subjects' age.

We can say that the increasing score achieved by the pre-schoolmen of the experimental group is due to the explicit intervention program on the development of narrative capacities, developed in this group during the experimental phase.

As a confirmation of the advanced assumptions at the onset of the research, we also present the central table of the evolution of the elements observed in the children's stories in the experimental group.

EXPERIMENTAL GROUP	Initial stage	Final stage sample2 papucel	Final stage sample 3 story at a minute
Place	55%	96%	85%
Formulas	22%	41%	63%
Intrigue	59%	-	93%
Happenings /	-	70%	93%

Action verbs			
Characters	Reale 48% From the stories 26% Fantastic 26% Negatives 7%	Other characters 48% reale 7% fantastic	Other characters 59%
Name for characters	-	-	37%

The phrase "other characters" designates those characters entered in the story in addition to those on the props (Slipper Sample 2 and Sample 2 Sample 3)..

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ORIENTATION TO THE CUSTOMER IN SERVICE OF EARLY EDUCATION, FROM THE CONCEPT TO PRACTICE

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Abstract: *Measuring customer satisfaction and initiate necessary actions in order to correlate the organization's objectives with customer needs and expectations is very important in ensuring a quality education. This is also subject to research that aims to understand customer needs (including defaults) and capable of building an educational offer with the demands of parents and children. The research was carried out in the kindergarten and consisted of an analysis of needs, basis for designing educational offerings for the next school year and its dissemination plan. The objectives were: determining the importance of variety of optional and extracurricular programs; identification of needs and expectations of goals (educational activities) and subjective (the learners); obtaining building elements needed to design educational offer. The research hypothesis was: objective and subjective expectations of parents regarding the services provided do not exceed the unit capacity to provide the required services.The educational offer is constructed so as to overcome threats, maintain opportunities and overcome weaknesses. The hypothesis was confirmed by analyzing the responses and it was build a dissemination plan to form a clear picture of the services offered to all the beneficiaries.*

Keywords:*customer satisfaction; educational offer; beneficiaries; dissemination plan;*

Introduction

A school organization that wishes to excel through quality must satisfy all of its customers' claims through its services. The open and sincere orientation towards solving customer problems is the key to opening up the gate of success, is the solution of a profitable business.

A satisfied customer:
  - will rejoin the products of the organization, turning into a constant customer;
  - will convey the feeling of satisfaction to others by putting the bidding organization in a favourable light;
  - Increases self-confidence in the choice made;
  - pay less attention to competing products and their advertising, e.g. [1].

Winning customers is done with promises. Their retention is accomplished by meeting needs. Through the feedback we receive from our customers, we can identify our strengths and weaknesses and we can evaluate our performance from a competitive perspective, e.g. [3].

Customer orientation in time education services

Customer awareness is a vast term used to cover all components that help maintain an effective relationship with customers, e.g. [2]. The success of all school organizations is based on the ability to manage the expectations of their clients, facilitating quality education services. "Customer Guidance" does not mean that the organization is simply aware of its customers, but refers to the actions it takes to ensure that they continue to remain customers with the following: how does management manage to pass on the objectives quality in such a

way that the objectives of the organization are also the objectives of the teaching staff; how they manage their resources; how it plans, organizes and carries out educational services tailored to the needs of its clients; how to measure, analyse, and improve these services; however, to achieve performance. Through performance, the school organization will orient its actions to attract other customers, e.g. [4].

Who are our customers? The direct customers of the early education units are preschoolers, students, and indirect clients, parents. Meeting customer needs is the central element of any quality system.

Understanding the needs and expectations of customers for educational services, food security, playing conditions, securing environment, education appropriate to pre-school exploration interests, etc. is done by preschool education. In order to meet these needs, the units specific to early education prepare well-built educational offerings to cope with modernity and its evolution.

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Construction of an educational offer

Measuring customer satisfaction and initiating actions to align the organization's objectives with customer needs and expectations is a very important aspect in delivering quality education. This is also the subject of this research that aims to understand the needs of customers (including those implicitly) and to build an educational offer capable of meeting the needs of both parents and children. The research was carried out in the Kindergarten with P.P. "The House of Joy" 11, Braşov at the end of the school year 2014-2015 and consisted of a needs analysis, a basis for designing the next educational offer for the 2015-2016 school year and its dissemination plan.

The proposed objectives were:
- Determining the importance of the variety of optional and extracurricular programs;
- Identification of the objective and educational (subjective) needs and expectations (on the part of educators);

- Obtaining the necessary building elements for designing the educational offer;

The hypothesis of the research was: the objective and subjective expectations of parents regarding the services offered do not exceed the capacity of the unit to provide the required services. The data used in the construction of the needs analysis were obtained using the questionnaire survey method. The questionnaire was applied with the support of teachers on a group of 51 parents aged between 28 and 40, at the level of 9 groups of preschoolers. The questionnaire was structured out of 14 open and closed response items.

We synthesized the statistical data obtained as follows:

Table nr. 1 Results obtained in closed-ended items.

Items	frequent		Most often		rare		never	
I1. Consulted in the realization of the educational offer	16	31%	13	26%	19	37%	3	6%
I2. Asked about the educational objectives of the activities	30	59%	20	39%	1	2%	-	-
I3 Ideas and suggestions for educational offer	26	51%	24	47%	1	2%	-	-
I4 Required optional / extracurricular activities	31	61%	16	31%	4	8%	-	-
I5 Leadership stimulates teacher-teacher co-operation on extracurricular / optional assets	30	59%	19	37%	2	4%	-	-
I6 Effective participation in optional / extracurricular activities	38	75%	13	25%	-	-	-	-

It is noticed that the tendency of the answers is one in which the parents are consulted in everything that the school takes, which means that the educational offer has been and is built on their needs.

In item 7 regarding the most important factor in the kindergarten activity, the answers were 63% oriented to the educational offer and less to the material endowment 22% and 15% to the kindergarten staff. At item 8, 86% of the parents confirmed that the educational offer should be drawn according to the interests / skills / needs of the children, the community. In item 9 were recorded the extra-curricular activities offered by the unit and which are the most frequently attended by pre-schoolers, as it is noticed that 50% of the children attend all extracurricular activities in the offer. At point 10, although 57% of the proposals for extracurricular activities were requested, nothing has been suggested, which indicates the level of satisfaction of the indirect beneficiaries of the services offered. Items 11, 12, 13, 14 record the capabilities, skills and attitudes that are desired to be formed through extracurricular activities; the most relevant activities of the unit; the area of development that it would like to encompass / develop the optional activities designed by the teacher, the frequency of demonstrative activities.

Based on parent feedback, the SWOT Analysis was built.

Strong points:
1. The educational offer contributes to the personalization of the instructive-educational process;
2. Quality didactic design documents in accordance with the national curriculum and the available resources, with the specific needs of pre-schoolers and their interests;
3. Use of modern curricular aids: guides, worksheets, educational software, for the efficiency and attractiveness of the instructive-educational process;
4. Concerns about increasing the use of educational software in the teaching process;

5. Elaboration of curriculum programs for the kindergarten decision that allow deepening of contents, remediation of children with learning difficulties and valorisation of the potentials of gifted children;

6. Elaboration of a curriculum for the nursery decision to respect the nursery continuity - kindergarten - school;

7. Educational offer materialized according to the interests and skills of the children, parents' requirements, differentiated from other preschool units;

8. Adequate educational climate to encourage pre-school children to learn with joy;

9. Running projects and contests to highlight individual potential and stimulate child development;

10. Extracurricular activities: trips, cultural activities, competitions, meetings organized in collaboration with the family;

11. Certification of the quality system of the kindergarten by national and international bodies.

Weaknesses:

1. The insufficient diversity of the teachers' abilities in relation to the complex needs of the beneficiaries;

2. Evaluation is not sufficiently exploited as a regulatory factor in process design;

3. Poor involvement of families in the formation of their own children;

Opportunities:

1. Certification of the quality system of the kindergarten by national and international bodies;

2. Implementing the CEIF excellence model, a European quality standard for child and family services, organization and management;

3. Personalization of the curriculum at the decision of the kindergarten and transformation into the kindergarten. The curriculum at the kindergarten's decision allows the capitalization of individual skills and interests;

4. A diversified offer of teaching aids allows rigorous selection for purchase;

5. Increasing the quality of social partnership, private initiative and community support for the development and support of the educational act;

Threats:

1. The desire of parents to enrol their children in all extracurricular activities leads to overcrowding of their children's program;

2. Legislative instability and high levels of bureaucracy in education.

The educational offer is built in such a way as to overcome threats, maintain opportunities and overcome weaknesses. By analysing the given answers, the hypothesis was confirmed and a dissemination plan was drawn up to give all beneficiaries a clear picture of the services offered, as follows:

Table 2. Plan to disseminate the educational offer

Dissemination in the kindergarten
Activity: Making a panel of the educational offer - metaphor
Objectives: To present the educational offer to everyone
Means: panel
Target group: educators, parents, unit staff, local community
Expected results: good information of kindergarten teachers, parents and staff coming to kindergarten.

Activity: Presentation of the educational offer for kindergarten parents
Objectives: to know the educational offer by all the parents of the kindergarten
Means: the leaflet of the educational offer, the activity of the children
Target group: parents of children in kindergarten no. 11
Expected outcomes: Informing parents about the educational offer of the kindergarten as accurate as possible
Activity: Organization of "Open Days"
Objectives: providing information about the kindergarten's educational offer
Means: support materials
Target group: educators, parents and other teachers coming to the unit, local community
Expected results Target group manifestation of an increased openness and interest towards the traditions and culture of other peoples

Dissemination in the wider educational community

Activity: Publish a PPT presentation on www.didactic.ro
Objectives: Provide information about the kindergarten's educational offer and its activities
Means: Article
Target group: Site visitors
Expected results: informing all site visitors
Activity: Making an informative leaflet of the educational offer
Objectives: Provide information about the kindergarten's educational offer and its activities
Means: folding
Responsible: Commission for the promotion of the image of the educational unit and educational marketing
Activity: Kindergarten magazine
Objectives: Provide information about the kindergarten's educational offer and its activities
Means: magazine
Responsible: Commission for the promotion of the image of the educational unit and educational marketing
Activity: organization of voluntary actions, excursions, involvement in community actions
Objectives: to promote the educational offer of the kindergarten and its activities
Responsible: Commission to promote the image of the educational unit and educational marketing, all teachers.

Particular attention paid to the construction of an educational offer and its dissemination way helps school organizations stay competitive. Customers' expectations are constantly evolving and it is essential for organizations to keep in touch with them if they want to keep them. Being centered or customer-oriented can be a challenge because it means always thinking about what customers really want and how you can touch, or even better, how to overcome your expectations. It is also essential to maintain a customer alert status, analyze what you want, and treat any problem raised by them well and promptly. These are also the elements pursued in the present case, which determines the construction of a successful school organization, capable of meeting the requirements of the community in which it operates.

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MOODLE BASED E-LEARNING ENVIRONMENT. CASE STUDY REALIZED AT "LOWER DANUBE" UNIVERSITY GALATI, ROMANIA

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Abstract: *Today, learning experience is increased with technology enhanced learning environment. In Teaching Learning process learning by learner is the key issue. In what way contents get delivered to learner? How teacher interacts with students?*

Universities and training institutions became aware of the power and advantages of e-Learning and had recognized how it can support their business in offering new more effective services that improve the learning efficiency.

Although the adoption of e-Learning resolves many of the challenges facing traditional education including the need for large investments, yet, further reduction in needed investments is still required in order to encourage current and future educational organizations to adopt e-Learning, especially because of the increased demand on education and training.

Moreover, new purely virtual e-Learning-based educational organizations have emerged, which conduct all of their learning activities via the Web by using e-Learning services and technologies.

MOODLE provides tools to support the learning experience, such as assignment submission, wikis, forums and programmes for distance learners where the online learning spaces are the key resource for learning materials and activities.

Keywords: *e-learning; technology enabled Teaching Learning process;, e-learning organizations; collaborative learning; Learning Style;, MOODLE; e-Learning services;*

MOODLE – technologies

MOODLE (Modular Object- Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) is a global project, a software used for carrying out classes over the Internet and which supports a social environment that actively participates to education and is offered for free.
MOODLER refers to a teacher or a student that uses the online teaching or online study.
Martin Dougiamas, licensed in computer science and education science created and launched the first version of MOODLE in August 2002 at Curtin University of Technology from Australia. The subsequent versions brought numerous quality improvements and extensions of functionality which considerably increased the number of users. Initially MOODLE was an experiment during his doctoral (PhD) research but the widespread adoption of MOODLE meant he couldn't be able to finish his research, according to
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Dougiamas.
With minimum server management knowledge, a computer may be installed and configured. This computer needs to have the following technical characteristics:

- 3 Ghz Processor;
- HDD- 10 Gb storage space;
- RAM 2 Gb memory;

- Network/ Internet connection

The easiest installation is under Windows with help from XAMPP v1.7.4 packet, which contains already configured PHP, MySql and Apache server. Moodle can be downloaded from: http://www.microsoft.com/web/gallery/moodle.aspx

1. Historic

During the time interval 2002-2004 a wide debate took place at "Lower Danube" University from Galati, concerning the procedure for evaluating the professional and scientific performance of the academic staff.

Starting from the academic year 2007-2008, the assessment of the teachers' activity by the students is carried out or made through an IT online application, which ensures the efficient analysis of the information, as well as the confidentiality/ privacy of the assessor. The processed results of the evaluation or assessment can be accessed by the management of the university and are used for the evaluation of the teaching staff at the level of the departments and faculties.

"Lower Danube" University from Galati was involved in the implementation of the MOODLE platform. The teaching/ academic staff of the "Automatics, Computers, Electric and Electronic Engineering Faculty" were the first implementers of this platform, then (DIDFR) - "Faculty of Letters".

https://www.idd.ugal.ro - the web address of the "Department for Long Distance, Low Frequency Study" (DLDLFS) - "Faculty of Letters" and it contains information about the educational and administrative activity for long distance, low frequency education.

https://edu.csed.ugal.ro/ - the web address for the "Automatics, Computers, Electric and Electronic Engineering Faculty"(ACEEEF) of "Lower Danube" University from Galati.

The implementation and use of modern technologies in education and research requires the mobilization and support of various initiatives, programs and projects of public institutions, professional organizations or individual specialists from the field of e-Learning, researchers, professors from secondary schools and universities, inspectors, councillors, teachers, psychologists, pupils and students [1].

2. Research context

In the present paper it is analysed the platform of the "Department for Long Distance, Low Frequency Study"(DLDLFS) - "Faculty of Letters"
Long Distance, Low Frequency Study (LLFS) is characterized by:

- replacement of teaching classes(courses) by individual study;
- the communication of educational information through multiple support media, specific and distance learning environments;
- periodic meetings with students for carrying out practical mandatory activities specified by the curricula (seminars, laboratories, practical works, projects, specialty training).

The platform contains a series of data from the "Department for Long Distance, Low Frequency Study":

- data related to the legal framework through which it was set up/ created
- the statute and regulation of DLDLFS
- financial aspects addressed to the students
- the presentation of the faculties within DLDLFS
    Important sections of the platform:
- the section of the Admission Methodology contains informative data regarding the

conduct of the entrance exam or admission contest.

• the section of Teaching Activity contains information related to the structure of the academic year, student's guide, the timetables/schedules of the teaching activities, session of exams as well as the student's regulations/ statute.

• the section of Educational Resources contains direct links to the MOODLE platform for long distance study

• the section of Electronic Bulletin Board contains the Requests/Notifications/News/Announcements categories.

„Distance learning" is defined as "any educational and professional training activity based on techniques and procedures which partially or totally compensate the spatial-temporal reunion between the trainer and trainee"[2]. Essentially, the distance learning is a "learning process which is based on multimedia resources and allows one or more persons to train starting from their own computer"[3].

The platform has three types of users:

• **The administrator** determines the website design and has access to all the courses.
The administrator posts general interest messages on the login page module. He also creates the user 's authentication.

• **The teacher** has full or complete control over his/her courses but cannot create user accounts for the trainees.

• **The Trainees** can use the e-Learning platform only to learn or study.

Once a course has been created or modified, it is useful to make a backup copy of the respective course and download it into the personal computer. This operation prevents the loss of data in case the server breaks down, allowing restoring the data on a new server. Also, the backup copy may be useful in order to reset a course to its initial form.

The maximum size of a file that can be uploaded is 8 MB.

Table no.1 - *Types of courses on the platform*

Faculty of Economic and Juridical Sciences Specialization: Juridical Sciences	Courses
Year 1	
Semester 1	5
Year 2	
Semester 1	7
Year 3	
Semester 1	5
Year 4	0
Semester 1	8
Faculty of Letters -Specialization: ROMANIAN LANGUAGE-ENGLISH LANGUAGE	**Courses**
Year 1	
Semester 1	11
Semester 2	7
Year 2	
Semester 1	9
Semester 2	9
Year 3	
Semester 1	9
Semester 2	9
Course support 2016-2017 (BACKUP)	81
Course support 2015-2016 (BACKUP)	71
Course support 2014-1015 (BACKUP)	79

Students are automatically signed up for the courses from the teaching instruction series which they belong to, due to the data uploaded onto the university website.

The teachers, the course tenures/holders decide whom to allow access and other users (access for guests). Also, it may be noticed the development of a course over the academic years of study. The first version of the course remains in the database, the student even if he promoted in the next year and the course has modified, he may only access the last course that he attended.

Table no. 2 - Number of trainees - Faculty of Economic and Juridical Sciences

Names cohort			Members
Juridical Sciences -1	DR.1	Learners DR 1- 2017	60
Juridical Sciences -2	DR.2	Learners DR 2 -2017	45
Juridical Sciences -3	DR.3	Learners DR 3 -2017	32
Juridical Sciences -4	DR.4	Learners DR 4- 2017	35

Table no. 3 - Number of trainees - Faculty of Letters

Names cohort			Members
Letters - Year 1	LRE. 1	Learners LRE1 - 2017	41
Letters - Year 2	RE. 2	Learners LRE.2 - 2017	51
Letters - Year 3	LRE. 3	Learners LRE 3 - 2017	37

The total number of members on this MOODLE platform is **752**.

Every week the teacher may choose to give a test. Accessing the test is made from the activities category section that the teacher posts every week. Once the test is released, details regarding the scoring method are registered, the allocated time etc. The information includes the date when the test started, the date at which finished, the grade, percentage from the final grade, etc.

Since the test starts/is launched, there is a time limit to finish it.

Table no. 4 - Electronic resources/ activity for 1st semester 2016-2017

Faculty of Letters - ROMANIAN LANGUAGE - ENGLISH LANGUAGE- Distance			
Nr.	**Name Courses**	**Courses**	**Resources**	**Homework**
Year 1				
1	**LEME**	1	18	3
2	**CPLEGC**	1	12	3
3	**LENM**	2	0	0
4	**EFAC**	1	0	0
5	**LRAS**	1	0	0
6	**LRCA**	2	0	0
7	**LGOC**	1	0	0
8	**ICE**	1	30	6
9	**TLCA**	1	0	0
Year 2				
1	**CPLES**	1	0	0
2	**CLEIM**	1	2	2

3	**COLE**	1	0	0
4	**LEMI**	1	2	0
5	**LEPF**	1	0	2
6	**COLEB**	1	0	0
7	**LRAS**	1	0	1
8	**COLR**	1	0	0
9	**LRCO**	1	0	1
	Year 3			
1	**COLED**	1	0	0
2	**COLEPM**	1	0	2
3	**LEPM**	1	0	3
4	**CPLEP**	1	0	0
5	**LEDG**	1	0	0
6	**COLR**	1	0	0
7	**LRCS**	1	0	0
8	**COLRDM**	1	0	0
9	**COLR**	1	0	0

The forums allow both the teachers and students to communicate on different themes, each participant having the possibility to open their own topic of discussion, in parallel to the one opened by the teacher, as it may be noticed from table no. 4.

The forums can be adapted to course-specific requirements. The teacher who has created a forum must manage it afterwards and inform the students as often (daily, weekly) when he accesses the forum. MOODLE also allows the upload of resources into the course, the creation of links to a file or an external web page, inserting a label which contains additional instructions and information (resources) referring to a section of the course.

3. Conclusions

Obviously, the possibilities which MOODLE offers are unlimited, currently only a small part of these possibilities has succeeded. There are still many exploitable opportunities which this platform has to offer.

The placement of the courses is not the end of the online study implementation. It is obvious the fact that the continuous improvement of the courses will lead to the increase of their quality, is going to enhance the usefulness of the platform, thus the appreciation from the students will also change for the better.

Even if we only have an analysis of the first semester of the academic year, we may notice in this case an improvement of the course material over the previous years.It must be mentioned that reports can be obtained which allow the assessment of the frequency of course attendance. The reports may be very large because any activity is registered. It's useful to select in the report either a trainee, one date or one activity.

Due to MOODLE a part of the course teaching is outsourced, thus becoming an open one.The disadvantage is in the situation when some of the students are not completely prepared to use digital materials and would prefer to study the course in another format (on paper).The good practices for implementing e-learning shall remain the property of each and every university.

The final conclusion is that the MOODLE platform is useful in the process of teaching and the students are satisfied with the implementation of this new instrument.It is necessary additional research regarding different organizational aspects of the online teaching process,

in particular in the field of internal insurance of the quality of online courses, methodology and criteria of external evaluation and accreditation the of e-learning systems.

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BUILDING COMPETENCIES, EXPERIENCES AND QUESTIONS FOR MENTAL HEALTH SPECIALIST

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Abstract: *The contemporary reality of the 21st century requires new international competencies and skills at the workplace, in the field of mental health (Binkley et al., 2012, Delors et al., 1996, Gordon et al., 2009, Lippman et al., 2015).*
The aim of the research is to analyse the practice of specialists and their questions regarding competencies in mental health network, to show how educational systems can succeed in integrating teaching and assessing skills from both the technical part (e-medical file) and clinical practice, in the international courses.
The analysis of specialized literature is corroborated with our five years of experience in Erasmus+ mobility projects. The experience-based results aim to raise questions in the sphere of education policies, with the purpose of improving them.

Keywords: *professional competencies; transversal competencies; specialists in mental health; projects; Erasmus + mobility;*

Introduction

The contemporary reality of the 21st century requires new international competencies and skills at the workplace, in the field of mental health (Binkley et al., 2012, Delors et al., 1996, Gordon et al., 2009, Lippman et al., 2015). These include descriptions of the way people think, act, use tools, and interact with other specialists and pacients. The framework for the cross-cutting skills that are being used in this research is derived from studies conducted by Asia-Pacific Education Research Institutes Network (ERI-Net), by UNESCO Bangkok.

Trainers face challenges while ensuring support tolearners in the development of cross-cutting skills. Training challenges come from the need to explore and identify the methods and strategies that will allow young professionals who are working in mental health care networks to embrace life and work, by making them loyal to the job.

What are the major challenges in educational objectives in different countries, and how do contributors change curriculum, pedagogy and assessment? As countries move more and more intentionally and explicitly towards expanding their curricula, trainers must align not only to formal pedagogical practices, but also to new assessment methods, as stated by Gwang-Jo Kim, director of UNESCO Bangkok, in "Assessment of Transversal Competencies", Policy and Practices in the Asia-Pacific Region, 2016; UNESCO, 2016. 2014).

Transversal competencies are based on concepts, literature, and psychological and educational practices (Kaplan & Saccuzzo, 2009). The challenge is: how can educational systems integrate teaching and assessing skills from technical fields (e-file of patient), clinical practice, or other fields of expertise, in international education policies? (Autor, Levy, Murnane, 2003).

Are we able to talk about trasncultural competencies in mental health?

The tutoring process in psychiatry and mental health adresses both the development of trasnversal competencies of specialists in mental health, through Erasmus + mobilities, and

the amelioration of professional skills, by international courses (classes), (Fond-Harmant, Deloyer, et al., 2016).

The trainers construct international courses based on formal and non-formal methods, designed to target the improvement of professional competencies of specialists in mental health, and to build transversal, international, and transcultural competencies. In order to accomplish these goals, educational systems require a shift in mindset regarding the teaching methods and the way specialists learn in the process of the European teaching system(Altbach & Knight, 2007).

Similar to the process of economic globalization, the educational system requires international skills and transculturalization, in the European labour market of mental health services (Bogdan, http://cdu.centre.ubbcluj.ro/sinteze/20.10.2018).

The training system is focused on advancement in competencies and skills, achieved through international European curricula. Assessment methods must support specialty practices in the field of mental health (Knight, 2004).

Research Methodology

The research methodology consists in the review of specialty literature and the examination of concepts, practice, educational tools and needes in the sphere of competencies in mental health networks, so as to identify the way in which educational systems manage to integrate teaching and assessing skills from technical fields, clinical practice or other fields of expertise, in international education policies.

The analysis of specialized literature is corroborated with our five years of experience in Erasmus+ mobility projects. Experience-based results aim to raise questions in the sphere of education policies with the purpose of improving them (Fond-Harmant, Gavrila-Ardelean, et al., 2016).

Research results

The positive experiences of the beneficiaries and the outcome on the improvement of professional competencies through European mobilities of the Erasmus + projects in the field of mental health, in which we have been involved ("Public Health-Mental Health", with the France acronym: SPSM; "Improving professional networks for elderly", with France acronym: ARPA), led to the idea of continuing the project: Tutoring Training in Mental Health (with acronym Tuto), to an upper stage of professional training, through specialized courses in a new strategic vocational project Tuto + VEThM (Hustinx, Gavrila-Ardelean, et al., 2016).

What are the expectations and perspectives of the Erasmus+ mobility projects for the specialists in mental health network?

- Improving the professional and transversal competencies of professionals working in various mental health workplaces (adult psychiatry, infantile neuropsychiatry - child and adolescent psychiatry - psychological expertise, judicial expertise), (Gavrila-Ardelean, 2016);
- Training activities need to be chosen so as to cover the pleiade of psychiatry network (Corbière & Durand, 2011);
- The amelioration of professional competencies and skills of mental health service staff: psychiatric hospitals, non-governmental organizations (N.G.O), mental health centers, special schools, and private praxis, social and educational centers (Gavrila-Ardelean, Fond-Harmant, et al., 2016);

- The improvement of transversal competencies of different categories of staff in mental health network: doctors, nurses, pedagogues, psychologists, social workers, by involving them in international mobility experiences, for an easier delivery of different types of integrated services: health, education, justice, and social services;

- An increase in the level of competence and professional attractiveness of various categories of staff: from young employees, to which socio-professional integration is facilitated, to staff at retirement age, where it comes as a professional reward for workplace fidelity;

- Increase in job satisfaction and improvement of performance indicators through new professional experiences and alternation of work;

- Occupational medicine studies have shown that an attractive work, that leads to professional and financial satisfaction, increases workplace adherence, reduces absenteeism and frequent changes of workplace, reduces the number of days of sick leave with temporary incapacity to work due to burn-out syndrome and optimizes labor efficiency, thus increasing Gross domestic product (G.D.P); the impact is personal, professional and economic;

- International mobilities establish social relations and constitute excellent socialization opportunities, new intergenerational professional experiences, and intercultural experiences.

Conclusions

Expected impact of the Erasmus Vocational Educational Training Mobility strategic projects in the field of mental health:

1. The impact on local socio-economical life through the improvement of qualified human resources;

2. The impact on the labor market by improving professional qualifications (Fond-Harmant & Gavrila-Ardelean, 2017);

3. The national and international cultural impact through international collaborations between specialists in this field (Gavrila-Ardelean, 2017);

4. The social impact of the project: promoting social progress.

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MARITAL STRESS AND COUPLE SATISFACTION

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Abstract: *This paper aims to investigate the relation between the marital stress and the couple satisfaction in a relatively isolated Romanian area, both from a geographic and cultural point of view, as well as the differences regarding the participant's gender and the length of marriage. We found that couple satisfaction is negatively associated with couple stress. There are no differences in couple satisfaction as far as the marriage length is concerned. Although there is not statistically difference between women and men as far as couple satisfaction is concerned, in the same couple we found a statistically significant difference between the husband and the wife which seems to be less satisfied. It would be interesting to conduct a parallel research which should involve as many couples as possible, who live in an urban area which is more connected to the existence of the 21st century in order to highlight the common and distinctive elements.*

Keywords: *marital stress; couple satisfaction; married couples*;

1. Theoretical framework

'Happiness is up to us', Aristotle once said (Bartlett, 2008) and people have been pursuing it since living memory. Family represents the environment where we are born, we grow and evolve, undertaking the traditions of previous generations, the written and unwritten laws which guide our existence.

In the past the family was built through the alliance and interest of the parents. In contrast, today it is based on the feeling of mutual love of the partners (Hatfield & Rapson, 2012) and on their desire to acquire a state of psychical and physical well-being through satisfying the needs of friendship, love, intimacy and stability (Turliuc, 2016).

The spouses bring in the newly-formed family the customs and traditions from their families of origin, which are influenced by various socio-economic factors (Turliuc, 2016). Their commitment entails emotional and cognitive aspects in order to establish a long-term relationship (Stanley & Markman, 1992). Women especially want protection, affection, safety and loyalty; they perceive more problems inside the couple and are more sensitive to relational dysfunctions (Turliuc, 2016). The men who demonstrate mature intimacy and communication and empathy interpersonal skills, thus consciously assuming their relationship, display a higher degree of relational satisfaction (Acitelli, 1992). Men react to the positive or negative changes of their intimate relationship and state that they are happier during marriage (Fiske, 2004).

Often the ideal image of how a marriage should work is different from the sufficient model of a satisfactory family relationship, consequently generating dysfunctions and marital dissatisfaction (Turliuc, 2016). The woman's neuroticism has a negative impact on the partner's degree of satisfaction, while agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness and extroversion have a predictive lower positive impact on couple satisfaction (Karney & Bradbury, 1995).

According to gender similarity, the degree of marital satisfaction of the spouses increases if there is a degree of similarity between the partners and the marital gender roles are close. Even the equally high levels of fury determine a high capacity of understanding the

emotional situations of the partner, coordinating the response of the couple to the environment and validating the emotions that are shared between two similar people (Turliuc, 2016).

The dysfunctionalities inside a couple, which were in the past carefully hidden from 'the public eye' are currently studied in the occidental society in order to understand the changes which have taken place in the family model and to support family stability, which is subject to multiple internal and external stress factors. It has been proven that the degree of satisfaction inside a couple follows the graphic aspect of a bell or of a reversed 'U' letter, being at its peak at the moment of marriage, registering an accelerated decrease in the first years, a minimum level at the moment when the children become teenagers and eventually a significant increase in the case of long-lasting couples, at the time when the children leave their original family (Anderson, Russel, & Schumm, 1983; Gagnon, Hersen, Kabacoff, & Van Hasselt, 1999; Glenn, 1990; Orbuch, House, Mero, & Webster, 1996).

The couple's harmony tends to be shaken by stress factors which originate both inside the marital dyad and outside it, in the latter case coming especially from the partners' workplace. In the case of double-career family models, occupational stress leads to a negative emotional state, which in its turn leads to a lower degree of tolerance towards the partner's mistakes, accentuated disciplinary reactions and bouts of fury towards the children from both the husband and the wife (Buck & Neff, 2012).

Major stress factors (the death of their child) affect both parents and represent a social challenge (Fischer & Riedesser, 2007). Minor but repetitive stress factors damage the relationship. The dyadic adaptation process and the coping strategies are the ones who improve the quality of the intimate relationship (Turliuc, 2016). Cohan and Bradburry (1997) demonstrate that the partners who are exposed to stress factors at the beginning of their relationship and manage to solve the situations in a satisfactory manner can successfully overcome later negative stressful effects.

The people who are alone are prone to contacting infectious-contagious diseases easier, may display cardiac disorders, cancer, obstructive pulmonary conditions and liver affections, the protective effect of marriage being higher in the case of men than in the case of women (Hatfield & Rapson, 2012). The negative effects on health are reported especially in the case of women via cardio-vascular, endocrine and immune system disorders. The cortisol level is modified (Saxbe, Repetti & Nishina, 2008), as is the blastogenic response to the mitogenic factors concanavalin A and phytohaemagglutinin (PHA). The rate of wound healing also decreases (Kiecolt-Glaser et al., 2005), pathological levels of IL6 appear, as well as tumor necrosis alpha factors and IL beta. The medical pathology (burnout, arteriosclerosis, high blood pressure, rheumatoid arthritis, disorders described in DSM IV), cause absenteeism and economic loss (6.8 billion dollars) in the USA (Forthofer, Markman, Cox, Stanley & Kessler, 1996).

Most studies on couple satisfaction and stress are conducted on occidental families, but the peculiarities of marital stress and satisfaction aspects constitute a wide theme to be explored in our country as well.

2. Objective and research hypotheses

This paper aims to investigate the relation between the marital stress and the couple satisfaction in Romanian families, as well as the differences regarding the participants gender and the length of marriage. Based on previous research, the following hypotheses were brought forward:

H1: Couple satisfaction is negatively associated with the couple stress levels.

H2: There are differences concerning couple satisfaction based on the length of the marriage.

H3: There are gender differences as far as couple satisfaction is concerned.
H4: There are gender differences as far as the couple stress level is concerned.

3. Participants

Fifty couples participated in the research. The participants were aged between 21 and 67 years old ($\bar{x}$ = 44.5 years, *AS* = 9.8 years). Twenty-seven couples came from the urban area, while twenty-three came from the rural area. The participants were randomly chosen from different occupational areas and different socio-economic categories. 8% of the participants graduated from junior-high, 47% graduated from high-school and 45% graduated from university. As far as their jobs are concerned, 53 participants work in the public sector, 26 participants work in the private sector and 21 participants are self-employed. Thirteen couples have been married for less than 10 years, 18 couples have been married for 10 to 20 years, 13 couples have been married for 20 to 30 years and 6 couples have been married for more than 30 years.

4. Measures

1. *The Couple Satisfaction Index* (Funk & Rogge, 2007) This questionnaire comprises 32 items, which define the degree of satisfaction/dissatisfaction inside a couple on a Likert scale of 7, 6 scores respectively. High scores indicate a high level of couple satisfaction. Researches have sustained the validity and fidelity of the questionnaire. It can measure marital conflicts, problems inside the couple and the quality of the dyadic relationship (Cui, Fincham & Pasley, 2008). The authors reported a Cronbach's α of .98, while in the current research a Cronbach's α of .93 was obtained.
2. *The Marital Stress Scale* (Matzek & Cooney, 2009) The questionnaire comprises 6 items and the participants have to score each item between 1 and 4 points, where 1 means 'almost always', 2 means 'often', 3 means 'sometimes' and 4 means 'almost never'. The authors reported a Cronbach's α of .83 and a Cronbach's α of .72 was obtained in the current research. Low scores indicate a high level of marital stress.

5. Research results

H1. Couple satisfaction is negatively associated with couple stress levels
In order to test the first hypothesis, the Pearson correlation coefficient between the scores obtained in the couple satisfaction and couple stress variables were calculated. There is a statistically significant negative correlation between the couple satisfaction level and the couple stress levels (r = - .53, df = 96, $p < .01$).

H2. There are differences concerning couple satisfaction based on the length of the marriage
The couples who were married for less than 20 years were in the first group were compared with the couples who were married for more than 20 years. The t test for independent samples has shown that there are no statistically significant differences between the couples who were married for less than 20 years (*M* = 129.63, *SD* = 17) and the couples who were married for more than 20 years *(M* = 127.45, *SD* = 18.62) as far as couple satisfaction is concerned ($t(98)$ = .60, $p > .55$).

H3. There are gender differences as far as couple satisfaction is concerned
The results indicated statistically insignificant differences between women (M = 126.4, SD = 18.64) and men (M = 131.2, SD = 16.27) as far as couple satisfaction is concerned (t (98) = 1.37, p > .17).

H4. There are gender differences as far as couple satisfaction is concerned
The results indicate than there are no statistically significant differences between the women (M = 10.14, SD = 2.42) and the men (M = 9.98, SD = 2.53) as far as the couple stress level is concerned (t (98) = .40, p > .68).

Are the partners different from one another as far as the above-discussed variables are concerned?
In order to test this research question, we used the t test for pair-samples. There was a statistically significant difference between the husband (M = 131.2, SD = 16.27) and the wife (M = 126.4, SD = 18.64) only as far as couple satisfaction is concerned (t(49) = 2.06, p < .04, d = .27).

6. Discussion

From the answers given by the researched couples, we have concluded that couple satisfaction is negatively associated with couple stress. Stress inside the couple is due to external factors (Bodenmann, 2005) coming from dysfunctional relationships at work, financial struggle, tense human relationships (with the neighbours, family and children) and internal factors such as lack of compatibility between the memebers of the couple (different perspectives upon fundamental aspects of family life, annoying habits, faulty expectations, behaviours and attitudes) (Bodenmann & Cina, 2006).

The couple comes into being in order to align two existential paths which had been different up to that point, in order to bring fulfilment to each of its members and to accomplish the multiple roles that the family has in society (economic, procreative, educational roles, as well as roles related to preserving cultural, religious and linguistic traditions, etc.). Marital satisfaction is the essential condition of a couple's stability, as the couple has to deal with multiple positive and negative influences coming from both society and the partners of the couple in a mutual manner. When society is built on a large number of balanced families, it has a higher stability rate, its citizens have a higher life expectancy and better health levels (North et al., 2008).

The results of the current research concord with the researches undertaken by researchers who have explored couple characteristics in the occidental world. In the case of the families from the study zone where there are unwritten laws and traditions, one notes that low stress levels are associated with a high degree of couple satisfaction, while high stress levels are associated with low couple satisfaction.

The sources of couple satisfaction can be found in the very nature of the relationships that often bloom between people who have a high educational degree and a similar family background, who have known each other for a long time and whose families get along well. The partners agree to build their future in the environment where they have lived, they accept the economic and social particularities and the possibilities of further development offered by the area of residence. The partners spend enough time together, and equally participate in the household activities (the society is a semi-rural one, and it has urban influences only at administrative level). The stress sources to which these couples are exposed become similar to the stress sources to which the occidental couples are exposed, and for this reason, the

answers provided to the questionnaire items are similar to those of respondents from other cultural areas.

The participating families are integrated in the communities in which they live, have strong connections with their native families, friends, neighbours and co-workers, social support being a particularity of small and relatively isolated communities, fact which favours group and couple cohesion alike.

The answers provided by the participating couples show that there are no differences in couple satisfaction as far as the marriage length is concerned. The participating couples had a marriage length of 1 to 40 years, and the age of the respondents ranged from 21 to 67 years old. In the literature (Anderson, Russell, & Schumm, 1983; Gagnon, Hersen, Kobacoff, & Van Hasselt, 1999; Glenn, 1990; Orbuch, House, Mero, & Webster, 1996) couple satisfaction follows the graphic aspect of a bell or of a reversed 'U' letter, being at its peak at the moment of marriage, registering a progressive decrease in the first years, and reaching a minimum level at the moment when the children become teenagers and cause multiple problems to the couple, meaning 15-17 years from the start of the marriage. In the case of the couples who managed to overcome this crisis by using their internal resources (dialogue, self-analysis, self-control, flexibility, the capacity to compromise) the degree of satisfaction inside the couple gradually increases as the years go by, professional retirement thus coinciding with very high levels of marital satisfaction.

There were no differences between the couples based on the length of their marriage. Just as the couples in the Western countries, our researched couples register times of crisis, difficulties caused by raising their children, by health issues, by teenage crises, but they state that they are constantly satisfied inside their marriage. The explanation could well reside in the cultural traditions of the area where the respondents live. Here, the marriages take place after a longer period in which the spouses get to know each other, after they get engaged and legally united. To be married equals a distinction inside the community, standing as proof for the couple's maturity. This maturity translates in assuming all the aspects of couple life, in order to safeguard the relationship and ensure its functionality. Tradition allows the young wife to mourn her maiden days, but after the wedding she has to take on the role of a wife. The marital conflicts have to be concluded without showing anything to the extended family or to the community, even if there are tensions, the couple has to seem happy. The oral literature abounds in proverbs and sayings which illustrate the aspect of confidentiality of the relationship between the spouses.

Conversely, in the view of the community and as a personal conviction, having a family is a reason of satisfaction, in as much as the couple still has strong connections with their native families and marriages are done, as much as possible, between partners who reside the same geographic area, have the same ethnicity and religion. It should be noted that both the more experienced couples and the ones who were at the beginning of their marriage reported a constant level of couple satisfaction, irrespective of the length of their marriage.

The conducted research has not found a statistically significant relationship between the stress levels and the couple satisfaction level as far as gender is concerned. Fiske (2004) reports that men have a tendency to fall in love easier, are more flexible to the positive and negative changes inside a relationship and their expectations as far as a couple relationship is concerned are fulfilled to a greater extent than in the case of women. Women take longer to accept their partner, their emotional reactions concerning the positive and negative aspects of the relationship are harsher, and the degree of couple satisfaction is lower. The explanation of the lower couple satisfaction degree for the women of occidental cultures, who were the respondents of Fiske's study, resides in the fact that women's expectations regarding marriage are related to love, protection, stability and romanticism, which leads to them being more sensitive towards the issues that appear inside the couple (Turliuc, 2016).

The couple satisfaction level reported by the men who participated in the current research is similar to the one presented in the literature. They have built a family, have a partner who accomplishes her obligations as wife, consequently the men can state that they are satisfied. The women who participated in the study do not declare a lower couple satisfaction level, because local traditions intermingle: a girl, once married, must become a serious and responsible wife. She should not complain (not even to her mother or to her friends) and she must play the part of a wife who is happy with the current state of the couple. Even if there are dysfunctionalities, the woman has to solve the conflicts and stay silent for the sake of marital peace. She must totally agree with the opinions of her husband. All these demonstrate an ancestral mentality which entails the woman's subordination in the face of man. The woman cannot express her complaints or dissatisfactions even in the face of her partner, let alone in the face of strangers.

The stress level inside a couple is a reflection of the interpersonal processes between the spouses on the one hand and a reflection of an intrapersonal feeling of the person on her own marriage on the other hand (Vajda, 2015). Gender similarity is considered by Turlic (2016) a factor that increases the marital satisfaction of both spouses. According to the spouse effect hypothesis, the couple grows happier as the husband becomes more aware of his relationship (Acitelli, 1992). In the case of the couples who participated in the present research, it is a tradition that since the beginning of marriage the husband should be the head of the family and take responsibility for its well-being. The personal abilities of the husband become important in the case of experienced couples precisely due to the experience resulting from all the years of living together. In the case of younger couples, the husband is already educated in the spirit of emancipating the woman, changing the vision upon the role of the wife, who thus becomes a decisional, educational, economic and spiritual factor inside the family, having a much higher potential than the wife had only a few decades ago.

Fiske's studies (2004) show differences between the husband and the wife concerning couple satisfaction, in that the wives' expectations towards marriage are not met, whereas the husbands consider themselves to be satisfied with their marriage. From the individual analysis of the answers provided by the 50 couples, we observed statistically significant differences between the degree of marital satisfaction declared by the wife and the one declared by the husband. Although the lifestyle and mentality of the 21st century lead towards a harmonious couple in which both members should be involved in daily activities and have equal expectations from their partners, the wives often have to deal with a variety of tasks which are considered of little importance by the husbands and 'a must do' for women. Consequently, women do not find the harmony that they were dreaming of before getting married. Conversely, the husbands declare themselves to be satisfied inside the couple because their partners offer emotional balance, financial support, social prestige and are involved in solving multiple family duties.

7. Conclusions and implications

7.1. Conclusions

In pursuit of harmony and stability, people are subject to multiple influences which in most cases cause them to activate adaptation reactions, having various positive and negative effects. The type of society, cultural traditions, written and unwritten laws, the educational model and particular values of every individual determine the attitude and feelings that he adopts both towards the requirements coming from society and his work environment and towards the family and closest people with whom he interacts and lives.

The present study aimed at a partial and limited assessment of these existential aspects, in a relatively isolated area, both from a geographic and cultural point of view, which is inhabited by a relatively homogenous community, where there are strong traditions passed on from one generation to the next. The area is negatively affected by the discontinuation of the mining activity, the lack of infrastructure and economic alternatives.

Our research subjects consisted of 50 couples who were officially married, in which both partners had an income-generating activity. They completed questionnaires which were identical to those used in researches reported by other researchers, concerning the family and professional stress levels and the work and dyadic satisfaction levels. We aimed to identify relations between satisfaction and stress levels and the length of marriage and gender of the participants.

Considering the limitations of this research, future research directions come into mind in order to further build on the topic and monitor the tackled issue. The research brought into light the strong socio-cultural influences which influenced the way of thinking and the actions of the participating couples. For a conservative area as far as the attitude towards the couple and family life are concerned, conducting such research which assesses couple satisfaction, work satisfaction, couple stress and work stress, opens new perspectives for the ones involved in a couple relationship. They can perceive the contact with a psychologist (psychology student) and the tests used to assess the stress and satisfaction levels as a source of meditation on the particular aspects of the existence of the couples in which they live, on their attitudes towards the partner and on the expectations and benefits of the workplace and of family life.

In pursuit of a harmonious family life and of professional fulfilment, any positive change of attitude, any corrective action on some dysfunctional aspects can have beneficial effects which lead to a high degree of couple satisfaction.

7.2. Research limitations

The research was conducted on 50 couples aged between 21 and 67, with a marriage length ranging from 1 to 40 years, living in a geographic and infrastructural area which is partially isolated from the tumultuous Western existence of the 21st century, where traditions and unwritten customs are respected and passed on from generation to generation. The number of participants is a serious limitation, because one cannot pass valid judgement only after consulting 100 people. The respondents are part of traditional heterosexual families, united via official marriage papers.

The participants have either graduated from high-school or faculty, pertaining to a social class with medium income rates and possibilities. Consensual union couples were not part of the research, as weren't the couples who work in agriculture or those in which one partner temporarily works abroad, which does not allow a more complex image of the situation of couples in this restricted community.

The couples are homogeneous in point of ethnicity, religion and cultural background, which limits the research results to the characteristics of the group. In the area, the notions of psychologist and psychological counselling represent something new. The families only started to ask for the help of a speech therapist, psychopedagogue in the last 5-10 years, when a speech therapy cabinet was built near the kindergarten. People meet the psychologist only when they are tested for obtaining a driving license or when some of them are hired in the educational and medical domains.

Admitting the fact that some existential states require the intervention of a psychologist (marital conflict, dyadic stress situations, educational aspects and conflicts between generations) is still in its early days, the population not being familiar with the notions of psychologist and psychological tests. Many participants considered the research to

173

be purely related to statistics, nonetheless trying to answer according to the indications they received and to the verbal instructions given before and even during the completion of questionnaires. The socially desirable answers that we obtained have their roots in the educational-familial and traditional core, which entails that intimacy should be kept in family life and the external explorers are not granted access to all details, especially if these details are not aligned with the 'social norms' accepted inside the community.

The research was conducted in one stage only, with the families being seen at a certain moment in their evolution. Consequently, it lacks a comparative assessment in which more years in the life of the questioned couples should be considered.

7.3. Future research directions

In view of the current economic and social situation and considering the evolution of demographic indicators in recent decades, family, in all its aspects, should represent a priority both for the notified bodies, which should ensure the economic stability and for the institutions and organizations which aim to support families in point of education and spirituality.

It is important to research young couples who get married and start their life now in a community with limited economic and social possibilities, but who benefit from tradition, folklore and spirituality worthy of being passed on to future generations. The young couples and the participants to the current study should be monitored twice a year in order to register the evolution of the researched variables (dyadic stress, stress at work, couple satisfaction, work satisfaction). It would be interesting to conduct a parallel research which should involve as many couples as possible, who live in an urban area which is more connected to the existence of the 21st century in order to highlight the common and distinctive elements. The periodical assessments could be intermingled with 'pro-family' interventions, conducted with the support of local authorities, schools (family day, school visiting day, my day with dad, my day with mom, Sunday school inside various religious cults etc.). In small, compact communities, such interventions and family programmes could contribute to increasing the dyadic satisfaction, alongside courses and presentations offered by specialists, such as: family week, pro-family education for young people who want to get married, mom's school, dad's school. The counselling and family planning units, the psychological cabinets in high-schools (aiming students who are close to becoming adults legally) could organise counselling activities for families in special situations.

There is a very complex territory to be explored, but it grants limited access due to the ethnic and linguistic particularities of the Rroma community. The periodic dissemination of the research results, the involvement in the pro-family educational process of the local mass-media, local TV stations and local press, or even the involvement of social networks to which most inhabitants have access, even in isolated areas, would constitute future involvement domains, in order to draw attention on the importance of safekeeping and optimal functioning of the family. This is the warranty of perpetuation not only for our People, but also for the cultural and spiritual values which have been passed on to us.

The future existence of balanced couples could be influenced by the professional and discrete involvement of the psychologist, who will likely be an appreciated specialist for the counselling activity that (s)he can provide.

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EDUCATIONAL INTERACTIONS AND THEIR DYNAMICS IN THE UNIVERSITY ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract: *The quality of educational interactions is essential to increase the academic motivation of university students, to achieve performance in learning and research, and to maintain an optimal level of professional satisfaction for students and teachers.*
This article presents in a synthetic manner a series of studies and researches carried out lately both nationally and internationally, on the subject of the student-teacher relationship specific to the university education. We consider that for a constructive and effective relationship with the students, the following skills are necessary: assertive communication, an optimal emotions management and the willingness to learn at any age and from any interaction. From this enumeration, we cannot omit the specialized knowledge and psycho-pedagogical competences of the teaching staff.

Keywords: *educational interactions; higher education; academic performance; teacher training;*

1. Introduction

The way we behave towards our students will put a strong mark on how they will relate, in turn, to those they will educate. In this way, teachers' actions influence long-term generations of students and pupils. Under these circumstances, it is important that the didactic relationship in the university and in particular, that of the psycho-pedagogical module meet certain requirements necessary for the quality training of the professionals in this field (Onu, 2017). The importance and impact of the educational relationship have been studied mainly in pre-university education, on the adult-child/adolescent axis and somewhat neglected the adult-adult education relationship specific to higher education.

According to Hagenau G. and Volet S.E. (2014) there is much less study on educational interactions in higher education than in the pre-university. In addition, the authors state that, limited studies of didactic relations in higher education often do not have a clear theoretical/ conceptual framework. Therefore, the above-mentioned authors have three reasons why research in this field should be expanded:

The first reason is that many universities around the world have relatively high levels of university abandonment, with high costs at the human and financial levels, giving as example the US (see Schneider & Yin, 2011). Thus, it is suggested that the investigation of educational interactions in the university environment and their optimization is relevant if it can contribute to the reduction of this negative trend.

The second reason concerns the need for developing a sense of belonging, that affects also the university professors. Thus, the authors assert, it is likely that a "positive relational environment in the classroom", including positive interactions and relationships, will have positive effects on their own teachers (for example, on the positive emotions of teachers, see Hagenauer & Volet, 2014) as suggested by the relational approaches of education (e.g., Graham, West, & Schaller, 1992; Wilson, 1992).

Thirdly, given the increasing importance of excellence in university education as part of the "teaching and learning scholarship" discourse (eg, Kreber & Cranton, 2000; Trigwell & Shale, 2004), the significance the teaching relationship requires detailed investigations.

2. Previous studies and research on the specificity of educational interactions in university education

Studying the literature, we found out that, on the one hand most researches focus on the relation between the teachers and the pupils in the pre-university education, and on the other hand we came to the conclusion that the educational relation is a multi-dimensional construct which has been operationalized differently from one author to another. Another important observation is that for the teaching staff, teaching is one of the professional requirements, the other being the quality of research which is much appreciated and which is the premise of professional promotion in the academic environment.

We present a series of internationally researched researches, as well as local researches, which address the issue of teacher-student relationship.

For example, Hsieh (2012) shows that Chinese teachers have a different understanding of the teacher-student relationship than British teachers. Also, students studying outside their home country often have different expectations from the teacher-student relationship (Zhou, Jindal-Snape, Topping, & Todman, 2008). In addition, the studied discipline affects students' perceptions about the educational relationship of teachers and students, the conclusions of Sander, Stevenson, King and Coates (2000), in which psychology students have better evaluated the importance of personal relationships with teachers, than business students. The results of a team of Finnish and Australian researchers suggest that this is also true for teachers (for example, the didactic approach, including relational issues, of "soft sciences" teachers differs from that of teachers in "hard sciences," Lindblom-Ylänne, Trigwell, Nevgi, & Ashwin, 2006; Parpa, Lindblom-Ylänne, Komulainen, Litmanen, & Hirsto, 2010).

Educational teacher-student relationships vary not only between contexts, but also in the case of the same actor in different contexts. For example, Lindblom-Ylänne et al. (2006) found that the teaching practices of the same university professors differ, depending on the course format (seminars/lectures). The pedagogical context influences not only didactic approach but also affects the teacher-student relationship, since the opportunities for approaching students and building relationships with them in the formal teaching and learning activities are much higher in seminars than in courses. Thus, according to Hagenau G. and Volet S.E. (2014), this dependence context makes the formulation of a general definition of the teacher-student relationship difficult enough.

Regarding the impact of the teacher-student relationship on the continuation of students' academic studies and performance, a meta-analysis by Hagenau G. and Volet S.E. (2014) shows that the probability of staying at university is higher for students who developed a sense of belonging to the university because their study satisfaction increased with established connections (Palmer, O'Cane and Owens, 2009). Developing a sense of belonging is of particular importance in the first year of study, as most of the renunciation decisions are made later this year (Christie, Munro, & Fisher, 2004). Moreover, many I-year students enter universities with unclear expectations and relatively high levels of uncertainty and anxiety, as the studies have shown, focusing on the experiences of first-year students (eg Gibney, Moore, Murphy, &O'Sullivan, 2011; Tett, Cree, Hounsell and McCu 2008). Brinkworth, McCann, Matthews and Nordström (2009) found that Australian students in the first year had unclear expectations not only in terms of their role as students, but also in terms of teacher-student relationship at university. Over 80% of the sample is expected to have "immediate access" to tutors and lecturers to facilitate the success of the study. Although they expressed the

awareness that university study is different from high school, they were expecting similar conditions in terms of teacher-student relationship. If students fail to connect to the university and their specialisation, for whatever reason (for example, unclear expectations, as Brinkworth et al., 2009), abandonment is often the result.

Although there is empirical support for the idea that peer-to-peer relationships are most important to students' feelings of belonging (Ramsay, Jones, & Barker, 2007; Strauss & Volkwein, 2004), relationships with teachers and tutors play an important role in the decision to complete their studies or to leave after the first year (Wilcox et al., 2005). Moreover, positive relationships with university professors not only contribute to the retention of students, but also facilitate other factors such as engagement (Strauss & Volkwein, 2004), effort (Lundberg & Schreiner, 2004), motivation (Rugutt & Leach, 2010), satisfaction (Calvo et al., 2010; Dobranska & Frymier 2004; Trigwell, 2005), involvement (Zepke & Leach, 2010); critical thinking and learning the basic principals (Halawah, 2006). Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) show empirically the independent influence of the teacher-student relationship on students' success in learning, controlling the different personal characteristics (eg gender, study area, orientation towards achievement).

According to Langevin and Bruneau (2000, pp. 49-52) the didactic relation in university education has eight characteristics: it is utilitarian (it aims to inform the students); is imposed (teachers and students do not choose, but they have to build their educational relationship for a determined period); it is accidental because a certain teacher teaches certain students; it is ambiguous, meaning it is less structured with fewer rules; is mediated because it takes place on a particular theme/content and a scientific structure; is located on a double plan, the cognitive and the affective one.

According to Ionescu (2000, pp. 65-69), students perceive as optimal a teacher-student relationship based on:
- the ability to communicate and collaborate with the students;
- mutual respect between teachers and students;
- spiraling congruence between teachers and students;
- a friendly relationship between teacher and students;
- good humor of the teacher;
- teacher's trust towards students;
- the teacher's sincerity;
- an atmosphere of partnership.

Another study by Englehart (2009, p. 714) highlights that teacher-student interactions, which are based on learner's needs and interests, "provide psychological comfort, strengthen motivation for study, and facilitate social development." Therefore, in the context of current academic education, the educational relationship should focus on collaboration and partnership, collaborative discovery of scientific truth, the formation of the student's abilities to achieve higher academic achievement, problem solving and the development of creativity and flexibility.

Ionescu (2000, pp. 65-69) argues in his study, that in order to perform quality didactic activities, it is necessary for the teachers to have the following qualities, presented by the author in order of importance:
- professional competency;
- psycho-pedagogical and methodical competence, pedagogical tact;
- empathy;
- ability to communicate with students;
- objectivity in scoring, examiner skills;
- imagination and pedagogical creativity;
- ability to capture students' imagination and to develop student's sensitivity;

- flexibility, ability to adapt quickly;
- ability to collaborate with students;
- calm and patient;
- interest in didactic and extradidactical activities of students;
- sense of humor;
- to provide students with a personality model;
- modesty;
- honesty;
- be a good manager;
- trust students;
- be sociable.

In the same vein, research by Parrot (1999, p. 39) on the expectations of first-year students from university activities indicates the following: to form good professionals; to prepare students for a possible teaching career; to develop skills for solving problems; to develop independent thinking skills; to teach students how to look for information and how to use it; mobilize the student for self-motivation and self-sufficiency; to develop their social skills; to develop their ability to critically evaluate information; to emphasize that theory is only an instrument for finding scientific truth and not to present theory as an absolute truth; to make the student take responsibility; to provide them with an environment conducive to research.

Inspired by the psychotherapeutic literature describing the therapeutic relationship as the main tool for achieving change, in educational terms, learning and development, we selected and adapted from Yalom (2013) a series of characteristics of the therapeutic relationship, that we consider appropiate for the educational interactions in the university environment. Therefore, they are formulated here as suggestions and proposals designed to help university teachers acquire new insights into the resource-rich ways of learning relationships:

✓ The professor and the students are for a period of time "road comrades";
✓ Involve students and be encouraging;
✓ Watch with empaty on the "window" of the students;
✓ Each student counts and has the power to influence interactions within a course;
✓ Recognize your mistakes, the difference between good teachers and others, do not consist in errors, but in what you do with them. More open admission of mistakes is a good model for students and an additional sign of their importance to you (Yalom, 2013).
✓ Create a new course/seminar for each year/group of students. The course/seminar does not only reduce to the information delivered to the students, but also involves examples, explanations and applications, dialogue with students, questions and answers, verbal, nonverbal and paraverbal communication, and therefore a certain affective charge, which has the role to influence in a positive or negative sense the interactions in the room and obviously the learning process.
✓ Technics are performing when emanating from the unique interaction between the teacher and the students;
✓ Provides a constructive, and specific feedback from which the student understands exactly what he/she has to do next, so that his/her attention, thinking and behavior is oriented towards objectives. This can often be a useful means of diminishing the defensive reaction, denial and resistance, and a kind and gentle and educational way of supporting students in the process of self-knowledge.
✓ Make your students take responsibility and make no decisions instead of them. "Once individuals recognize the role they play in creating the difficult sessions in their lives, they realize that they alone have the power to change the situation (Yalom, 2013).

Another aspect that defines educational relations in the university environment is constitutional rights of students (Matthews, 2009, pp. 656-658):

- freedom of expression: students have the right to express their political point of view and the ideology they adhere to, provided that this right does not interfere with university discipline;

- the right to public education in a mass education - any student who has the necessary skills has the right to enroll and become a student at any university and any faculty he wants, regardless of race, sex, religion or nationality.

- private rights - these refer to the confidentiality of student data, grades and their school situation;

- religious rights - the student has the freedom to practice any religion he wants, without the university participating in its propagation.

These rights are accompanied by obligations to observe the discipline and regulations imposed by the university, to accept that they are subject to drug controls and tests if they are suspected of being in the possession or under the influence of prohibited substances, otherwise they are sanctioned by expulsion.

3. Conclusions

Specialty literature addresses, so far, only certain facets of the multidimensional construct teacher-students relationship in the university environment. Studies conducted so far indicate that this relationship has a major impact on reducing university dropout, increasing motivation, engagement in student learning activities, optimizing student and teacher professional satisfaction, and increasing students' academic performance.

Thus, we believe that for a constructive and effective relationship with the students, the following skills og the teachers are very important: assertive communication, the optimal emotions management, the willingness to learn at any age and from any interaction. From this enumeration, we can not omit the specialized knowledge and psycho-pedagogical competences of the teaching staff.

So, the way in which the didactic relationship is built in the university environment is a powerful motivational factor for the students. Involvement of students in activity is possible through interactions based on mutual respect and safety, curiosity, understanding and support, cognitive and emotional validation, authenticity and passion for the content being approached.

A professor who loves what he does, his profession and is pleased with his financial status and social status, will convey that state to his students, helping them to realize their potential. In other words, through educational relationship, we can influence students to seek, to discover, to be curious and interested in the teaching contents presented, to trust that they can and will succeed if they make the effort. As A. Williams said, "I'm not telling you it will be easy. I tell you it will be worth it. "

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PROFESSIONAL SATISFACTION, OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND EMOTIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL EXHAUSTION SYNDROME OF TEACHERS IN PRESCHOOL AND PRIMARY EDUCATION

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Abstract: *The teaching profession is considered one of the most demanding and exhausting profession. Freud calls it an almost impossible job, along with being a parent and a psychoanalyst. The objective of this research is to identify and analyze the relationship between professional stress, burnout, professional satisfaction and individual aspects of preschool teachers and primary teachers.The research was carried out on a lot of 62 preschool and primary school teachers. 4 questionnaires were used: Maslasch Burn-Out Inventory, Professional Stress Scale -adapted Mental Health Professionals Stress Scale, MINICRI-Teacher's Assessment of Professional Satisfaction Assessment, Catell Anxiety Questionnaire.*
After processing the data, it was found that preschool teachers and primary teachers are living similar levels of professional satisfaction and stress. From the perspective of Burnout Syndrome manifestations, we did not notice significant differences between the two professions. Early teachers are more vulnerable to fatigue and psycho-emotional exhaustion than experienced teachers.

Keywords:*Professional stress; burnout; professional satisfaction; preschool and primary education; teaching experience;*

1. Introduction

At an international level, the teaching profession is considered one of the most demanding, exhausting but also crucial to other people becoming. Freud calls it an almost impossible job, along with a parent and a psychoanalyst. Preschool teachers and primary teachers are the first people who enter a child's life when it comes out of the parent's nest. Through scientific and didactic competences, teachers in pre-school and primary education continue the construction that was begun within the family. The philosopher Kant believes that education alone can turn us into people. "Man cannot become a man but through education" (Kant, apud Cucoş, 2005). Thus, the author says that we are not born human beings, but becoming human beings, and this human needs to grow and develop by the presence, by accompanying one participative and attentive to the individual's experiences and needs, and this development becomes a premise in Education.

Professional satisfaction affects the general state of a person, people spending a significant part of their life in the workplace. They may be satisfied or dissatisfied with their professional activities. There are many factors that can influence the state of well-being that comes from the professional area. There are factors that relate to each individual's individuality, his personality traits, motivating factors and factors related to the organizational climate. Through correlative research, we want to identify the relationship between psycho-emotional exhaustion syndrome, professional stress and the level of professional satisfaction. In order to help the educational institution, the manager can observe, analyze, and propose measures to increase the level of professional satisfaction of the teaching staff in the

educational institution that coordinates. Thus, creating a harmonious educational environment, favorable to the learning of children, we can speak of an increase in the quality of the educational act.

2. Theoretical framework

As Massari says (2016), professional satisfaction is given by certain emotional states born from the way a person values his work, it is "a key to fulfilling both professional and personal well-being, in the form of a sense of accomplishment (Massari, 2016, p.313). From the perspective of the teaching profession, the author asserts that in the absence of professional satisfaction, we are talking about the success of the work, in the form of productivity, enthusiasm and happiness in the realization of the actual work, negative consequences ensue on the quality of the teaching act (Massari, 2016, p.316). According to this author, the organization of the factors that can influence the professional satisfaction of the teachers in three reference levels comes to integrate both the factors that are related to the individual characteristics of the teaching staff, as well as the aspects related to the specificity of the school, the management of the profession, but also the dimensions of the system education, educational policies with a major impact on professional satisfaction. The gender and age of teachers, seniority in teaching, and even taught discipline correlate significantly with professional satisfaction and motivation in a study of a batch of high school teachers in the United States (Bishay, 1996, apud, Massari, 2016). Also, from the perspective of the individual characteristics, Păişi Lazarescu (2014) concluded that the extraversions along with the emotional stability are associated with the satisfaction at the work place. Among the dimensions of professional satisfaction in primary and preschool teacher, but on satisfaction slope, there were complaints about pay and promotion, but also disagreements about organizational and communication issues. On the other hand, Bota (2013) reports a high level of job satisfaction for a group of 112 teachers in the Romanian high school education compared to the level of didactic satisfaction of the teachers in the British high school education. The author compared the average obtained on her group of teachers to the average obtained by other authors who have researched the level of professional satisfaction in various professional categories: academics, tax agents, nurses. The results show that the investigated teachers have scored the highest level of professional satisfaction among all these investigated professional categories.

Clipa (2016) considered that the Romanian society has crossed many social, political, economic changes that marked the educational sphere. All this introduced new elements at a rapid pace where adaptation was made on the go; the implementation of norms without tuition to the realities of their own educational, social and cultural system creates among teachers on one side and children and parents on the other great difficulties, becoming thus sources of tension and stress. A permanent assessment, the need for continued development and training, the pressure given by responsibility for education and the development of future adult generations are just some of the possible sources of stress in this profession.

There is consensus that most preschool teachers have the ability to work under stress, and their workloads are accompanied by pressure and constraint, uncertainty, fear and frustration (Clipa and Boghean, 2015). Following a study by the two authors, on a number of 150 preschool teachers, 96% of the subjects considered that preschool didactic activities are extremely stressful, which confirms the idea that this job is among the more stressful jobs. The large number of possible sources of stress that was brought to the attention of preschool teachers was structured into two categories. The first is administrative, the stress being caused by exaggerated requests for documents, the large number of children in a group restricted in

small spaces, additional administrative work or high workload. The second source of stress is the financial one, when the salary and insufficiency or lack of didactic materials enters. On the other hand, the different sources of stress related to either political instability (very frequent changes in the education system), or the education that parents have given to children in their first years of life, the inadequate behavior of both children and of parents towards the teacher are sources of stress related to the specifics of the educational activity. Identified as stress-generating were also the necessity of attending courses or seminars, as well as presenting activities at methodological meetings, committees, or professional qualifications.

It was found according to Cojocaru-Borozan (2010 apud Gorincioi, 2015 p.74) that "the incompatibility between the personal expectations of the chosen profession and the professional reality", relational specificity, "disregarding of its own value, typical problems of self-organization (insufficient autonomy, conflicts of role, inadequate or insufficient feed-back, the feeling of personal failure and the disappearance of the true meaning, professional failure ", profound exhaustion and professional exigencies, are just a few of the elements that put pressure on and overwhelm the teacher's situation, called by the author, "emotional burning". In this way, Gorincioi (2015) considers that the age of the teacher is a factor that can influence burnout in the sense that youth associates with greater vulnerability when talking about burnout than with adults in the adult stage of life. Also, in his research, teaching staff with less than 10 years' experience in the department were more affected by emotional burning than those who had gone through this first professional decade. Similarly, the high level of stress favors the occurrence of emotional burning as well as the high level of neuroticism, while job satisfaction can lead to the development of emotional burning in the academic staff (Gorincioi, 2015).

Burnout is a syndrome that affects physical, academic and social performance in the teaching act (Sears et al, 2000, apud Baran et al, 2010), causing aggression, decreased performance, quality and competence is affected, the person is exhausted, which interacts with it, can live the effects of this exhaustion. The decline in teacher performance stems from a drop in the level of interest, concern for students, parents, workplace and causes negative impressions on the people with whom teachers come in contact (Baran et al, 2010). As Baran (2010) points out, it is important to establish those factors that increase the level of burnout. Over time, psychological, occupational, demographic variables have been identified that increase this level. Also, other variables are: age, gender, years in the same activity, educational system, willingness/ willingness to work, degree of appreciation and support by others, professional training, number of students in class, quality of educational institution, state civilian and personal qualities of the teacher.

3. Methodology of research

Our research is quantitative and aims to make a foray into the universe of the two professions. We investigated a group of 62 teachers, preschool and primary education professionals. The research design is a correlative one in which we want to identify and analyze the relationship between psycho-emotional exhaustion syndrome, the professional stress and the level of professional satisfaction of the preschool teachers and primary teachers participating in the research, and certain individual peculiarities.
The objective of the research is to identify and analyze the relationship between psycho-emotional exhaustion syndrome, professional stress, professional satisfaction and subjective peculiarities in preschool and primary education teachers.

Hypotheses:

1. There is an expectation of a relationship between the professional satisfaction of the teachers and:

1.1 The level of professional stress,

1.2 The level of psycho emotional exhaustion,

1.3 The level of their anxiety.

2. It is assumed that there are statistically significant differences between preschool teachers and primary teachers on the field

2.1. Professional satisfaction,

2.2. Professional stress,

2.3. Psycho emotional exhaustion,

2.4. Anxiety.

3. It is presumed that there are significant differences from the perspective of the professional satisfaction experienced by primary and preschool staff according to the salary income.

4. Significant differences are expected when it comes to the age of primary and preschool teachers:

4.1. Psychoemotional exhaustion (burnout),

4.2. Professional stress.

5. It is anticipated that there are significant differences in the level of professional stress according to the experience of the teaching staff in primary and preschool education.

6. It is assumed that there are statistically significant differences according to the didactic degree regarding the level of professional satisfaction for preschool teachers and primary teachers.

Operationalization of variables

Satisfaction is the feeling of accomplishment that the teacher has in his professional activity. It is when the teacher is satisfied by his relationship with children, when the institutional environment is harmonious, when he can perform its activities and tasks.

Professional Satisfaction – in our research it represents the score obtained by the teachers in the questionnaire consisting of 25 items, MINICRI and is the sum of the results obtained in the subscales of this questionnaire:

1. Satisfaction regarding the relationship with children-students

2. Satisfaction regarding the relationship with the family of the children

3. Satisfaction regarding the relationship with the preschool-school environment

4. Satisfaction regarding the work activities and tasks

5. Satisfaction regarding the exercise of the pedagogical profession.

Psychoemotional Exhaustion - is the score obtained by applying the 25-item "burnout" Maslach evaluation questionnaire. It can be felt as an emotional squeeze associated with the physical and mental tiredness of the teachers in their activities.

Professional stress - It is the tension experienced by the teacher because of interpersonal conflicts or disorganized organizational climate. In current research, it is the score obtained in the 42 items that make up the following subscales: Professional demands,

Difficulties in dealing with children, pupils, Organizational problems, Conflict relations with colleagues, Insufficient material and human resources, Professional doubts Conflicts generated by the family climate.

Anxiety - we understand the level of emotional discomfort, the degree of emotional instability of the teacher. It is when the person experiences feelings of insecurity, guilt, strong negative emotions: anxiety, fears. For Catell, the anxiety factor is secondary representing a combination of 5 primary factors:

1. Self-awareness. Social ideal ego,
2. The force self. Emotion,
3. Insecurity. Paranoid tendency,
4. Insecurity in the direction of culpability and
5. Ergic tension (Minulescu, 1996, p.265).

The research lot is one of convenience, consisting of 62 teachers, of which 31 are preschool teacher and 31 are primary teachers, with a large majority of 96% females and only 4% of male gender, who are part of the class of primary teachers. From the perspective of the professional experience at the department, more than 24 subjects had more than 20 years of teaching activity, being the most representative group, 38.7%, followed by the group of those who were in the first year of teaching, a number of 15 subjects, representing 24.2% of the total participants. All teachers were informed of the research objectives and confidentiality of the data. Each research participant has completed 4 questionnaires. Their administration took place within methodical meetings to which they participated.
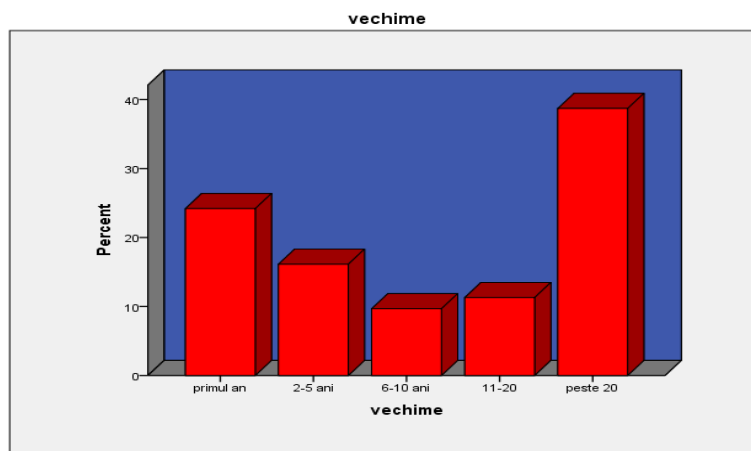
Figure 1. Distribution of the teaching staff according to the length of service.

The instruments used in the research were:

1. Maslasch Burn-Out Inventory - Maslach C.Jackson, SE, 1981,
2. PROFESSIONAL STRESS QUESTIONNAIRE - Workplace Voltage Sources (a questionnaire adaptation - MHPSS = Mental Health Professionals Stress Scale, Delia Cushway & Patrick, A. Tyler (1996)
3. MINICRI-Teacher's Professional Satisfaction Questionnaire - a questionnaire designed and built for current research
4. C - CATELL ANXIETY QUESTIONNAIRE

Analyzing the internal consistency of the instruments we used, the Alpha Cronbach coefficients obtained on our research lot took values between .672, for the Anxietate-C Catell questionnaire, .902 for the Professional Stress Questionnaire, .757 for the questionnaire built

by us for the current research to determine the level of Professional Satisfaction and .902 for Maslasch Burn-Out Inventory-Maslach. All of these values indicate a good internal consistency, which pleads for their use in our study.

4. Results

H. 1.

To test the first hypothesis, we used the Pearson correlation test, which resulted in the correlations shown in Table 1. We have significant negative correlations between professional satisfaction and professional stress (r = -0.49, p <0.001), between professional satisfaction and psychological exhaustion (r = -0.45, p <0.001), but also significant positive correlations between occupational stress and psycho emotional exhaustion-Burnout (r = 0.69, p <0.001), p <0.001) and respectively between professional stress and anxiety ((r = 0.48, p <0.001). The determinants coefficients in the table allow us to see how much of the variation of one of the two variables is determined by the variation of the other variable. These coefficients can be interpreted as a percentage, for example, we can say that professional satisfaction and psycho emotional exhaustion share 40% of the variation that characterizes them, and the remaining 60% of their variation comes from other sources.

The obtained results allow us to conclude that this hypothesis is confirmed, which translates into a relationship of negative association between professional satisfaction and professional stress, professional satisfaction and Burnout and professional satisfaction and anxiety, as well as positive association relationships between professional stress, psycho emotional exhaustion-Burnout and anxiety. Thus, while professional stress increases, the level of psycho emotional exhaustion increases, anxiety is high while the level of professional satisfaction decreases significantly.

Table 1. Correlations between Professional Satisfaction, Professional Stress, Psycho emotional Exhaustion-Burnout and Anxiety

Corelation		Satisfaction professional	Stress professional	Exhaustion Psycho-emotional-Burnout	Anxiety
Professional satisfaction	Correlation coefficient Pearson		r = -0.49	r = -0.64	r = -0.45
	Coefficient of determination		r²=0.24	r²=0.40	r²=0.20
	The threshold of significance		p<0.001	p<0.001	p<0.001
Stress professional	Correlation coefficient Pearson	r = -0.49		r = 0.69	r = 0.48
	Coefficient of determination	r²=0.24		r²=0.47	r²=0.23
	The threshold of significance	p<0.001		p<0.001	p<0.001
Exhaustion Psycho-	Correlation coefficient	r = -0.64	r = 0.69		r = 0.48

emotional (Burnout)	Pearson Coefficient of determination	r²=0.40	r²=0.47			r²=0.23
	The threshold of significance	p<0.001	p<0.001			p<0.001
Anxiety	Correlation coefficient	r = -0.45	r = 0.48	r = 0.48		
	Pearson Coefficient of determination	r²=0.20	r²=0.23	r²=0.23		
	The threshold of significance	p<0.001	p<0.001	p<0.001		

H. 2.

In order to verify the second hypothesis regarding the differences from the perspective of the professional category in our research – preschool teacher or primary teachers - on the level of professional satisfaction, professional stress, anxiety and psycho emotional exhaustion - Burnout, we used the statistical **t** test for independent samples. In all four dimensions, the results obtained are statistically insignificant (p> 0.05), so hypothesis 2 of the research is not confirmed.

However, we have identified significant differences in two subscales of the anxiety variable, namely Ego Force and ergic tension. The data in table no. 2 gives us both the value of the **t** test and the value of the significance threshold, p <.05. Looking at the environments, we noticed that the group of preschool teachers obtained a significantly lower average for the Ego Force (m = 3.68) compared to the average obtained by the group of primary teachers (m = 4.77). As far as the ergic tension is concerned, we show a higher average of the group of preschool teachers (m = 8.94) compared to the average of the primary teachers (m = 6.84).

This hypothesis does not confirm the differences between preschool teacher and primary teachers for the total level of anxiety, but significant differences appear on the two subscales mentioned above.

Table 2.Differences between preschool teacher and primary teachers

Variable	Categories compared	Number	Average	Standard deviation	The difference Average	Test *t*	Meaning
Force ego	Preschool teacher	31	3.68	2.02	-1.09	-2.15	p<0.05
	Primary teacher	31	4.77	1.97			
Tension	Preschool teacher	31	8.94	4,50	2.09	2.04	p<0.05
	Primary teacher	31	6.84	3.49			

H. 3, H. 4, H. 5, H. 6

The last 4 hypotheses of the research were checked using the same significance test of the differences between the averages, and the obtained results are presented in Table 3. We

observe a significance threshold p <0.5 for each of the compared categories, which confirms the hypotheses formulated. Thus, the **t** test is statistically significant for the average differences in the level of satisfaction of the pupils according to their financial income, which means that those with an income higher than 2000 lei show a statistically elevated level than their colleagues which have revenues between 1600-2000 lei.

Also, from an age perspective, the **t** test reveals a significant difference between younger teacher, aged between 20-30 and the older teachers aged 41-50 years old, in the way they rated for the variable professional stress and exhaustion Psycho emotional. Similarly, people in the first year of teaching are significantly more burdened on the level of professional stress than their colleagues with more than 20 years of experience at the department. A significant difference on one of the subscales of the professional satisfaction variable, namely the Professional Satisfaction in the relationship with the school-educational environment, we identified it in the teaching staff who have the didactic grade I faculty towards their debut colleagues in the pedagogical profession.

Tabel 3. Differences between environments – salary, age, length of work.

Variable	Categories compared	Nr	Mean M	Standard Deviation SD	The mean difference	Test *t*	Meaning
Professional satisfaction	1600-2000 lei	18	88,84	8,523	-8,017	-3,04	p<0.05
	Peste 2000 lei	26	96,96	8,632			
Professional stress	20-30 years	21	24,76	13,43	8,82	2,54	p<0.05
	41-50 years	15	15, 93	7,196			
Burnout	20-30 years	21	50,29	15,40	9,95	2,325	p<0.05
	41-50 years	15	40,33	10.26			
Professional stress	First year of work	15	27,27	14,572	7,892	2,144	p<0.05
	Over 20 years of work	24	19,38	8,479			
Professional satsisfaction related to educational enviroment	Debutants	16	18,94	3, 235	-2, 108	-2,29	p<0.05
	Grade I	22	21,05	2, 439			

5. Discussions and conclusions

Let's understand the connection! At the heart of these links is the teacher in his / her relationships with his / her children, colleagues, school, educational environment, education system.

In our research we have focused our attention on identifying and analyzing the existing relationships between Professional Satisfaction, Level of Professional Stress, and the degree of psychoemotional exhaustion-Burnout. We also introduced the Anxiety Factor as a component of the personality structure of the teaching staff and we intended to identify

possible associations between the emotional stability of the teaching staff and the other areas of our research.

The links between the variables of the research are in line with the existing theories regarding the Professional Satisfaction of the Teacher (Massari, 2016)) and about the stress in the teaching activity (Clipa, 2016). According to our results, the professional satisfaction of the teachers is closely related to the tension they experience in the form of professional stress and which in turn is associated with the psycho emotional exhaustion-Burnout, but also with the Emotional Stability, versus the Anxiety level. When professional stress sources tend to become more harmless to preschool and primary school professionals, they will be able to avoid emotional shedding, loss of meaning, endless fatigue, lack of energy, etc. There is a consensus that Professional Satisfaction, Professional Stress and Personal Development Levels must be monitored to prevent the exhaustion that comes from this profession, which can sometimes be experienced as exhausting. (Massari, 2016)

Following statistical analyzes on the two groups of teachers who participated in our research, we found that preschool teacher and primary teachers are living similar levels of professional satisfaction in their didactic work, a perspective that makes us argue that both professions are generating similar degrees professional satisfaction. Even though the age of the children participating in the educational act is different, there are great differences in the institutional and professional organization of the two professions, yet we cannot talk about a higher degree of professional satisfaction for either of the two categories professional. We found the same thing for the verse of Professional Stress and Burnout-Psychological Exhaustion. The two professions scored similar levels for both criteria proposed in the study. Thus, the tensions generated by professional situations are similarly felt, but there is no discrepancy for those working with preschool children compared to those working with primary school children.

We found a statistically significant difference between preschool teacher and primary teachers on the Anxiety Scale, in the sense that primary teachers ranked more on the Self-Emotion Strength subscale while the ergic tension subscale proved to be more loaded in the group of preschool teachers, about which we may say that they experience several states of hyper-emotive, irritability and nervousness, having a greater need for consideration than their primary college. How can we make sense of the difference? Can we say that the specificity of children in the educational activities of teachers in preschool education, the somewhat legacy framework, the flexibility related to the establishment of limits, the rules when it comes to the child in kindergarten often put in difficulty this professional category? The fact that from the perspective of tensions and exhaustion, however, there are no differences between preschool teacher and primary teachers, the identification of differences in subscale of anxiety comes as a way in which these professionals manage to integrate each, the professional peculiarities with resonances in the plan of emotional experiences.

The analysis of the statistical data across the entire group of teachers led us to the conclusion that the younger teachers, who are at the beginning of their teaching career, are more vulnerable to fatigue and psychoemotional exhaustion than their experienced colleagues at the didactic chair. Also, preschool teachers and primary teachers with seniority and didactic experience feel less busy and tense professionally than their younger colleagues. The onset in the teaching profession involves entering what constitutes professional reality. Those who choose this profession will encounter the various difficulties and conflicts that can keep both personal characteristics and those of their fellow guilds, the children they will accompany in learning, the parents of these children, the meeting with the tutoring of the educational system, methodological norms, organizational hierarchies and many more. In addition to the basic assimilated theoretical training, some professional and life experience, the mentor's support, which can guide and contain the teacher's insecurities, can be divided from the

richness of his own didactic experience to meeting the daily challenges. It also needs strong motivation and a strong belief in the educational act, the enthusiasm and the joy of giving the child learning and growth experiences for himself and for the world.

Professional satisfaction correlates with the financial income of those working in preschool and primary education. Similarly, Massari (p.329, 2016) also writes about the issues of wage inefficiency and organizational deficiencies both from a managerial perspective and from a climate perspective, all of which have significant repercussions on the extent of professional efficiency, performance and professional satisfaction. One of the threats to these effects is related to the fact that the teaching staff chooses to leave the education system. This also corroborates the results obtained by testing the hypothesis 6, according to which we note that the debutants show a lower level of professional satisfaction when it comes to their relationship with the preschool or school environment towards their colleagues with didactic degree I. We can ask ourselves how we can help new educators get into this profession? The need for a harmonious climate on the part of their colleagues to support them in this process of initiation, the appropriate resolution of the conflicts that have arisen in this process, and the availability of the working group seem to be just some of the milestones that are being considered by the debutants.

6. Usefulness of the study and future research directions

One of the benefits of this study is to be able to observe, analyze and work together, Professional Satisfaction, Professional Stress and Psycho emotional Exhaustion-Burnout within these two professional categories, preschool teacher and primary teachers, both at the conceptual level and above all the existing dynamics between these 2 phenomena. We consider it important to understand these dynamics and existing relationships in order to be able to support the didactic framework but especially to directly support the act of learning for children. Measures are needed to maintain a high level of professional satisfaction among teachers, which could diminish their professional stress with an effect on their emotional state and availability. Thus, creating a harmonious educational environment suitable for the learning of children, we can finally talk about an increase in the quality of the educational act.

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SELF-ATTITUDE AND ATTITUDE TOWARD LIFE OF PERSONS WITH MOTOR DEFICIENCY

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Abstract: *Disability is a multidimensional concept that has the following components: medical, functional and social. This research proposed to test the hypothesis that self-attitude and attitude towards the life of motor deficiencies persons is independent of the level of studies. Thus, people with motor disabilities who have university studies: wish to be born a second time, get annoyed when they do not succeed; complain without reason, feel jealous of those who do not face the same deficiency, are satisfied with them, are fulfilled by their lives, do not believe that others are to blame for what is happening to them. People with motor disabilities who have gymnasia studies: feel the most dissatisfied with them, are not so fulfilled in their life, get angry when they fail, think the others are to blame for what's happening, have feelings of jealousy to people who do not face the same deficiency and do not complain without reason.*

Keywords: *people with motor deficiencies; attitude towards oneself; attitude towards life; perspective of graduate studies;*

1. Introduction

Disability is a multidimensional concept, with medical, functional and social components. For disabled people, we need to be able to quantify the need for specialists and support services, to study the course of life for people with disabilities, and to develop accurate strategies to prevent relapses and aggravations. We need to make sure that there is no confusion about cause and effect (attributing associated conditions as a result of disability when they are actually the cause of functional limitations) and those comparisons with typical (non-disabled) individuals is correct (S. McDermott, M.A. Turk, 2011). Physical deficiencies are visible and cannot be hidden. For example, one can see a person using a wheelchair and / or a person walking through a frame. While others may hide disabilities to avoid discrimination or stigmatization, it is not possible for this population to do so (Z.P. Nkabinde, F.E. Obiakor, M.T. Offor, D.J. Smith, 2010). Labeling and negative stereotypes associated with different causes of disability result in social exclusion, which also affects the individual's health.

2. Background

Central nervous system disorders, nervous system diseases and degenerative muscular illnesses often lead to significant physical impairment and disability. Adolescents with low motor skills have reduced the perception of their physical self and tend to avoid physical activity. Individuals with chronic physical disabilities participate less on paid and voluntary work and are less satisfied with their lives than with people without health problems. The results show that the relationship between happiness and work is different for people with chronic illness and physical disability compared to typical persons. Few people with chronic illness and disability have been classified as "thankful for work" (C. van Campen, M. Cardol, 2009). Children with disabilities, especially girls, have been found to be in danger of

participating in a more restricted variety of activities, which implies fewer social interactions (N. Schreuer et al., 2014). Adolescents with cerebral palsy and spina bifida interact weaker with colleagues. An on-line pilot intervention has provided interaction with colleagues. The participants of that pilot-study have reported more social contacts, reduced loneliness, increased social acceptance and confidence (M. Stewart, 2011). Children with physical disabilities are known to be at risk of participating in fewer activities, so fewer leisure activities which affect their quality of life (A. Bortolussi, W. Douglas Biggar, 1996, M.K. Bult, et al., 2011).

Alla S. et al. (2016) investigated the influence of demographic, clinical and temporal factors associated with disability. Higher level of disability was associated with advanced or younger age, longer duration of the disease, spinal cord syndromes with onset of motor involvement and a progressive onset type. Overall, the studied factors explained about one-third of the variation in disability, of which about two-thirds were represented by: age, onset and disease duration, and a third, of the nature of the first symptoms and type of illness: onset (progressive or recurrent). The current age, age at onset and duration of illness had all independent associations with disabilities, and their effects also interacted, contributing to the increase of disability level during the disease. The results of regression analysis showed that people with severe disabilities had a lower rate of participation in different screening activities, they also had significantly longer stays in hospitals and generally poor health status (Boyoung Jeon, Soonman Kwon, Hongsoo Kim, 2015; M. Rowland, 2014). Perinatal etiologies were dominated by the main cause: hypoxia in 6.3% cases; postnatal etiologies were dominated by neonatal infections such as meningitis and hyperthermia of unknown origin in 9.7% cases, seizures 4.2% and jaundice 2.8% of the cases; prenatal etiologies were dominated by reduced birth weight 16.7% cases, prematurity 2.8% of cases, multiple pregnancies 2.1% cases (S. Batoui, et al., 2015). Pain was one of the most reported symptoms for children with motor disabilities, especially during daily activities in institutions and during rehabilitation. Despite the care and attention of professionals, the presence of chronic pain persists in frequent care maneuvers. The most painful activities were: feeding, passive limb mobilization, orthostatic transfers, and clothing - stripping (J.S. Bourseul, 2016). People with motor disabilities often suffer from pain and fatigue secondary to physical disorders that may worsen over time, leading to increased disability and decreased quality of life (anxiety, depression) (E. Widerström-Noga, M.L. Finlayson, 2010).

Building the professional identity of people with motor disabilities shows an identity formation process that starts with a sense of failure and exclusion at the beginning of life, continues through a turning point and ends with a feeling of self-efficacy (N. Dvir, 2015). Chronic illness, disability and social inequality intersect, unfortunate. New ways are needed to counteract the social determinants of health and disability. Employment opportunities, employability, employment decisions and employment discrimination are under the control of managers of companies / institutions and human resources specialists, informed and motivated specialists who can make the difference (R. Klimoski, L. Donahue, 1997).

Access to information technology is of vital importance to people with disabilities. In this context, changing and replacing standard devices (keyboard and mouse), and providing alternative techniques using switches would be welcome (G.F. Shein, 1992). The use of robotic technology in support devices opens new opportunities for people with severe disabilities (tetraplegia, spinal cord injuries and so on) at work and in their homes. It can reduce social exclusion and contribute to social and professional integration (Ch. Bühler et al., 1995).

People with physical disabilities not only integrate better in society but have significant achievements in the sports world. It is now a routine for tetraplegia athletes to complete marathons in less than 2-3 hours. A research by: C.J. Gaskin, M.B. Andersen and T.

Morris (2010) shows Ben's history of life, illustrating the benefits and costs of trying to compensate for disability through sport and physical activity. By engaging in sports and physical activities, these achievements have not compensated for his feelings of inferiority, but he has set tougher goals for himself after he has passed the euphoria of accomplishing his previous goals (C.J. Gaskin, M.B. Andersen, T. Morris, 2010). The Romanian tennis experience shows great potential for social integration of people with disabilities (R. Stănescu, 2014).

Research has also been carried out on the attitudes of parents who have encouraged the physical activity of children with disabilities and their participation in sports activities. Although they did not see their children as particularly skilled, they appreciated that the little ones enjoyed physical and sports activity. In conclusion, parents' support for sport and physical activity of children does not depend on their physical capacity, but on the encouragement offered (J.J. Martin, Y.S. Choi, 2009). Music has been also successful as a therapeutic intervention for people with physical disabilities. Motor coordination and driveability can be enhanced by many musical experiences. The results highlighted the effect of musical therapy on sensory motor reactions (R. Hatampour, 2011).

There are researches that explore how people with motor disabilities want access to natural areas and protected areas. They ask themselves: *Do they share the same desires and values in terms of access to natural areas and protected areas as typical people?* The conclusion was: the mobility disability group has expressed a stronger desire for increased access in such environments. Managers of these environments have been among the last to have accessed these environments to the needs of tourists with motor disabilities - partly because of the physical difficulties and costs of doing so, but also because of the desire to preserve the natural and wild nature of these areas (B.A. Lovelock, 2010). Participating in recreational activities is a fundamental human right and an important factor in the quality of life. Participating in recreational, community and school activities for children and young people with physical disabilities presents a number of environmental barriers. Barriers to participation have been encountered in school and work environments, physical and built environments, governmental institutions, service and assistance institutions (M. Law et al., 2007). Adults with physical disabilities often have limited opportunities to participate in leisure activities, so virtual reality tehnologies (VRs) can serve to broaden the recreational activities repertoire. VR seems to offer varied and motivating opportunities for leisure activities among young adults with physical disabilities.

Ease of use and adaptability make it a feasible option for this population (S. Yalon-Chamovitz, P.L. Weiss, 2008). Currently, commercial computer games offer few software options and access devices that are flexible enough to meet the needs of children with disabilities. There have been developed peripheral access devices and a 3D computer game that does not require action to shoot, click, or activate various keys at the same time. This method offers a range of action that can be adapted to different types of motor deficiencies (A. Oppewal et al., 2015).

For people with disabilities, robotics assisted with motor disabilities can be a relevant alternative as it offers new opportunities for action on the environment. However, a number of studies show the existence of problems with the acceptance of robotics assisted by people with disabilities. Therefore, it is recommended to consider disabled people in the design of assisted robotics (R. Khomiakoff, G. Czternatsy, L. Vandromme, 2009).

3. Methodology

The ***purpose of the research*** was to investigate the self-attitude and attitude towards the life of persons with motor deficiencies according to the level of graduated education:

gymnasium, high school, university. **Research hypothesis**: we anticipate that self-attitude and attitude towards the life of motor deficiencies is independent of graduate level. The survey based on the questionnaire was the main method used in the research. The questionnaire was elaborated on two dimensions: leisure and attitude towards the world and life. The questionnaire was developed and validated specifically for this research (Alpha Chronbach coefficient = 0.802). The **research group** comprised 93 subjects with motor disabilities (para, tetra, hemi (pleats), para, tetra, hemi (paresis), myopaths, amputated limbs and so on). Of these, 60.2% (56 subjects) were male and the remaining 39.8% (37 subjects) being female. Depending on the origin, there were 73 subjects (78.5%) from the urban area, the remaining 20 subjects (21.5%) living in rural areas. If we look at the age group, we have 14 subjects (15.05%) aged up to 20 years; 29 subjects (31.18%) aged 21-30 years; 17 subjects (18.27%) aged 31-40; 18 subjects (19.35%) aged 41-50 years and 15 subjects (16.12%) aged over 50 years. Another criterion for differentiation was the level of education of the subjects: 16 subjects (17.2%) who graduated gymnasium/secondary school, 41 subjects (44.1%) who graduated from the high school, 22 subjects (23.7%) who graduated from the school post-secondary and 14 subjects (15.1%) who graduated from higher education (faculty). Employment was another aspect of the batch characterization, so only 26 subjects (28%) work (have a job), the remaining 67 subjects (72%) not having a job. If we look at the subjects from the point of view of the nature of the deficiency, we have 32 subjects (34.4%) with inherited deficiency and 61 subjects (65.6%) who have acquired the deficiency during their lifetime.

4. Results

The main research hypothesis consists in our anticipation that *self-attitude and attitude towards life of motor deficiencies is independent of the level of education*. Self-attitude and attitude towards life were investigated through 8 items of the questionnaire, for which a high-value of Alpha Chronbach coefficient (.880) was obtained. The items were: *SometimesI get angry when I cannot do what I propose; Others are to blame for what's happening to me; I was surprised to have feelings of jealousy towards people who do not experience the same deficiency; Sometimes I cry without reason; I'm a person happy with my life; I'm happy; I think I'm fulfilled with my life at the moment; I wish I was born the second time.*

Table 1. Mean values of self-attitude and attitude towards life for persons with motor disability

Education level	Mean	St. Dev.	Education level	Mean	St. Dev.	Education level	Mean	St. Dev.
SometimesI get angry when I can not do what I propose			*Others are to blame for what's happening to me*			*I wish I was born the second time*		
gymnasium high-school	3,38	-1,025	gymnasium	2,13	1,408	gymnasium high-school	3,38	1,360
	3,24	1,090	high-school	1,85	1,236		2,78	1,370
post-secondary	3,14	,941	post-secondary education	2,18	1,259	post-secondary	2,23	1,110
education	3,29	,469		2,00	0,784	education	3,43	1,222
university			university			university		
I'm a person happy with my life			*Sometimes I cry without reason*			*I'm happy*		
gymnasium	2,88	1,204	gymnasium	2,13	,957	gymnasium	3,25	,447

Education level	Mean	St. Dev.	Education level	Mean	St. Dev.	Education level	Mean	St. Dev.
m high-school	2,59	,948	high-school post-secondary education	2,22	1,037	m high-school	2,73	1,073
post-secondary education	3,68	,839	university	2,05	1,133	post-secondary education	3,27	,985
university	3,00	,961		3,00	1,240	university	3,29	,726
I think I'm fulfilled with my life at the moment			*I was surprised to have feelings of jealousy towards people who do not experience the same deficiency*					
gymnasium high-school	3,00	,730	gymnasium	3,00	1,265			
	2,63	1,080	high-school	2,22	1,235			
post-secondary education	3,50	,802	post-secondary education	2,00	1,234			
university	3,29	,726	university	2,86	1,027			

In the table 1 are presented the values of the self-attitude and attitude towards life variables for persons with motor disability, viewed from the education level perspective (gymnasium, high-school, post-secondary education and university).

We might think that if people are more educated, then they could also have a positive attitude toward themselves and towards life, to a greater extent than those with fewer studies. Thus, in the item *I wish to have been born the second time,* the persons with university studies register the highest average value: 3,43 with a standard deviation of 1,360, compared to the lowest average, recorded by graduates post-secondary school (2,23 with a standard deviation of 1,110). But the above-stated reasoning is not fully verified: gymnasium and high school graduates are placed in an intermediate position. Returning to the high values of those with university studies, this could be explained by their desire to have a second chance to capitalize otherwise.

Thanks to them, in the presence of motor disabilities, there are people with post-secondary studies (average value: 3,68 with a standard deviation of ,839) and those with university studies (average value: 3,00 with a standard deviation of ,961). On the opposite side are people dissatisfied with them, and these are those with high school education (average value: 2,59 with a standard deviation of ,948) and the most dissatisfied are the persons with secondary education (average value: 2,88 with a deviation standard of 1,204). It seems that education can increase the ability to understand the presence of the disease. In agreement with self-esteem, happiness also comes. On the first positions we find those with higher education (average: 3,29 with a standard deviation of ,726) and post-secondary (average: 3,27 with a standard deviation of ,985). Low values are recorded by those with gymnasium and high school education. In the item *I think I'm fulfilled with my life at the moment* the persons with higher education are placed in a second position (the average value: 3,29 with a standard deviation of ,730), being overtaken by those with post-secondary studies average: 3,50 with a standard deviation of ,802). Again, we find those with secondary and lower secondary education.

For the other four items the situation is reversed. Thus, to the question *SometimesI get angry when I cannot do what I propose*, people with higher education are annoyed, the mean is 3.29 with a standard deviation of abnormality, 0,469 being overtaken by those with gymnasium studies, 3,38 with a standard deviation of - 1.025. Self-control of care is weak

doubles with *I happen to cry without reason*. At this post, the people with higher education are detached (mean: 3.00 with a standard deviation of 1,240), followed by those with higher education (mean: 2.22 with a standard deviation of 1.037). Also, for the item *I was surprised to have feelings of jealousy towards people who do not experience the same deficiency,* people with higher education are in the first positions. Thus, the persons with higher education rank second with an average value of 2.86, with a standard deviation of 1.027; on the first position being the persons with secondary education (average value: 3.00 with a deviation standard of 1.265). People with higher education are better positioned when it comes to answers to the item *others are to blame for what's happening to me*. They are to a greater extent aware that others are not to blame, the third place, as it can be seen in table no. 2 (mean: 2.00 with a standard deviation of 0.784). Those who accuse the most are the people with post-secondary studies (mean: 2.18 with a standard deviation of 1,259), and the least accuse those with higher education (mean: 1.85 with one standard deviation of 1,236). Following the ANOVA test, the following results were obtained: $F(3) = 6,095$, $p < 0,01$ between *I'm a person happy with my life* and the studies of people; $F(3) = 4,743$, $p < 0,04$ between We consider that *I think I'm fulfilled with my life at the moment* and studies of people.

A total score of results was obtained for responses investigating attitudes towards oneself and towards life of people with disabilities. Next, the average value for this total result is identified. It had value: 21.76 (minimum - 8 and maximum - 34). It was divided into three categories of the obtained interval.

Thus, the category: low level had the values below 17, the category: average level, between values 17-27 and the category: high level, values over 27. The results were as follows: 10 cases (10.8%), for the average, most of the cases - 77 (82.8%) and for the high level, only 6 cases (6.5%).

Next, we wanted to analyse these results in terms of the criterion: completed studies.

Table 2. Distribution of results on three categories

Studies	Low level	Average level	High level
Gymnasium	0 subjects (0%)	14 subjects (15,05%)	2 subjects (2,15%)
High-school	10 subjects (10,75%)	27 subjects (29,03%)	4 subjects (4,30%)
Post-secondary education	0 subjects (0%)	22 subjects (23,66%)	0 subjects (0%)
University	0 subjects (0%)	14 subjects (15,05%)	0 subjects (0%)

And from these results, we notice that we cannot speak of people with a certain level of education that have a higher level for the self-attitude and attitude towards life than the others. All four variants of studies have the same distribution of results: most on average and the remainder disposed on low and high levels in relatively equal proportions.

Calculation of Spearman correlations identified the following: high level correlations - between *I'm a person happy with my life* and *I think I'm fulfilled with my life at the moment* (.721 with p-0.01); *I think I'm fulfilled with my life at the moment* and *I'm happy* (.662 with p-0.01); between *I'm a person happy with my life* and *I'm happy* (.653 with p-0.01) and middle-level correlations - between *I was surprised to have feelings of jealousy towards people who do not experience the same deficiency* and *Sometimes I cry without reason* (.546 with p-0.01); between *I was surprised to have feelings of jealousy towards people who do not experience the same deficiency* and *Sometimes I cry without reason* (.546 with p-0.01); *I was surprised to have feelings of jealousy towards people who do not experience the same deficiency* and *I wish I was born the second time* (.513 with p-0,01); *I wish I was born the second time*time and *Sometimes I cry without reason* (.498 with p-0.01).

5. Conclusions

A portrait of self-attitude and attitude toward life of persons with motor deficiency looks as follows:

• *persons with university studies*: are pleased with them (mean: 3.00 with a standard deviation of 0.961); fulfilled with their life (average value: 3.29 with a standard deviation of 0.726), do not think others are to blame for what is happening to them (mean: 2.00 with a standard deviation of 0.784). However, they get angry when they fail (mean: 3.29 with a standard deviation of 0.469); complain without reason (mean: 3.00 with a standard deviation of 1.240); (mean of 2.86, at a standard deviation of 1.027) and want to be born a second time (mean, highest: 3.43 with a standard deviation of 1.360);

• *persons with gymnasium studies:* are the most dissatisfied (mean: 2.88 with a standard deviation of 1,204); are not so fulfilled in their lives (mean: 3.00 with a standard deviation of 730); they get nervous when they fail (mean: 3.38 with a standard deviation of -1.025); believe that others are to blame for what is happening to them (mean: 2.13 with a standard deviation of 1.408); presents a feeling of jealousy to people who do not experience the same deficiency (the value of the highest mean - 3.00, at a standard deviation of 1.265) and we can say that they do not complain without reason (mean: 2.13 with a standard deviation of 0.957).

The ANOVA test had the following results: $F_{(3)} = 6,095$, $p < 0,01$ between *I'm a person happy with my life* and people's studies; $F_{(3)} = 4,743$, $p < 0,04$ between *I think I'm fulfilled with my life at the moment* and the studies of people.

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HEUTAGOGY – AN APPROPRIATE FRAMEWORK FOR COMPUTER AIDED LEARNING COURSE WITH POST-GRADUATE TEACHER STUDENTS

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Abstract:*This study is a practical action research. Its purpose is to explore the practicality and applicability of heutagy for post-graduate students who are preparing to become teachers. The necessity to use a heutagogical framework derives from the fact that students are very different as specialization and level of abilities in using computer and mobile devices. At the same time, they are mature learners, with a bachelor's degree in diverse fields. The pedagogical research comprises three principal stages: the preliminary stage, to determine the degree of diversity in the students' group; the pedagogical intervention, and the research evaluation. Computer aided learning is a course whose main outcome is to enable future teachers to use computer and mobile devices in the classroom. Technology has now a spectacular evolution and, to be able to manipulate it in the future, the teachers have to become lifelong learners. Heutagy can empower them with capabilities like self-efficacy, communication and teamwork skills, creativity, positive values and self-determined learning. The results of the research confirm that the heutagy is an appropriate framework for the teachers' education in academic post-graduate studies.*

Keywords: *heutagy; self-determined learning; computer aided learning; student-centered learning;*

1. Introduction

Heutagy is a challenge for teachers, especially if they are working with post-graduate students who want to become teachers themselves. The students are prepared to become engineers, economists, philologists, philosophers, actors, mathematicians, journalists, doctors, psychologists, geographers, lawyers and so on. They have decided, as a second chance, to teach at different levels: in lower secondary education, upper secondary education, short term or long-term higher education, as a second chance. The reasons why more and more adults choose post-graduate studies is the aging of the population on the one hand, but also the frequent change of workplace and the rapid evolution of technology (Ross-Gordon, 2011).

The future teachers will be able to teach different subjects, in accordance with their studies. They have a bachelor degree in different specializations, but they did not attend the courses of the psychology-pedagogy module during their university years.

The heutagogical principles will be used in the course of computer aided learning, so, the level of computer skills is important, too. Usually, the students of this kind are very different from this point of view: some of them are at the basic level; others are using the computer in a professional way, depending on their skills in the domain. All of them are using mobile devices, but especially for communication or socialization, not for learning.

For this heterogeneous group of students, a general, common curriculum is not appropriate and it is obligatory to find other educational strategies.

2 Theoretical frameworks

2.1 Adult learners

The post-graduate teacher students are adult learners, with learning experience. This group of students can be characterized as "non-traditional" because of the age first of all, they are older than 22 (Horn, 1996), they attend the classes part-time and they are not living on campus (Stokes, 2006), they are working full-time, are financially independent from the parents, are married or have children (Choy 2002). The post-graduate teacher students have their strengths but at the same time the weaknesses that differentiate them from traditional ones (Jameson & Fusco, 2014).

Adult learners prefer self-direction, they are accustomed to learning, have a high degree of motivation, and have experience from previous studies (Lieb, 1999), engage in transformative learning (Mezirow, 2000). Their relationship with teachers is different from that of regular students (Lynch & Bishop-Clark, 1994) and they are more strongly motivated (Delahaye & Ehrich, 2008; Sachs, 2001; Silverstein, Choi & Bulot, 2001).

The adult learners are faced with personal, professional or institutional obstacles (Ritt, 2008) that often lead them to abandon (Kerka, 1995). Regarding these obstacles, the group of the students is homogenous. They are influenced by psychological factors which determine their goals, attitudes and behaviour (Bandura, 1994; Usher & Pajares, 2008) and they should be in the main focus of the teachers (Jameson & Fusco, 2014).

The university education focus on teaching rather than on student learning and the teacher seeks to control and determine the learning of the student (Dyson, 2010). The teaching based on lecture can demote and disable the students and create a gap between content and its practical applicability (Haber-Curran & Tillapaugh, 2015).

2.2 Heutagogy

The concept of heutagogy (based on the Greek word for "self") was defined by Hase and Kenyon in 2000 as "the study of *self-determined learning*". In heutagogy, a holistic way is applied to develop the learner capabilities. The learning is an active and proactive process and learners are "the major agent in their own learning, which occurs as a result of personal experiences" (Kenyon & Hase, 2010).

The focus of heutagogy is to create capable learners. The learners develop their capability and capacity to learn (Ashton & Newman, 2006; Bhoryrub et al, 2010; Hase & Kenyon, 2000; Blaschke, 2012). Heutagogy is a "net-centric" theory because it uses the power of the Internet and the new technologies with applications in distance education, as well as it serves as "a framework for digital age teaching and learning" (Anderson, 2010; Blaschke, 2012).

2.3 Self-determined learning

Self-determined learning is characterized by competencies *and* capabilities acquired by learners (Hase & Kenyon, 2000, 2007). The ability to acquire knowledge and skills is defined by competency and the confidence of the learner in his competency is capability, the ability "to take appropriate and effective action to formulate and solveproblems in both familiar and unfamiliar and changing settings" (Gardner et al, 2008; Blaschke, 2012). Capable learners are characterized by the following features:

- *self-efficacy*, they how to learn and usually reflect on the learning process;

- *communication and teamwork skills*, they communicate well with the colleagues and work together;
- *creativity*, they apply their competencies to new and unfamiliar situations and are adaptable and flexible;
- *positive values,* they have an open attitude and promote the positive values (Kenyon & Hase, 2010; Gardner et al, 2008).

The competent learners acquire knowledge and abilities; knowledge which can be retrieved and abilities which can be proven. The capable learners can use the abilities and knowledge in new situations. Capability is the extension of competence, and without competency there cannot be capability. In the heutagogical framework, the learning is provided through the process of double-looping, which allows students to be aware of their learning style and to adapt the new situations to their own learning style, increasing their capability. Heutagogy is the appropriate framework for the adult learners needs, in complex and changing conditions because of the dual focus on competencies and capability (Bhoryrub et al, 2010; Blaschke, 2012).

2.4 The heutagogical approach

The underlying principles of the heutagogical approach (Narayan & Herrington, 2014) are provided below:

(1) "An open or flexible curriculum that recognizes the fluid nature of learning.
(2) The learner as the driver in determining his/her learning path, context, activities.
(3) The learner is involved in the design of the assessment or ensures flexibility for the learner to be able to apply it within their context.
(4) Learning is collaborative.
(5) Coaching and scaffolding are provided to the learner when needed.
(6) Questions are learner directed; this provides an opportunity for true collaboration between the teacher and the learner with regard to the content and the process. The questions also provide clarity on what guidance, scaffold, and support are needed by the learner.
(7) The learner creates contextually relevant content according to their knowledge and learning needs.
(8) Reflective practice for deep learning is encouraged."

These principles are a practical guide for a learning design that could be applied in post-graduate studies for teacher education.

2.5 Applications

In a review of heutagogical practice and literature, Blaschke (2012) stipulates that heutagogy is most appropriate for post-graduate studies. She provides examples of its application in education, engineering, and nursing. However, there are examples of heutagogy successfully implementation in undergraduate courses: "a vocational foundation degree, landscape architecture, product design, contemporary music, performing and screen arts, and architecture" (Cochrane & Bateman, 2010).

The University of Western Sydney in New South Wales, Australia has implemented a heutagogical approach to its *teacher education program.* They designed programs to integrate self-determined learning through blended learning and applied this approach to the course design, development, and delivery, but not in the summative evaluation. The university has identified the following benefits: "improved teacher outcomes, more capable teachers (learners) who are better-prepared for the complexities of the learning environment, increased

learner confidence in perceptions, engaged learners in communities of practice, learner scaffolding of peer learning processes, improved ability of the learner to investigate ideas, and further development of the learner's ability to question interpretations of reality from their position of competence" (Ashton & Newman, 2006; Ashton & Elliott, 2007; Blaschke, 2012).

3 Research Methodology

The purpose of this study is to explore the practicality and applicability of the heutagogical framework to the post-graduate group of students who are preparing to become teachers.
The focus is to find out if a self-determined learning model can be used as a workable learning and teaching means for the academic disciplines in the psychology-pedagogy module, particularly for computer aided learning.
Research question: Is heutagogy an appropriate framework for the teachers' education in academic post-graduate studies?
The principal stages of the research were (Cretu, 2015):
- Preliminary stage: with the purpose to characterize the group of students;
- Pedagogical intervention;
- Research evaluation.

This study has used a mixed-method design, which is "the procedure for collecting, analyzing, and combining both quantitative and qualitative data" (Creswell, 2012).
The target population of the study consists of 59 students, graduates in different specializations, who attend the psychology-pedagogy module courses to be able to work in education. The method to select the sample was in function of the students' availability and willingness (Cretu, 2015).

4 Research Design

4.1 Preliminary stage

4.1.1 Sub-questions

The first group of sub-questions was formulated with the purpose to characterize the group of students.
The quantitative sub-questions refer to the heterogeneousness of the student group:
- Which specialization have they graduated?
- Did they learn information technology or computer science or informatics during the university studies?
- Which subjects will they teach?
- At which level (lower or upper secondary education, short term or long term higher education) will they work in the future?

The qualitative sub-questions refer to the use of computer or mobile devices, to the students' experience in teaching and using computers and mobile devices in school, to their opinions about computer aided learning and m-learning:
- How often and for what purposes are they using the computer or mobile devices?
- What is their experience in using IT in school?
- Do they consider that computers can help the teacher in the classroom and how?

4.1.2 Instruments

The primary data sources were the official documents from the department of university. They provided the answers to the first quantitative sub-questions: the qualification, the study of computer science, and the subjects to teach (according to the students' specialization).

To determine the level and the purposes of using computer or mobile devices, a questionnaire was given to the students.

An interview was organized with a part of the students (26 volunteers) to speak freely about their experiences of using IT in the classroom and their opinion about computer aided learning and m-Learning.

4.1.3 Initial data analysis

The students have graduated in different specializations:
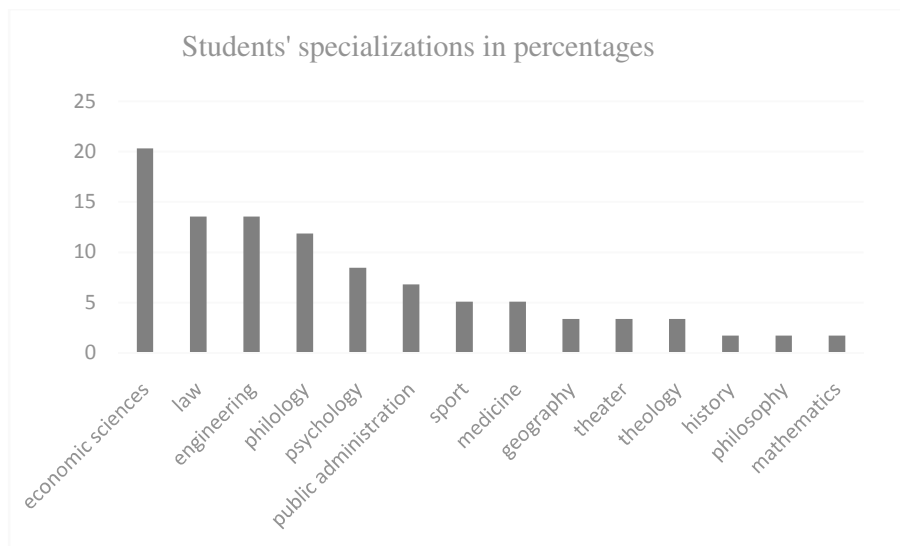
Only 61.54% of the students attended computer science courses in university.
The students intend to teach at different school levels:
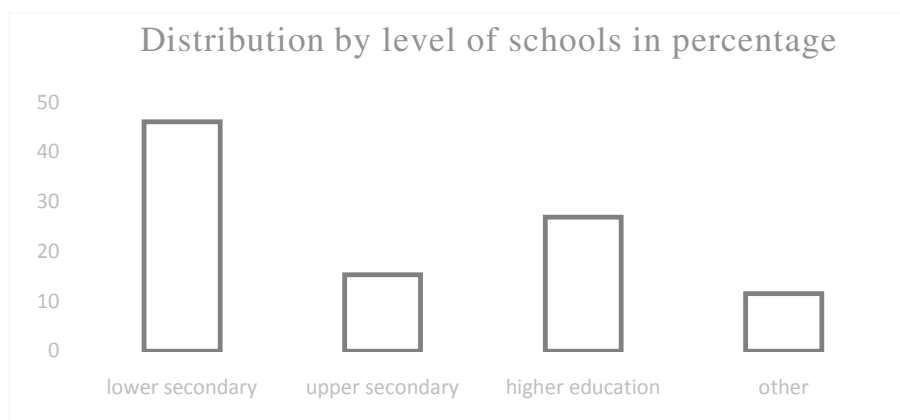
The students use the computer or mobile devices for personal purposes:

The purpose of using computer in everyday life
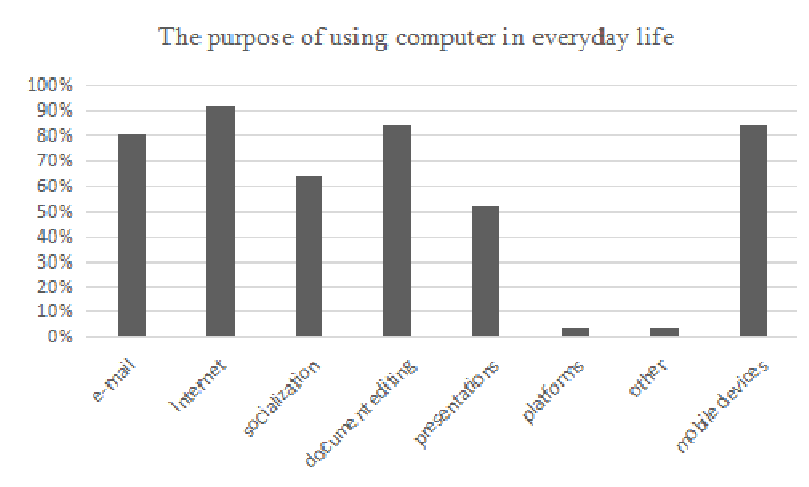
Only 32% of students report experiences of using computers in school in different ways:

Experiences of using computers in school
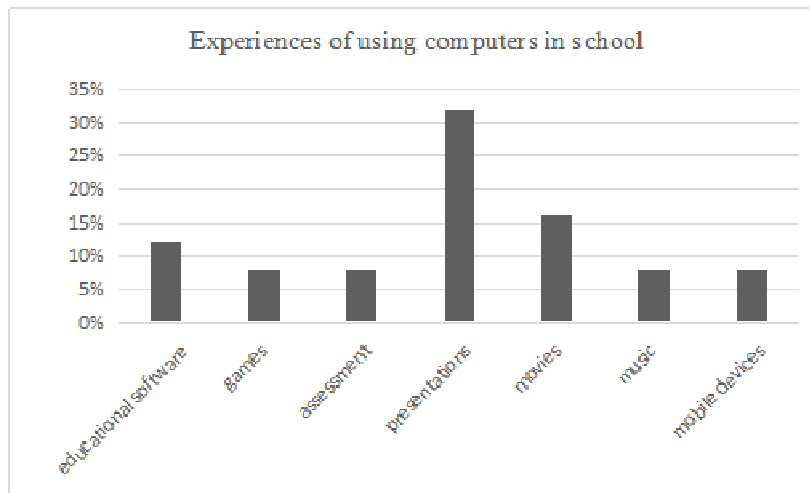
The students consider the following to be efficient to use in the learning process:

The students are motivated and show a positive attitude towards introducing new technologies in the teaching and learning process.

Students' opinions on the effectiveness of different ways of using the computer in school
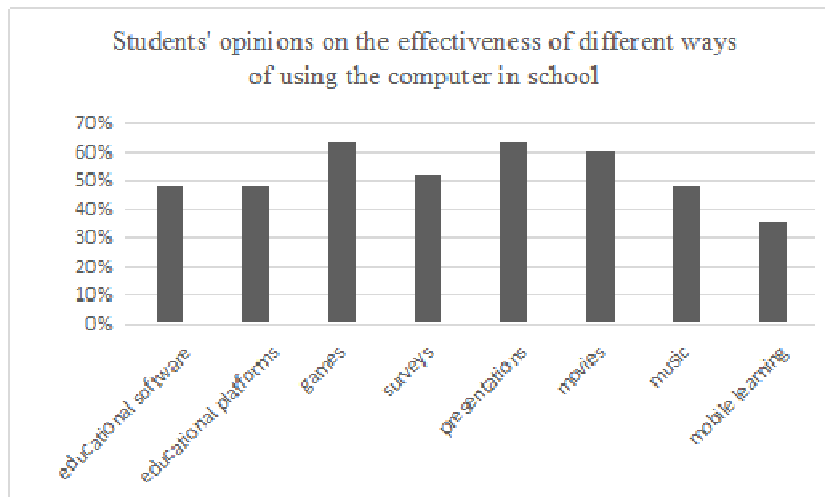
4.1.4 Identification of the problem: needs to develop a heutagogic framework

From the data analysis, the following answers to the first group of sub-questions have resulted:

- The students from this study program hold different bachelor degree specializations.
- Their experience in using computer or mobile devices differs a lot.
- The subjects that they will be able to teach are in accordance with their specialization.
- They want to work at different levels of the education system.
- The students show interest to the introduction of new technologies in education and they consider using computer and mobile devices in learning useful.

In this case, a general curriculum for computer aided learning is not a solution. The main outcome of this course is to enable students to use computers and mobile devices in education when they become teachers. The content of the course can be flexible, in accordance with the students' knowledge and abilities, in relation to the subjects which will be taught, depending on the class level.

They have to become capable teachers, adaptable to the changes in using computers and mobile devices. They will be obliged to keep up with the evolution of new technologies, so they will need to learn all along their life.

A heutagogical framework is appropriate for the preparation of the future teachers in post-graduate academic studies.

4.2 Pedagogical intervention

4.2.1 The design process

The heutagogical design process starts by defining the learning contract (Blaschke & Hase, 2016). The student and teacher identify together the learning needs, depending on the course outcomes. We have to negotiate the assessment process too, and a contract is created and agreed on.

The process continues with the development of the learning activities (Blaschke & Hase, 2016). We need to motivate the student to engage in this process by proposing challenging tasks. They have to find their resources, to select what they need, to be creative, and realize step by step the final product which will be assessed. All this time, the teacher provides support and feedback in function of the student's needs.

The last part of the heutagogical design process is the evaluation of the learning, in order to determine whether the aims stipulated in the contract have been achieved (Blaschke & Hase, 2016). The student must be the first assessor of his work.

4.2.2 Design elements

In the heutagogical design, the elements are: exploration, creation, collaboration, connection, sharing and reflection (Blaschke & Hase, 2016).

Exploration. During the learning activities, the students were encouraged to explore different resources, to find teaching-learning materials in accordance to their specialization: educational software, games, movies, different sites with information etc. The teacher offered support if necessary. The Internet provides the ideal environment for self-determined exploration. Google, Wikipedia, digital libraries, magazines are practically unlimited sources of information. Some students needed help at the beginning to evaluate the resources and to choose the most useful ones.

Creation. In the heutagogical approach it is important to cultivate the student's creativity. The practical tasks for students are to design some classroom activities or only parts of them, including computer facilities or on-line resources. They can create teaching-learning interactive materials or find them on Internet and integrate them in lessons, use the web opportunities in projects like WebQuest etc. The students are free to design their projects, but, at the same time, they make serious research. The majority did this work with pleasure.

Collaboration. Collaboration is another key element of heutagogy, based on the idea that learners can learn from each other. A virtual platform was used for discussions, messages, questions, scheduling etc. It was, at the same time, an example which the students can follow in their future activity, to manage the group of pupils.

To solve the tasks, the students will work in groups of two, three or four, depending on their specialization or affinity. They helped each other along the learning process, they shared information and experience. The teacher served as coach if needed, but the teams had complete autonomy to manage learning activities. For online collaboration, besides the virtual platform of the group and numerous other tools were accessed.

Connection. Students were encouraged to connect with others, using the media available. Social networking sites like Twitter, LinkedIn, Academia.edu, Facebook, WhatsApp and Google+ facilitate professional connections which are important for their career. Through these connections new ways of learning can be created.

In the same time, to design interdisciplinary projects, the students had to make connections with other domains and to solicit the expertise of their colleagues, to share information with them.

Sharing. By sharing information, the students were able to learn from their discoveries and experience. In the group they could use the platform, but there are numerous other available tools for this purpose, like SlideShare, ResearchGate, Twitter, Facebook.
The students shared their work on the platform and they received a first assessment from the colleagues. At the same time, they could see other ideas and they could improve their own projects.

Reflection. In many cases, reflection after the learning process is neglected. It is important that the learners have opportunities to reflect on the new knowledge acquired, new abilities, and on the learning process as a whole. At the end of the course, the students shared their opinions on the experience and the discoveries made during the learning process, which they will be able to apply in their future work in education.
The final questionnaire, as a feed-back of the course, was another opportunity for reflection.

4.3 Research evaluation

4.3.1 Sub-questions

The second group of sub-questions investigates the efficacy of the heutagogic framework during the learning process:
- How often the students explored the virtual environment to find resources?
- How much the tasks solicited their creativity?
- Did they frequently collaborate with the colleagues during the learning process?
- Did they make connections with other domains to accomplish the tasks?
- Did they share experience or learned from the colleagues' experience?
- Did they reflect later on the assimilated competences or the learning process?
- How much did they applied or are going to apply in their didactic activity the appropriated skills?

- How much the new abilities will be useful in other domains or in their daily life?

4.3.2 Instruments

To evaluate the efficacy of the heutagogic framework, a questionnaire was elaborated. We asked students to give a feed-back at the end of the computer aided learning course, after two weeks of the final assessment. The questionnaire consisted of 8 items, on a Likert scale with five levels, varying from very frequently, frequently, occasionally, rarely, never.
(1) How often did you explore the virtual environment to find resources?
(2) How much the tasks solicited your creativity?
(3) Did you frequently collaborate with the colleagues during the learning process?
(4) Did you make connections with other domains to accomplish the tasks?
(5) How much did you share experience or did you learn from the colleagues' experience?
(6) Did you reflect later on the assimilated competences or the learning process?
(7) How much did you apply or intend to apply in the didactic activity the appropriated skills?
(8) How much the new abilities will be useful in other domains or in your daily life?
In addition, a comment could be added at the end if the students wanted. It was administrated by Internet, respecting the anonymity of the answers.

4.3.3 Final data analysis

We received 57 answers to the final questionnaire with all items complete. To estimate the reliability of the test scores, we calculated Cronbach's alpha, using ANOVA two factors without replication and the value was acceptable, 0.746113.
The results of the questionnaire are described in the table 1:

Table 1. Final questionnaire - students' answers

Questions	Very frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
1. How often did you explore the virtual environment to find resources?	30 52.6%	24 42.1%	3 5.3%	0	0
2. How much the tasks solicited your creativity?	33 57.9%	22 38.6%	2 3.5%	0	0
3. Did you frequently collaborate with the colleagues during the learning process?	18 31.6%	29 50.9%	4 7%	6 10.5%	0
4. Did you make connections with other domains to accomplish the tasks?	28 49.1%	17 29.8%	9 15.8%	1 1.7%	2 3.5%
5. How much did you share experience or did you learn from the colleagues' experience?	18 31.6%	24 42.1%	6 10.5%	9 15.8%	0
6. Did you reflect later on the assimilated competences or the learning process?	28 49.1%	18 31.6%	8 14%	3 5.3%	0
7. How much did you apply or intend to apply in the didactic activity the appropriated skills?	30 52.6%	22 38.6%	5 8.8%	0	0

8. How much the new abilities will be useful in other domains or in your daily life?	28	26	3	0	0
	49.1%	45.6%	5.3%		

The majority of the answers are very frequently and frequently, although we have to pay attention to the heutagogic design elements where there are some students who answered with never or rarely.

During the activities, the exploration of the virtual environment to find resources was appreciate by 94.7% of students as very frequently or frequently, only 5.3% explored it occasionally.

Concerning the creativity, the majority (96.5%) recognized that they needed a lot of creativity to design the learning materials for the pupils.

Some students did not collaborate with the colleagues, 7% occasionally and 10.5% rarely. In the future, the tasks should oblige to cooperation for solving, because the teamwork skills are very important for a teacher.

A lot of students (78.9%) responded that they made connections with other domains to design the learning materials frequently or very frequently, but 15.8% only occasionally and 5.2% rarely or never.

The sharing experience is strongly dependent on collaboration. This item reflected that for 15.8% of students the knowledge or experience were shared only rarely and for 10.5% occasionally. 73.7% of students declared that they shared experience with colleagues very frequently or frequently. The collaboration and sharing experience could be stimulated by organizing heterogeneous groups and establishing interdisciplinary tasks.

The reflection should be encouraged too, because 5.3% of students consider that they reflected only rarely on their new competences achieved.

The practical applicability of the acquisitions was positively appreciated by students. Even better results were obtained at the item asking about the skills' transfer in other domain or their usefulness in daily life.

Some students added comments, like:

"Thank you very much! It was the most useful course!"

"Thank you for everything what we learned!"

"The practical activity was very useful."

"This course helps me a lot to prepare interactive materials for the school."

The results confirmed that heutagogy is an appropriate framework for the teachers' education in academic post-graduate studies.

5 Discussion

To manage the course of computer aided learning is not so easy in our days. Until the course is elaborated, it is outdated, because the technology evolves in a very rapid way. We must prepare teachers for the next thirty-forty years, so, the most important thing for them is to become capable people, trained for lifelong learning. Teacher education has to improve and stimulate attribute like self-efficacy in learning, communication and teamwork skills, creativity, and spirit of investigation, to keep pace with the new technologies' facilities.

In the same time, our students differ a lot by comparison with the ten years ago students, they have no more patience to follow a theoretical course, and they prefer to be actively involved in the learning process.

In this study we changed fundamentally the framework of learning and the results were gladdening.

The reason to adopt a heutagogic framework was strengthened by the heterogeneousness of the group of students and by their experience of learning, all of them being graduated, with a bachelor in different specializations. We considered important their experience in using computer and different devices, as was stressed in the first part of the study.

The heutagogy is a strong motivational approach and the students appreciated a lot this non-traditional way of learning.

The tasks were negotiated at the beginning, relevant for the students' future activity, integrating the technologies in the lessons. They were asked to design different materials, for a real context, with immediate application in the classroom. To elaborate these materials, the students needed to explore the Internet, to find useful resources with the minimum of guidance from the teacher.

The collaborative learning was encouraged and the sharing of experience and knowledge. The learning activities' products proved a lot of creativity, connections between different domains. The students were able to imagine didactic situations and to exploit the computer's facilities. They elaborated interactive materials for pupils like tests or questionnaires. The WebQuest projects stimulated the collaborative activity, exploration, connections, sharing and, finally, reflection.

The evaluation developed in two stages: the students asked first the opinion of some colleagues, by uploading the learning products on the platform and inviting the others to assess their work. After this stage, they reflected on the observations of the colleagues and improved their work. In the final stage, the students had to present their materials, to justify the chosen methods, to describe the elaboration process, to reflect on what new skills they acquired.

The questionnaire was sent after two weeks. It was a new moment to reflect on the activities and the answers proved a very good appreciation of the heutagogic design elements.

6 Conclusion

Nowadays, more and more adults have to change the workplace, need a re-qualification to find another job, even in a different domain. The teacher education departments prepare teachers and the number of post-graduate students which choose to work in education as a second chance increases every year. They are adult learners, with a bachelor in other specialization, with experience in learning.

The adult students differ from traditional-aged college students through strengths, like educational experience, a high degree of motivation, but in the same time they have to face obstacles, like work and family responsibilities, financial limitations, psychological barriers.

Teachers' educators have to work with a heterogeneous group of students: diverse fields of specialization, diverse levels of using computer and mobile devices, diverse experiences in education.

According to these reasons, to prepare teachers for the future, especially in a post-graduate study program, heutagogy is the appropriate framework.

Computers and mobile devices are in a spectacular evolution and their use in the classroom demands capable teachers who should know how to learn and keep pace with these changes.

In teachers' education, it is an obligation to use new methodologies as example for the students' prospective work. They have to be able to explore, create, collaborate, connect, share and reflect. The self-determined learning will empower them with appropriate features for a teacher.

In the future, the teacher education departments should try to extend the heutagogic framework to the majority of courses.

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EMOTIONAL MANAGEMENT OF THE ELDERLY DURING THEIR ONGOING SELF-DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

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Abstract: *This research aims at studying the association between emotional intelligence and emotional management in the elderly's interpersonal relationships. There were involved 56 subjects aged between 60 and 85, enrolled in a continuous training programme within the University of the Third Age project. They were asked to fill in individually 4 questionnaires. The results highlight the importance of designing and implementing intervention programmes for the elderly, focused on the development of emotional abilities as well as on the most effective management strategies for their emotions within human relationships.*

Keywords: *emotional management; emotional intelligence; continuous training;*

1. Introduction

A striking feature of normal ageing is its widespread effect on a number of domains (Carstensen et al., 1998). Physically, we experience a reduction in physical strength due to a loss of muscle tissue (Milanović et al., 2013). Cognitively, we suffer from memory declines that, in some cases, herald the onset of dementia (Amieva et al., 2005). Conceptual reasoning and processing speed (Harada et al., 2013) also decline gradually over time. Socially, we are more likely to experience losses as the people we care about move away or die.

These observations paint a depressingly bleak picture of older age, making us think that as we get older, everything goes downhill. However, longitudinal research has shown that, compared to younger adults, older adults experience increases in subjective well-being (Cacioppo et al., 2008) and decreases in negative affect (Charles et al., 2001). In contrast with the declines seen in cognitive control, age does not impair emotional control (Mather & Carstensen, 2005). Research using eye tracking technology found that older adults showed preferential looking towards positive stimuli displaying happiness and turned away from negative stimuli displaying fear (Isaacowitz et al., 2006). Investigating whether these preferences are not merely an effect of current mood, Isaacowitz et al. (2008) found that older adults displayed mood-incongruent positive gaze, looking toward positive and away from negative faces when in a bad mood. On the contrary, young adults showed gaze patterns congruent with their negative mood, displaying gaze preferences toward angry and afraid faces. This suggests that compared to younger adults, older individuals activate a positive looking preference in order to optimize their current mood. Older adults are also better able to positively appraise and dwell less on negative information than young adults (Charles & Carstensen, 2008). It can therefore be assumed that emotion isn't on a parallel track with cognitive decline later in life and that it interacts with our environments quite differently in older adults than it does in younger adults. Moreover, even when they deal with chronic heart disease, stress experienced decreases with age (Farcaş & Năstasă, 2014).

Negative emotions can be toxic and disrupt one's balance in life, so the ability of older adults to regulate negative emotions can help them to enhance their quality of life. Being able to deal with age-related changes and manage the emotions caused by these changes in daily lives can thus be an important component of optimal aging. Emotion–based coping is the preferred mechanism used by the elderly, such as acceptance, asking for emotional support,

religion (Farcaş & Năstasă, 2011). A study investigating coping strategies of Iranian elderly women found that both problem and emotion focused approaches are used as strategies to reduce the harm caused by negative age-related changes (Bagheri-Nesami et al., 2010).While problem-focused strategies including changing their lifestyle, seeking healthcare, managing negative behaviours, etc., were used as proactive solutions to age-related changes, emotion-focused strategies were employed when elderly women felt unable to change the situation. Passive coping strategies such as self-control, distancing, praying, escape and avoidance, helped the participants to reinterpret the situation causing them difficulties and to modify their feelings towards these stressful events.

Despite reduced energy and functional constraints, older participants in a Swedish study, regarded being active and constantly doing things as very important in old age (Larsson et al., 2009). At the same time, they acknowledged the importance of social contacts and networks, making efforts to remain active in the society. Participants who did not have close family nearby, visited the post office, bank or shops to meet other people and have human contact. Adaptive strategies based on emotion-focused coping were also employed by older individuals in a similar study (Dunér, & Nordström, 2005). Not being keen on losing their independence, the elderly continued to strive and keep busy, while getting help from various sources and adapting to circumstances. These individuals managed to positively reinterpret and re-formulate their circumstances and exercise self-control over their feelings about needing help.

Research on the management of age-related changes have also shown that being active in leisure times helped elderly individuals maintain a healthy and balanced emotional life (Roelofs, 1999). There is ample evidence that physical leisure activities bring about qualitative changes in older individuals' psychological and social wellbeing (Kleiber & Linde, 2014). For instance, elderly individuals identified positive emotional effects as result of their participation in an outdoor adventure or leisure programme (Schwartz & Campagna, 2008). These were tied to their sense of belonging to a group, increased quality of life and ability to remain physically active. When asked about their emotions, the majority of participants identified the absence of fear, depression and boredom, while all participants reported positive feelings such as joy, mutual respect and naturalness. Similarly, communal gardening was associated with increased positive affects and emotional states in a sample of elder English participants (Bingley et al., 2004) and leisure-time physical activity facilitated increased physical and social functioning, emotional balance and mental health in Spanish older adults (Balboa-Castillo et al., 2011).

Taken together, these studies demystify aging, showing that, despite a cognitive decline, elderly individuals are not simply passive recipients of help and support. To cope with age-related changes, older adults use both problem solving and emotional coping strategies. Nevertheless, how elderly individuals boost their social lives and relationships with others in order to increase their wellbeing is not comprehensively investigated. The purpose of this research is to explore how a group of elderly people, living and managing on their own, manage their emotions in order to improve their relationships with friends and family and thus increase their social and psychological wellbeing.

2. Method

2.1. Research objectives and hypotheses

This research investigates quantitatively and qualitatively the relationship between the elderly's emotional intelligence and the management of the emotions experienced in relationships with family and friends. The study also seeks to identify the emotional states

experienced by them in their family and friendships as well as the elderly's needs related to these relationships. The research design is correlative and the hypothesis are:
(1) The elderly's emotional intelligence correlates with emotional dissonance.
(2) Their emotional intelligence is associated with emotional effort.
(3) Emotional intelligence correlates with the regulation of emotional expression.
(4) Emotional dissonance is associated with the regulation of emotional expression.
(5) Emotional effort correlates with the regulation of emotional experience.

2.2. Participants and procedure

There were 56 people involved, aged 60-85, enrolled in a continuous training programme within the University of the Third Age project, designed and implemented by the "Dunarea de Jos" University in Galaţi through the Centre of Legal, Administrative, Social and Political Research. The project is a novelty for the academia in our country and aims to provide a structure for the continuous training of the elderly in order to improve their physical and mental health and to maintain an active and independent life.

For the organization of the focus groups, the group of subjects was divided into 5 groups. The interview guide for each focus group included the following questions: (1) What emotions do you experience in the interpersonal relationships with family members and friends? (2) Which are your real needs in the relationships with family members and friends? (3) Which are the coping strategies used?

2.3. Measure

The elderly were invited to individually fill in the following four questionnaires:

(1) *Emotional Intelligence Scale* - EIS aims at assessing the emotional intelligence seen from an aptitude perspective, based on the original model proposed by Salovey and Mayer, through a self-administered questionnaire. It is composed of 33 items and the Cronbach alpha coefficient is .90 which indicates a very good internal consistency (Schutte et al, 1998). The scale has good psychometric properties in the present study ($\alpha = .86$).

(2) *The test for assessing the four skills of emotional intelligence* – TASEI consists of four parts: (a) perceiving emotions – PE, (b) using emotions to facilitate thought – UET, (c) understanding emotions – UE and (d) managing emotions – ME (Caruso & Salovey, 2012). Regarding the psychometric qualities of the test, the results of this research prove a good internal consistency ($\alpha = .77$ for managing emotions), an acceptable one ($\alpha = .62$ for using emotions to facilitate thought) and a weak one ($\alpha = .55$ for understanding emotions and $\alpha = .53$ for perceiving emotions).

(3) *Emotional Labor Scale* - ELS investigates emotion management strategies at the workplace, regulating emotional experience and regulating expression with the two subtypes conceived by authors later on (simulating emotions and hiding them). ELS also targets: the frequency of interactions with customers, the intensity of emotions expressed in these interactions, the variety of expressed emotions, and the length of interactions with customers. The scale has internal consistency coefficients ranging from .68 to .85 for the dimensions investigated (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). In the present research, the scale dimensions range from a good level of the α Cronbach coefficient ($\alpha = .71$ for the regulation of emotional expression by emotion simulation) to acceptable levels ($\alpha = .65$ for the regulation of the emotional expression by concealing emotions and $\alpha = .68$ for the variety of expressed emotions).

(4) *Hospitality Emotional Labor Scale* - HELS measures the employees' perception on the emotional work in organizations that involve direct interactions with the customers. The

scale comprises 19 items grouped into two subscales: emotional dissonance (11 items) and emotional effort (8 items). The original version of the scale has a good internal consistency (α = .89 for the emotional dissonance dimension and α = .77 for the emotional effort dimension) (Chu & Murrmann, 2006). In the present study, the results indicate an acceptable internal consistency (for emotional dissonance α = .67 and for emotional effort α = .70).

3. Results and discussion

The research started with the focus groups centred on identifying the emotional states experienced by the elderly in the relationships with their families and friends, their real needs in these relationships, and the coping strategies used. The method used for data interpretation was thematic analysis. According to this analysis, five themes were generated:

(A) *Emotions experienced by the elderly in family relationships.* The third-age people reported that they felt negative emotions, mostly unexpressed, in their relationship with the family and that the relationship itself could be affected by them. When it comes to family, they have first of all in mind the relationship with their grandchildren and their children, not the relationship with their life partner. Practically, they say that they often do things for their children out of "duty" *("that's the way things are done")* and "sacrifice" *("when you have children, you sacrifice yourself for them")*, but they are conditioned by the children's subsequent actions towards them *("if I do for the child certain things that he should do, then the child will have to do things for me when I cannot ... ")*. They also state that their daughters and sons remain children regardless of their chronological age, which means that the relationship with them remains within the parameters "the parent gives, the child receives" even if, given the age, *"the child"* is an independent adult. In this context, however, the elderly state that they feel anger and helplessness *("I'm angry when I get tired", "what I do and I know how to do for my grandchildren does not fit anymore", "What we are, and what we were", "I would like to be able to do even more", "I have come to be scolded by my own children", "my landmarks are no longer good", "I get angry when I'm forgotten")* which also influence the relationship with the family *("I am often arrogant and irritable", "I'm angry that my grandchildren and my children call me only when they need something")*. Anger causes them to victimize themselves and, in the relationship with their family, they the most often express dissatisfaction as a starting point in communication which makes them become *"unattractive"* for their children and grandchildren. In addition to these, some of the elderly have identified the presence of shame *("I am ashamed that I am not as fast as I used to", "I cannot handle all these things, I make me a fool of myself", "I'm not good at anything", "I can't handle things")*, fear *("I'm afraid my family can no longer rely on me", "I'm afraid of becoming a burden","I'm afraid I'm not wanted around anymore", "I'm afraid each time not to bother them")* and sadness *("I'm sad when I feel that I stand in the way","I'm an useless oldman")*.

(B) *Emotions experienced by the elderly relationships with friends.* The elderly have also identified a number of negative emotions in the relationship with friends such as disappointment *("they do not care", "they never call me first")* and dissatisfaction *("they can only talk about illness", "she is the only one to speak", "they comes over and forget to leave")*. The negative emotions described make them not even initiate contact and also give up communication and common activities because they imagine they are not wanted or important enough for their friends. The feeling of loneliness appears, from those reported by some of the elderly, because of the expectations they have in their relationships with friends (mostly, they expect to be contacted and this does not happen; they do not initiate themselves activities, waiting to be invited, for fear they might disturb, upset or disappoint).

(C) *The elderly's needs related to family.* In the relationship with family members, some third-aged people mentioned the need to communicate *("I want them to talk more and more often with me", "I would like them to listen to me")*, the need to be protected, understood *("I wish to understand me when I do not feel well", "I want to them to pamper me, to speak nicely to me, not to hurry every time")*. Also, the elderly have identified the need to effectively relate to their family (*"I do not know where I'm wrong, they sometimes hide from me", "I'd like to be good not only when I cook", "sometimes I don't know how to behave", "as if I bother them", "my grandchildren do not call me anymore")* and have recreational activities together *("I would like to go with them on holiday not only to take care of my grandchildren"," I would like them to invite me to a movie, to a play").* In addition, some third-age people have identified as important in their relationship with their children and grandchildren the need to learn techniques for managing their emotions *("sometimes I cannot help but be authoritarian", "I feel they are bothered of me being sad and dissatisfied"," I'd like to learn how to get rid of fear, not to be so panicked about what it might happen if ... "," I would like to know how to be more attractive to my grandchildren", " I'm sad because I always remind myself that I've been wrong in the past", " I cannot stand easily some things, and I get angry quickly").*

(D) *The needs of third-aged people in the relationship with friends.* As for the relationship with friends, the elderly have identified the need to spend more time together in the open air, the need to communicate, the need to travel together *("I want to spend more time with my friend, that because I do not know how long I shall live", "to travel with my friends, I do not like to go alone somewhere", " I feel more and more the need to communicate", "I cannot stay alone in my house, I want communication and open air")*

(E) *Coping strategies used by the elderly.* The coping strategies mentioned by the study participants are, in most of the examples, active, action-centred *("watching TV", "cooking", "baking cakes", "walking around", "playing chess with my friends"),* but some of the third-age people also mentioned passive avoidance strategies *("I go home and stop talking to anyone", "I am tired of the emotions I experience when meeting people and I prefer not to see anyone").*

It is worth mentioning that the participants in the study found it quite difficult to identify their needs with regard to both family and friends. They mentioned that they were not used to thinking in terms of personal needs because this aspect would be associated with selfishness. They also reported that they were more accustomed to connect to the other's needs than to their personal needs, but at the same time, this aspect dissatisfied them as their expectation was that their needs be "guessed" by the others and fulfilled when they appeared. They admitted that this self-attitude was likely to determine the negative emotions they felt, but otherwise they did not know how to do it in a different manner *("I have not been taught to take care of myself, on the contrary, all the time I had to take care of the others", " what the world thinks is more important to me", "not to fail, not to bother, not to hurt the other").*

Another important aspect emerging from the qualitative analysis is that although third-age people can identify their own needs, they do not fulfil them (the stereotypes *"I had to bear my cross", "I cannot stand in their ways"* block their natural satisfaction) which triggers negative emotional states (frustration, anger, dissatisfaction, sadness, fear), states that turn them into "victims" waiting for a "saviour". But the negative emotional states affect exactly the interpersonal relationships (with family and friends, that is, precisely with the "saviours" they expect), which leads to the perpetuation of the role of victim and the implicit maintenance of this vicious circle. They also behave as if it is not natural to feel good, as if they have the right to be happy only if they have initially went through a bad state (in their youth they did not have the right to have fun, *"parents do not have fun without their children",* and at the third age, being *"expired",* they are *"funny and ridiculous"* if they do).

In other words, someone else is responsible for seeing and satisfying their needs (there is an expectation from the elderly that this "someone else" be their children).

To verify the first two hypotheses we performed a correlational analysis and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Correlations between emotional intelligence and emotional labor dimensions

	EI EIS	PE TASEI	UET TASEI	UE TASEI	ME TASEI
Emotional dissonance HELS	.094	-.023	.174	.057	.202
Emotional effort HELS	**.402****	**.296***	**.272***	**.361****	.181

* p< .05, ** p< .01

Emotional intelligence is not associated with emotional dissonance, but positively and statistically significant correlates with the emotional effort the third-age people put in inter-human relationships, including those with their family members. Also, the extent to which they strive to modify the emotions expressed or experienced in their relationship with the entourage is associated with three of the four abilities of emotional intelligence: perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thought and understanding emotions.

The Pearson coefficients show that there are significant relationships between emotional intelligence and the regulation of emotional expression of the elderly (Table 2).

Table 2 Correlations between emotional intelligence and regulating the expression

	EI EIS	PE TASEI	UET TASEI	UE TASEI	ME TASEI
Regulating the expression - hiding emotions ELS	**-.416*****	**-.435*****	**-.414****	**-.364****	-.103
Regulating the expression - simulating emotionsELS	-.150	-.220	**-.339***	-.068	.025

* p< .05, ** p< .01 *** p< .001

At the third age, emotional intelligence correlates negatively, statistically significant only with regulating emotional expression by concealing emotions. Out of the four abilities of emotional intelligence, three are associated negatively and statistically significant with the regulation of emotional expression by suppressing emotions: perceiving emotions, using emotions to facilitate thought and understanding emotions. In terms of the emotional change strategy by simulation, it correlates negatively, statistically significant with using emotions to facilitate thought.

The Pearson coefficients indicate that there are significant relationships between emotional dissonance and the regulation of the emotional expression, as well as between emotional effort and the regulation of the emotional experience (Table 3).

Table 3 Correlations between emotional labour (HELS) and emotional labour (ELS)

	Emotional dissonance HELS	Emotional effort HELS

	Emotional dissonance HELS	Emotional effort HELS
Regulating the expression - hiding emotions ELS	**-.350**[**]	-.106
Regulating the expression - simulating emotionsELS	**-.275**[*]	.094
Regulating emotional states ELS	-.007	**.356**[**]

* p< .05, ** p< .01

In relationships with family members and friends, the discrepancy felt by the elderly between the emotion they felt and the correct one according to the norms of emotional expression correlates negatively, statistically significant, both with the strategies of modification by suppressing the emotional expression and with those by emotional simulation. The extent to which research participants strive to modify the emotions displayed or experienced in interactions with others in the close entourage is associated with the regulation of emotional states. Also, the emotional effort of the subjects correlates positively, statistically significant with the frequency of direct interactions with family members and friends.

4. Conclusions

In our study, the third-age people who strive to modify their displayed or experienced emotions are able to perceive, evaluate and express their emotions or the others' emotions, to understand complex feelings and how they evolve, to recognize the causes of different emotions but, above all, they can translate emotions into a language accessible to everyone. However, the discrepancy experienced by them between the emotion experienced in interactions with family members or friends and correct emotion according to the rules of emotional expression does not correlate with emotional intelligence. The emotionally skilful elderly, who cognitively process emotional information, are much more likely to make a considerable effort to change their inner feeling or emotional expression to conform to the rules of emotional expression.

The results of the qualitative analysis of the focus groups show that the elderly are willing to correctly identify the causes of their emotions and to manage these emotions to improve their interpersonal relationships with family members and friends, this aspect being related to the satisfaction of the need to be active in society, to communicate, to have some common activities with other people. Participants are aware that the emotions felt and not integrated are a source of self-victimization and interpersonal conflict, and that they lead to blocking contact with their own needs, to the appearance of irrational negative thoughts, and the use of avoidance strategies. They need to be intellectually and emotionally stimulated through educational programmes proposed by the community, the elderly showing their willingness to join them.

After these continuous training programmes, the improvement of the affective mood and cognitive functioning would have positive effects on relationships with family and friends.

We also founnd that third age people feel intense negative emotions in their relationships within their family and have great expectations of meeting more needs in relation to this than in their relationships with friends. By investing in relationships with their peers and thus supporting the satisfaction of their needs by participating in lifelong learning

programs, the third-age people would come out of the sacrifice scenario with their family. We expect this to reduce the intensity of the negative emotions in relation to their grandchildren and children and, implicitly, to improve their relationships with them. Our results are in line with Man's vision (2017) that a socially active elderly person, surrounded by friends and acquaintances involved in useful activities and intellectual stimulation trainings has multiple benefits in terms of physical health and cognitive and emotional functioning.

It is worth mentioning the results according to which the participants in the study who are able to perceive, evaluate and express emotions, understand emotion and emotional information for optimal affective and intellectual development avoid adopting change strategies by suppressing the emotional expression displayed according to the rules of emotional expression. Those who use emotions to improve cognitive processes, who manage to change their perspective on inter-human relationships and understand what family members or friends feel do not resort to strategies of modifying through simulation of the displayed emotional expression to conform to the rules of emotional expression.

Elderly people who make sustained efforts to modify their expressed or felt emotions tend to change their internal emotions in order to become consistent with the rules of emotional expression. At the same time, those who experience a small discrepancy between the experienced emotion and the appropriate one in relation to their family members or friends use strategies to suppress and simulate the emotional expression displayed to be in accordance with the rules of emotional expression. Also, the more frequent the direct interactions with people in the closest entourage, the greater is the effort made by the elderly to change their displayed or felt emotions.

The research findings highlight the importance of designing and implementing educational intervention programmes for the elderly which focus on developing emotional skills and on the most effective management strategies for their emotions in human relationships. Our results support Anghel's vision (2010) that, with the introduction of the concept of "lifelong learning", the educational approach of people in the third age credits them as having potential and improves their lives. The learning, the intellectual and emotional stimulation groups are required to use interactive methods based on discovery, communication, debate, humor, play, art, metaphor and metaphoric scenario for the achievement of such goals.

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MATHEMATICS FOR PERFORMANCE AND THE "UNIQUE MANUAL"

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Abstract: *The return to the "unique manual" raises questions from many points of view: preparing the National Testing, as well as the exams, contests and Olympiad, and even capitalizing the potential for performance. We considered that it is natural to ask the question: to what extent can the performance training be achieved with the help of the "unique manual"? The paper aims to address these issues.*

Keywords: *"unique manual";Mathematics; performance; training;*

1. Introduction

What will be understood through performance in the present paper is "an exceptional achievement that exceeds the level customarily achieved" (Mircea, 2006, p. 269). Also, "performance is the extent to which an individual successfully solves a problem or task; degree of acquiring certain contests, skills, knowledge, attitudes" (Schaub, Zenke, 2001, p.219), and again, "performance is the result that a learner gets from a learning activity is a measurable, sometimes measurable result ... In turn, performance demonstrates the existence of a gained competence, in fact it is the way to prove the achievement of the intended goal. So, performance in this sense is not an end in itself, but an indicator of the student's progress" (Mircea, 2006, p. 269).

The basics of performance training in Mathematics are placed in primary school, where optional mathematical activities lead to the improvement of children's creativity and logical thinking, the development of their interest in the application of mathematical knowledge in various contexts.

The possible factors that concur to obtaining performance in Mathematics are studied in several papers, some of which will be presented below. "More recent studies point to a positive correlation between student attitudes towards mathematics and student academic achievement." (Mata, Monteiro, Peixoto, 2012, pp. 1-2). Other factors include: "differentiated classroom instruction, flexible grouping, and immediate intervention for students who are not mastering math standards give students the individual instruction they need to succeed in math. Teacher collaboration, within and across grade levels, acknowledges the importance of year-to-year continuity in mathematics instruction. The quality of math teachers, particularly with regard to their content knowledge of mathematics, is critically important." (Improving Math Performance-US, Department of Education, p. 5). K.R.Wenzel and A. Wigfield consider that "to remain engaged in math, students' must have a sense of a task's interest, importance, or utility value" (Wenzel, Wigfield, 1998, p. 158), also that "academic performance can be explained, in part, by the sets of goals that students pursue" and that "students' motivation is crucial to their school success" (Wenzel, Wigfield, 1998, p. 162).

Requirements for mathematical performance are individual work, participating in many school competitions and Olympiad, attending specialized training, actively involving the family in the child's life with encouragement, incentives and permanent support. Of great importance as well is the existence of competent teachers to deal especially with super-talented students who are eager to develop mathematical performance in this field, to engage with dedication, to constantly keep the pupils' interest for study and to motivate them.

Studies of the relationship between self-beliefs and performance tend to draw on this or related theories and usually endorse the notion of reciprocal determinism at a substantive–theoretical level. However, attempts to model this postulated mutual influence of self-beliefs and performance are few and are focused on the relationship between self-concept and performance. The reciprocal determinism of self-efficacy and performance seems to be without direct empirical support, probably because the longitudinal, repeated-measures data often considered necessary for this purpose are not available. It is possible, though, to model reciprocal effects with cross-sectional data" (Williams, Williams, 2010, p. 453). M. Bong and E.M. Skaalvi give some ways to predict performance: "The theoretical and operational definitions of the constructs, when compared, also create the impression that self-concept embodies fairly stable perceptions of the self that are past-oriented, whereas self-efficacy represents relatively malleable and future-oriented conceptions of the self and its potential. Despite these differences, self-concept and self-efficacy are used to predict a fairly similar set of outcomes including motivation, emotion, and performance." (Bong, Skaalvi, 2003, pp. 9-10).

An important contribution to training for school competitions with a view to achieving performance, are school textbooks. Sutherland considers that "Mathematics textbooks are used in different ways by teachers, but almost every country produces its own textbooks and these reflect the beliefs and practices of a particular mathematics education culture" (Sutherland, 2007, p. 24).

In the present paper we address the issue of Math performance from two perspectives: firstly, from the point of view of the National Testing and secondly from that of the school contests and Olympiad, connecting them to the "unique manual". In addition to these approaches, we also intend to address the issue of the "unique manual" in a differentiated way, on educational levels: primary and secondary. In Romania, the return to the "unique manual" raises questions from many points of view: preparing the National Testing, as well as the exams, contests and Olympiad, and even capitalizing the potential for performance. The question we want to answer starting from the above considerations is: to what extent does the "unique manual" open a door to these issues?

2. Performance in National Testing and "unique manual"

A.Revuz observed that "the problem is not to convey a ready-made science but to make achieve a way of thinking" (Revuz, 1970, p. 58). This means that any dogmatism must be avoided. The Mathematics teacher must not reproach to the discipline itself for being abstract. Mathematicians note, not without humor, that what a generation qualifies as abstract is often considered as concrete by the next generation.

The way to look at any novelty in mathematical performance cannot be separated from the current curriculum vision. An important role in achieving Math performancein National Testing is the unique or alternative manual. Until now, alternative textbooks, using a wide range of exercises and problems with different levels of difficulty (marked with one to seven stars) lead the student from simple to complex, preparing him/ her for National Testing.
In order to prepare pupils for national exams, we believe that the "unique manual" must meet some criteria including: providing examples of applied Mathematics; containing a sufficient amount of solved/ proposed exercises and problems, necessary to enhance students' knowledge; containing enough examples of subjects given at national exams (if we want to eliminate some of the numerous auxiliary materials).

Regarding the training for the national examinations at the primary level, we consider that if the conception of the "unique manual" is properly done, according to rigorous criteria, this type of manual could prove very useful. With regard to national testing in the 8th grade –

a decisive event in a student's life – we believe that in addition to the usual exercises and problems aiming to understanding and deepening, the "unique manual" should contain at least 40 tests, resembling those given at the National Testing. In this way, all students will have access to these evaluation tests and can thus verify their level of knowledge. We believe that these things should also be taken into account when thinking about the „unique manual" for upper secondary level and especially for the 12th grade.

3. Performance in Contests/ Olympiad and "unique manual"

The alternative textbooks, through the above mentioned "problems with stars", also make an "opening" to school competitions. We say "opening", considering there is no perfect recipe for success in these competitions. However much we would like to, we do not know all the factors and parameters that lead to success.

In order to prepare pupils for contests/ Olympiad, we believe that the "unique manual" must satisfy some important criteria including offering problems with a slightly higher degree of difficulty to incite the quest and to cultivate the curiosity that is so necessary for the pupil with potential, for the future Olympic student. We believe it is necessary, but not sufficient, that the "unique manual" should also provide examples of problems encountered in such competitions.

In the past 8 years, in Brasov, Romania the training for the Math Olympiad (district and national level) is also done by performance training programs for students, where experienced and dedicated teachers present to the selected students chosen themes with many examples of "beautiful problems". We ask ourselves the following question: should not those "beautiful problems" be a part of the Mathematics manual, being thus the "trigger-factor" for the desire to achieve this kind of performance? If the answer to this question is the one we deduct, then we consider that a selection of this type of "beautiful problems" should be made by the authors of the „unique manual" and included in it.

There is still a problem specific to the district level of Mathematics Olympiad, namely related to the choice of too difficult topics for that level, which leads to very low scores for the majority of the participants. We all know that in order to "get closer" to the discipline of Mathematics we need to have a lot of diplomacy and not to lack encouragement for the smallest successes. That is why we have raised this issue. For a pupil, even if he is ranked 10th in the district Math Olympiad, having a score of 8-9 points out of a total of 28 points is daunting and hard to understand that he is not a failure and that he must continue training for the following contests. In one of his motivational speeches, S. Ross said: "Here are some things about what is not a failure:
1. People believe that failure can be avoided. No, it cannot be avoided.
2. People think failure is an event. No, it is not.
3. People think that failure is the enemy, which is not true.
4. People think failure is irreversible. No, it is not.
5. People think failure is a stigma. No, it is not.
6. People believe that failure is final. No, it is not final." (Ross, 2016).

Based on these considerations, a new definition of failure is reached: failure is the price paid to progress, going forward in the middle of difficult situations, even when everybody else would think it was a failure. We believe that a lower (or even higher) secondary school student cannot easily overcome a "failure", so we suggest that the level of knowledge should be taken into consideration in the choice of topics, so that a hard-working student should be able to reach up to 14 points, leaving differentiation in the range of 15-28 points.

In order to make the learning process more active and creative, we believe that the "unique manual" must also include a sufficient number of counterexamples. This can create a learning environment encouraging discovery and can make a good delimitation of the conditions which are required for a student who is preparing for performance.

4. Conclusion

We believe that training for national exams can be done through the "unique manual" if it complies with many criteria, but the preparation of Olympic performance cannot be done only with its help.

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THE ROLE OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE CONTEXT OF THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract: *Scientific and technological advances have made their mark on the means of communication, but also on the mobility of individuals. The latter has led to increased interaction and cooperation at international level. In the last decades we are witnessing a significant increase in the mobility in higher education level and the diversification of the types of international cooperation. Inevitably, cultural diversity is also manifested in higher education level, intercultural communication in the academic world becoming an increasingly appreciated subject. The purpose of this research is to identify how the intercultural communication competence influences the academic mobility of teachers and students.*

Keywords: *intercultural communication; internationalization of higher education; academic mobility;*

1. Introduction

Culture can have multiple connotations, but in a broad definition culture can be understood as representing an accumulation of "ever-changing values, traditions, social and political relationships, created everywhere, owned by a group of people gathered together by a combination of factors that include common history, geographical position, social class or religion, as well as the ways in which they are transformed by those who share them" (Nedelcu, 2008, p. 19). From the perspective of social sciences, the term culture refers to beliefs, expressive symbols and values that a group acquires and characterizes in terms of organizing the experiences and the behaviour of its own owners (Băran-Pescaru, 2008, pp. 7-8).

S. Schwartz (1999, p. 25) defines cultural values as "implicit or explicit abstract ideas shared by individuals who belong to that culture about what is right, what is good or desirable for society." Values are the most stable cultural elements, "they have the purpose of ordering and giving meaning to our deeds" (Voinea, 2014, p. 40). Adherence to certain values contributes to the differentiation of people or human communities, and these differences significantly affect human interaction. Cultural diversity is an indispensable element of society. Diversity cannot be removed, it becomes self-imposing and it tends to belong to the interior from a social point of view, of nature and culture (Nedelcu, 2008, p. 9).

The concept of "multicultural" presents the diverse nature from the cultural perspective of a human society, it refers to aspects such as linguistic, religious diversity, not only to the elements of ethnic and national culture (Băran-Pescaru, 2008, p. 46). Multiculturalism is a reality of coexistence on the same spatio-temporal line of groups of individuals belonging to several cultures, but which stand out individually, bypassing the contamination (Rey, 1999, p. 153 cit. in Pavalache-Ilie & Plugaru, 2007, p. 8). Multiculturalism can be difficult to define, but we can mention that it is used in two contexts. The first context takes into account the educational side, here, multiculturalism refers to what is taught and taught as "culture". The second context is of a social, economic, political nature. The idea that groups with cultures different from the majority culture are not sufficiently

protected by individual rights is underlined, that is why specific rights are needed to protect their own culture, meaning, the way of life (Okin, 1998, pp. 661-662).

Interculturality involves interaction, reciprocity, interdependence. Therefore, it is concerned with the identification of values, lifestyles, certain symbolic representations through which a relationship with human beings is established, the individual or groups in interaction, but also the identification of interactions that take place between many aspects of the same culture and between cultures (Rey, 1986 cit. in Dasen Pierre, Perregaux, & Rey, 1999, p. 152). The prefix "inter" implies the relationship, but also a mutual conditioning between individuals. The intercultural approach does not have within the range of its objectives the identification of the other by isolating him in a set of meanings, it puts the individual in a special place as a subject, regardless of its cultural characteristics (Bârlogeanu, 2007, p. 150).

Communication is a specific human behavior, conditioned by the desire to relate and interact (Țurcanu-Spatari & Grîu, 2015, p. 41). Interculturality takes on itself an elementary element of communication that admits an approach from interpersonal and social communication to intercultural communication. Intercultural communication is an "exchange or value transaction with the understanding of adjacent meanings, between people or groups that belong to different cultures. Exchanges can be made at an ideological, verbal, nonverbal, behavioral, physical, objectual, organizational level" (Cucoş, 2000, p. 136). Intercultural communication points to a fundamental human connection, but also to an idea that involves reflection: the relationship between us and others or, in other words, a relationship between distinct cultural identities (Georgiu, 2010, p. 115). As for the actors of intercultural communication, individuals, groups, ethnic, local, religious, linguistic communities, as well as societies are remarked. Where there is interidividual communication, it will be followed by intercultural communication, because individuals have diverse and personalized cultural structures. The difference between the two types of communication lies in the differences in language, religion, values, behavioral norms, habits, cultural experiences, and diverse views on the world (Georgiu, 2010, p. 117).

At present, the internationalization of education, understood as the "process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, function or delivery of postsecondary education" (Knight, 2003, p. 2), determines broad curricular reforms that aim to the increasing the number of academic programs taught in large-scale circulation languages, international recognition of qualifications and training standards, increasing physical mobility of students and teachers, and encouraging cross-border collaboration.

A convenient description of globalization is provided by Jane Knight and Hans de Wit (1997 cit. in Bogdan, n.d., p. 2), as follows: "In higher education, globalization implies a technological, economic, informational flow of people, values, ideas and transcend borders ". Internationalization and globalization are two distinct concepts in which globalization can be an activator process, and internationalization implies a direct manifestation of globalization.

The main factors influencing the process of internationalization of higher education are (cf. Pricopie & Nicolescu, 2009, p. 11):
• Perceiving the importance of education for the economic, social and cultural welfare of society;
• Constant integration of information and communication technologies in teaching, learning and research;
• Pressures on higher education institutions to prepare graduates for life and work in an international context;
• Increasingly facilitating the mobility of highly skilled human resources, thus creating a highly competitive international labour market;

• The decrease or stagnation of public funds allocated to higher education in countries around the world, with no drop in demand for higher education;
• Increasing the pressure on higher education institutions to diversify their sources of funding to meet demands;
• The emergence, partly due to the above, of new suppliers and innovations in the higher education market as well as in the process of generating information.

The various ways of internationalization of higher education are grouped into six categories of phenomena and activities (cf. Pricopie & Nicolescu, 2009, pp. 11-14):
a) Physical mobility - refers to travels across national boundaries, both for students and for teachers;
b) Cross-border recognition of qualifications at the completion of studies or study modules conducted within other higher education institutions, especially those located in other countries;
c) Curricular reform, the purpose of which is to internationalize both from the perspective of the content and the way of carrying out a university degree program;
d) Promoting the European Higher Education Area Agenda to increase mutual trust between institutions providing tertiary education in different countries;
e) Academic and scientific marketing consisting in the promotion abroad of the educational offer of the higher education institutions;
f) The relatively recent development of some cross-border activities and of some forms of institutional mobility for the provision of study programs abroad.

2. Research methodology

2.1. The objective and hypothesis of research

O. Investigating the role of intercultural communication competence on the academic mobility of teachers and students.

I. We assume that the level of development of intercultural communication influences the level of academic mobility of teachers and students.

2.2. Participants, methods and research tools

The research group consisted of 21 teachers and 29 students from Transylvania University from Brasov. The research method used was the survey based on a questionnaire. The questionnaire has a total of 11 items, 2 open items and 9 items closed. The issues covered by the questionnaire are: occupational status, age, gender, whether or not they have participated in academic mobility, the known international languages and the general level of linguistic competence, intercultural communication capacity, obstacles encountered in intercultural communication and knowledge of host culture.
The relationship between teachers and students who participated in academic mobility and those who did not participate can be seen in Figure no. 1.
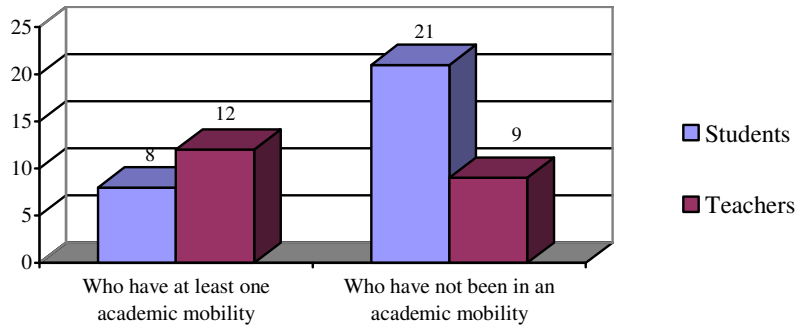
Figure 1. Distribution of participants according to the academic mobility criterion

2.3. Analysis and interpretation of research results

We present the most relevant results in the light of the objective and hypothesis. Thus, for the item "I feel comfortable communicating with people from other countries", the most significant difference between students who participated in international mobility and those who did not participate, we find at the level of the "strong agreement" option of response, so as can be seen in figure no. 2. In the case of teachers, there are notable differences in the same response option.
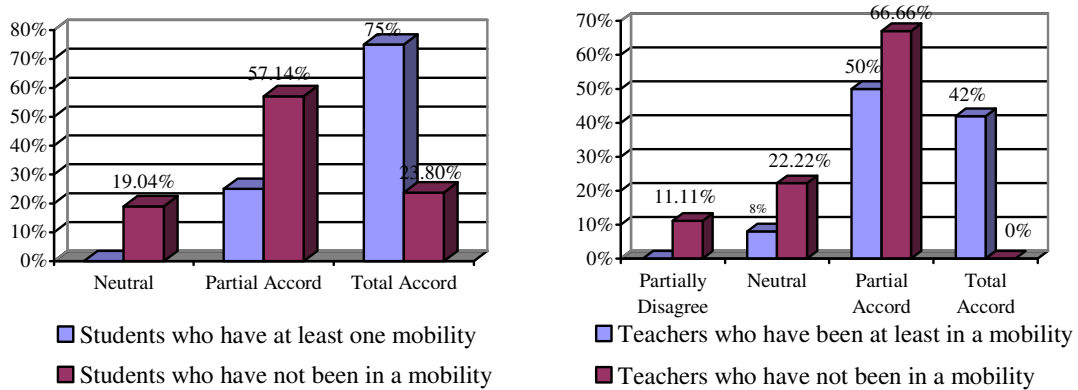
Figure 2. The students and teachers comfort level in intercultural communication
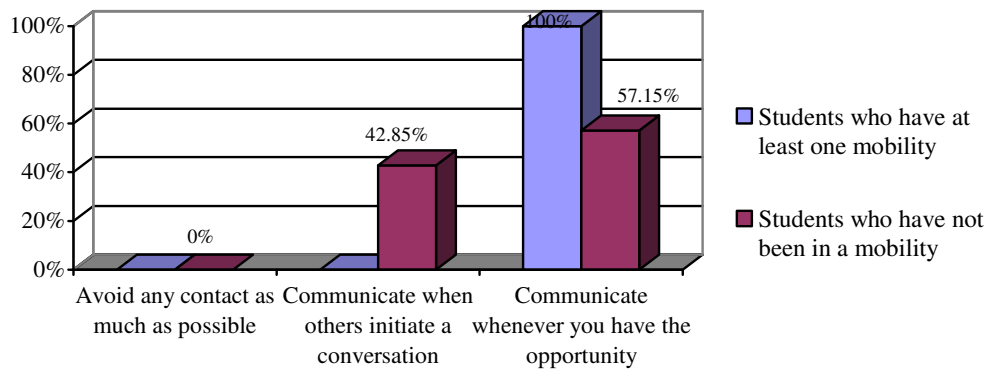
Figure 3. Intercultural Communication Initiative (Students)

The ability to initiate a conversation is an important element of communication competence in general, and of intercultural communication competence in particular. The results presented in Figures 3 and 4 highlight how students and teachers communicate when they meet a foreign person.
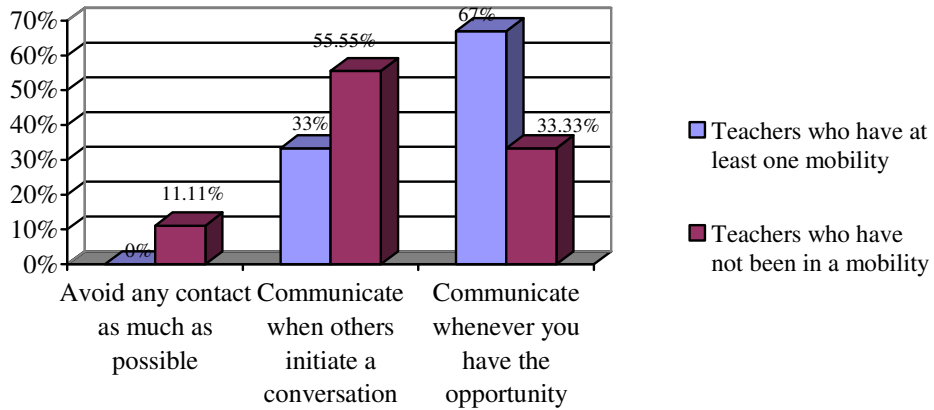
Figure 4. Intercultural Communication Initiative (Teachers)

We note that students and teachers who have been in an academic mobility have responded to communicating with people from another country whenever they have the opportunity, to a greater extent than students and teachers who have not been in such a mobility.

Curiosity, the desire to know people belonging to another culture, we appreciate as being one of the determining factors when considering the possibility of international academic mobility. Thus, the participants in the study were invited to appreciate the extent to which communication with a foreign person belonging to another culture is fascinating. The results can be seen in figure no. 5.
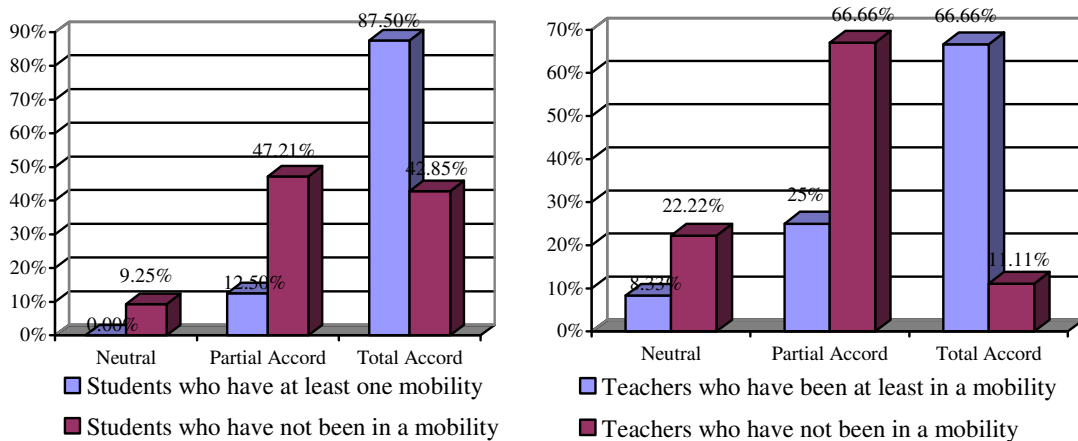
Figure 5. Respondents' responses to the extent to which communication with a foreign person is or not compelling

Notable differences can also be observed in this regard. Students and teachers who have been in academic mobility appreciate in a much greater proportion how engaging communication with people belonging to another culture is exciting.

5. Conclusions

The internationalization of higher education creates opportunities for teachers and students to interact with cultures, civilizations, ethnicities or different races more than ever in the past. Intercultural communication places in the center the relationship that is formed between interlocutors, individuals or groups belonging to different cultures. A correct approach to intercultural communication starts from the awareness that we are different, and this diversity is precisely the bond that unites us and helps us to accumulate valuable experiences. Undoubtedly, intercultural communication "does not reduce itself to only the use of a known foreign language (...) but also involves a reference to the target cultural system" (Alexandru, 2010, p. 6). Intercultural communication has as a "medium / instrument" the knowledge of one or more languages of international circulation, but also certain cognitive, volitional, emotional, and attitudinal and behavioural abilities. It is easy to understand why the tools and abilities of intercultural communication must be the subject of continuous training and development, both of the teacher and the student.

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FACING NAIVE THEORIES ABOUT SAFETY AT SCHOOL: A STUDY WITH INFANT AND PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER TRAINING COURSE AT THE UNIVERSITY

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Abstract: *This paper focuses on the process of detect and overcoming student's and teacher's naïve theories about the topic of inclusive safety at school. This was the focus of the workshop "Safety at school", held by the University of Macerata and S.E.T.A. (Safety Education Training Agency) from November 2016 to March 2017, after the earthquakes that stroke in the central part of Italy. The course enrolled 26 students of the Infant and Primary School Teacher's Training Course. One of the purposes of the workshop was to deal with the knowledge and the possible naïve theories possessed by the participants on the topics of risk and danger. The course had also the aim to obtain a significant learning outcome, offering information and hands-on activities. The paper presents the theoretical framework, the design of the educational path, the adopted tools and some remarks about the reached goals.*

Keywords: *Safety;Inclusive safety; Scaffolding; Naïve theories; Peer's interaction;*

1. Problem statement

Emergency is a well-shaped term in the vocabulary of the Italian Civil protection and it refers to different situations in which the environment (which can be also nature itself) puts human life at risk. Moreover, emergency should deal with different human beings, their personal fears, kinds of reaction, attitude to pro-action and, of course, one's own physical or psychological boundaries.

Two terms are mainly connected with the concept of emergency: risk and danger. Both words have their scientific definition, that we can learn from the Italian national law UNI11230. According to that document, risk is the probability that a potential damage will occur. Even better said: risk is the probability that an event able to damage people will happen. Risk exists in relation to a source of danger. For example, an unsafe school is a source of danger. But if no one is there, than the risk is zero, because even if it falls down, no people will be involved and damaged. As a consequence, safety has to deal with risk more than with danger.

When working at school, teachers are often put face to face with these concepts at a very factual level. In Italian schools evacuation drill emulating a fire or an earthquake is a compulsory trial to be made at least once a year. Unfortunately, the rule is not always followed by a well-shaped practice, and probably even the meaning of such an exercitation is understood. As the Safety Education Training Agency (S.E.T.A.) association pointed out several times in public presentations, evacuation drill is often engaged by teachers and scholars as a leisure moment in their school routine, with no sense about the further benefit a well-performed simulation can bring them in a real emergency situation, not only because participants just memorize a safe path and how to behave, but moreover because they comprehend and interpret risks and potential damages.

The gap between laws and practice dramatically emerged in our territories in 2016 and 2017, when several strong earthquakes stroke caused massive damages and deaths in the

central part of Italy. Before even thinking about how to teach them properly the concepts related to safety, the main question – which is the one we try to answer in this paper – is how to proceed when dealing with such a subject. Safety is indeed something we experience in our everyday life at different levels and in different environments. Safety at home is different from safety at school or from safety while crossing the street. Moreover, safety is a concept that changes within the life cycle of an individual, according to age, physical and mental condition. Each person may have a different view on it, based on different reactions adopted in the past, divergent memories and educations. For this reason, we started from the assumption that our class already had a vision or a concept about what safety is and about the connected subjects of risk, danger and emergency. How to catch these visions and representations? How to connect the personal knowledge with the results of the scientific knowledge? And, when realizing that the personal knowledge is partially correct or incorrect if compared to the scientific conceptualization, how to convey them in a proper way in order to let students gain a significant learning? And also, how to manage to enlarge the conceptualization of safety at school in an inclusive way?

2. Theoretical framework

Scientific knowledge has often a winning counterpart when dealing with delicate still everyday life topics as emergency. We are talking about the naïve theories, a concept transposed from Vygotsky's "complex" thinking, that the author identifies as the evolutionary stage prior to "conceptual" thinking, which is what we call logic. The complex and the concept are hardly discernible when facing the so-called pseudo-concept. A liminal stage when certain facts or object are connected in order to gain a theory on a topic. Hence, naïve theory is by all means a real theory the subjects shaped in order to make sense of a phenomenon. But it isn't scientific because the nexus that forms the theory doesn't start from generalized and verified concepts, but from concrete and factual connections (Vygotsky, 1962).

The theoretical framework of the course "Safety ay school" design is based on the conceptualization of Vygotsky's theory and drawn considering his idea of proximal development zone (1934). Furthermore, the scaffolding strategy (Bruner, Wood & Ross 1976) was adopted, in order to connect the personal knowledge to potentially new concepts and looking at the creation of a community of learners (Johnson, Johnson, Holubeck, 1994). As for the adoption of Multiple Intelligence Theory by Gardner (1983), it points out the need to address different kinds of intelligence, and the related tools and codes, in order to involve every participant.

These frames of work were connected in an integrated strategy (Fink, 2013) to offer participants a learning environment able to enhance experts and peer-to-peer scaffolding, exchanges of meaning and co-construction of knowledge within significant learning experiences (Hogan & Pressley, 1997).

3. Method

This work is about the results of the workshop about "Safety at school" held from November 2016 to March 2017 by the University of Macerata and the Safety Education Training Agency (S.E.T.A.). The course was designed to give students of the Infant and Primary School Teacher's Training Course a wide perspective on the topic of safety at school. The educational need arose from the fear and confusion caused by the ongoing earthquakes of that period. Indeed, after confronting with the students both in formal and informal occasions,

it came up that most of them did not have a clear view on the topics of safety at school, and how to deal with a class in case of emergency.

The training approach was chosen in order to deal with the representations and potential naïve theories surrounding the topics of risk, danger, and emergency because if they are conceived in an improper way, to adopt the right consequent behaviour can be difficult[vi]. Our goal was not to train the participants to manage an emergency (as in an evacuation drill). We wanted to give them theoretical instruments both to teach about inclusive safety in class and to design didactic activities in order to spread a culture about prevention, once they will be working in schools.

In order to do that, we took into consideration also that an intervention on naïve theories must be customized according to the zone of proximal development of the class. Studies on this particular way of improving social and psychological impact on groups (which can be commonly found as "implicit theory interventions") points out that the effect on the groups or class is possible because the messages are shaped to be effective to that students in a given context (Yeager & Walton, 2011). This does not mean the intervention is not replicable. Still, as Yeager and Dweck (2012) stated, these featured must be taken into account when working on a scale larger than small groups as a class. In this sense, most of the initial work in the course was about to bring about these theories, share and deepen them if correct, put them on the right track if naïve, with the purpose of obtaining a significant learning by the students about safety, with a particular attention to inclusive safety. In fact, when facing an emergency, people with disabilities or people belonging to the weaker part of the society (as children, old people, foreign people, and so on) cannot have the same physical and psychological means to deal with the situation as it is expected for the majority of individuals (Hemingway & Priestley, 2014). In this way of setting up the teaching-learning process, professors, experts in different fields (such as geology, psychology, pedagogy), and participants themselves are included and motivated to interact, looking for a shared knowledge.

The course was composed of 6 meetings. Five experts in different fields related to the topic of emergency and safety at school were invited as guest to discuss with the participants.

4. Student's knowledge about risk, danger, and emergency

4.1 Risk, danger and emergency: giving a definition

At the very beginning of the course, after presenting the general aim and organization, the students were asked to give and write their own definition of the words "risk", "danger" and "emergency". No previous explanations were given, in order to collect their representations and conceptualizations. This activity was thought to activate the participants' motivation and reasoning, collecting their workout and sharing the ideas within the group.

The written definitions were collected. The results, part of which is presented below as significant examples (Tab. 1), pointed out that the concepts of risk and danger are often taken one for the other and there is not a clear definition of them. Also, the explanation of the word "emergency" was often the results of a very personal experience.

[vi] This approach can mostly be found in medical student education (Borggreve et al., 2017) where simulation-based training is proven to give great benefits in the process of learning how to deal with trauma emergency. This is also the case of some non-profit organization approach, such as Action aid, that in order to teach about emergency put students together and let them simulate an emergency management.

Table 1. Examples of definitions at the beginning of the course

Definition/Student	1	2	3	4
Danger	danger is connected to something unsafe	danger is something that puts us on a trial, that obstacles our daily life and derives from risks. I feel in danger when my assurances are lost	danger is an occurrence that can bring up negative consequences	danger is a potentially damaging occurrence for things and/or people
Risk	risk is a potentially dangerous situation	risk is facing something that scares us and may put us in danger. To risk is to dive into a new and unknown situation	risk is a problematic situation where a danger may show up, bringing discomfort	risk is the possibility to step into a danger
Emergency	emergency is a situation that needs immediate intervention	emergency is a psychophysical stress condition in which complex dynamics take place. They are unexpected and difficult to figure out. Cooperation is fundamental	emergency is a case when you have to figure out the problem in the least time possible and with the best resources available	emergency is a situation that needs an intervention to be back to normality

Having a look at these definitions the first thing that come out is that, according to the scientific definitions of danger and risk, students had a clearer idea about the second concept. While, when asked to define danger, their knowledge appears more puzzled. Among the four definitions we choose to put out as relevant examples, only the first one barely meets the scientific concept of danger. The other three connect danger with a possible occurrence, without taking in consideration that danger is usually a permanent feature of a place or a situation.

In the emergency's definition we can find a recurrent concept: the timing and the action. "Immediate intervention", "figure out", "least time possible with the best resources available", "intervention to be back to normality". Hence, emergency as a situation and managing the situation, which are two different steps in dealing with emergencies, are shuffled in the same definition.

Moreover, these definitions - even the ones that tried to remain general - did not take into consideration people with illness, disabilities, or aged and the necessity to adjust things for them.

This is part of the naïf theory's or implicit theory's features (Yeager & Dweck, 2012): they develop starting from everyday experience and, if not worked through, they inform personal beliefs and, of course, they reinforce according to personal experience. Because no

one of the participants was dealing with disabilities at the time and they were young people, they did not think about physical or mental issues can change one's own perspective in dealing with risk, danger and emergency.

4.2 Re-negotiating the definitions in an inclusive perspective

A group debate about the given definitions followed. The students read their definitions aloud so the other participants, including the professor and the experts attending the class, could note them. Through the discussion, the students could realize how personal views and feelings played a big role in their knowledge about the three concepts. Indeed, they all had their own personal theory about these concepts, especially because they had recently experienced the earthquakes. Such a fresh and thrilling experience reinforced their previous theory and support them even when not scientifically correct.

They started to move from these initial theories, which were not completely wrong but at the same time were not scientific and so not replicable, acquiring doubts and new aspects from the other's declared perspectives. The further steps were indeed to ask students to divide the class in groups and write another set of definitions taking in consideration one kind of weakness or disabilities. In particular they were able to choose from weakness derived from age (child or old people), from an occasional featured (being an immigrant in a foreign place) or from a permanent or temporary disability.

In the following table (Table 2), we present some relevant definitions emerged from this group work. The definitions are about children at school, old people and auditory disability.

Table 2: Example of inclusive definitions

Definition/Category	Children (at school)	Old people	Auditory disability
Risk	Risks for children can be related to the food they eat, activities in the gym, wrong behaviour in class	Being scammed, being not able to avoid an imminent danger because of lack of readiness, get hurt as a consequence of ambulation's problems	Being alone in a dangerous situation with no one that can warn you
Danger	Danger can result from slippery floor in the bathroom, crossing the street during school trip, electricity plugs	When the previous risks occur	Not being able to listen to the alarm signal as a bell ring or an alarm
Emergency	Bullying, inclusion, moral of psychological traumas, earthquake, fire	Sudden illness (as an heart attack), need for help or assistance	A person with an auditory disability can use other more developed skill as sight in order to deal with emergency

What is immediately clear, comparing these outputs with the previous definitions in the Table 1, is the attempt of the students to put themselves in the shoes of the category they were dealing with. So that what we are reading are hypothesis and possibilities, rather than definitions. This comes evident in the definition of emergency for people with auditory disabilities. The group skipped the definition and focused on the compensative abilities of the person who can't hear.

This first step (writing down the definitions and then thinking about a particular social group) was useful also to identify student's area of proximal development. At that point indeed, we had a clearer vision of what our students knew and didn't know, and from which starting point we had to lead them to a scientific vision of the topic. The final stage of this initial work was confronting the definition with the proper ones, which are given by the Italian national law UNI11230.

4.3 From the experts to the practice

For this reason, after students realized their previous ideas about the main topics of the course were partial or wrong, a variety of experts from different field of expertise were asked to discuss with the group of participants. These lectures were designed to empower the class understanding of safety in general and inclusive in particular. The experts were: a geologist, a psychologist, a pedagogist, a teacher, and an architect. Every meeting was a compendium of theory, personal experience from the experts and practical activities such as group work and simulations. The experts provided information in an interactive way, using narration, video, hands on activities, case analysis.

This was, in particular, the case of the architect, who was deaf and could tell students about real fact who occurred to her and other disabled people, to let them understand the importance of think about safety adopting an inclusive approach (Boon et al., 2011). She tackled the fact that, even if we have the technologies and the knowledge to make a building inclusive, architects and designers are not often used to project and plan buildings in an inclusive way.

In addition to the peer's debate, the practical aspects of inclusive safety have been considered too, in order to obtain a significant learning experience. The teacher, also vice-president of S.E.T.A. association, presented during one of the meeting the didactic subsidies that has been developed in recent years in order to make children and adolescents reflect and think about emergency (Midoro & Chiatti, 2009). The class had to use and then comment these subsidies, pointing out suggestions to improve them. This was auseful activity for two reasons: to present in a pro-active way to the participants what has been done during years in order to teach prevention; to give them the opportunity to make a comparison between previous didactic approaches and subsidies and the most recent technologies and didactic theories (in particular, the ones they have learned at the university).

During the last lesson students grouped together and designed their own games and activities to teach prevention in other classes. The projects had to point out: the target, the activities and a test to catch learning feedbacks. This phase was designed so that the class could put into practice what they have learned, in order to crystallize the notions in something practical. Moreover, the students, having previously learned about the Multiple intelligence theory by Gardner, already knew they could appeal to different way of learning, of catching attention and, of course, to different languages and activities in order to convey the topic to the selected target. Six projects were designed in this way, only one focused on high school students. It was about a "Safety manifesto" to write together with students, teachers, and experts after workshops and filmed evacuation drills.

The other projects were designed to meet younger educational needs. One game was focused on safety at home. Another game was about safety in the street using a role-playing game in which children were asked alternatively to be pedestrians, animals, cars and so on. Then, some students imagined a board game-like activities that involved answering questions about safety correctly in order to win the game, which should provide an immediate feedback on their learning outcomes. One project imagined the possibility to develop a virtual reality game. Another one was a team game to play in the school gym that reproduced a city-like scenario (in particular, the school's surroundings) with simple objects. In this scenario, children have to pretend there is a fire or an earthquake. This, in student's idea, would also help children to deal with fear, if properly guided during the game.

5. Finding and results

The purpose of the course was to identify participant's entry knowledge and theories in order to catch possible naïve theories and then teach them about inclusive safety in a proactive approach. So, first of all, were the initial theories naïve? According to the initial definitions given in Table 1 and 2 and to the final reports of the students partly presented in the following table (Table 3), they mostly were.

In the final reports students had to take into account their possible cognitive change (Vosniadou, 1994) about the topic of inclusive safety at school and their role as teachers. Here some relevant comments the students made in their final reports about this process:

Table 3: Examples from the final report of the course

Student 1	*Thanks to these lessons we reflected on the fact that society is made by many different people and that these diversities must be taken into consideration. For this reason, didactic is to be customized in accordance with the target.*
Student 2	*We realized that changing the target may result in changing safety needs and every word took a very different meaning.*
Student 3	*We realized how important is to understand other people's point of view. We gained a new awareness.*
Student 4	*Each category has a different vision about danger, risk an emergency. Being aware of this must lead to the customization of didactic at school. Children should be aware of what is risky and dangerous and be led into a path toward autonomy.*
Student 5	*The same situations, environment or events mean something different at different point of a person's life. A simple step can be a danger to a child, an old person or a disabled person.*
Student 6	*All the definitions we wrote before were for normal people and differences were not taken into account. But as teachers, we must grow into children the awareness that what is not a danger to an adult, might be for a child.*

From these reports, it is clear that students gained new insights about inclusive safety. But also, about the teacher's role, the variety of point of views and abilities. This also because students, by designing their own didactic activities about inclusive safety, were able to actively fill the gap between their initial theories and a more comprehensive view of inclusive safety. Letting the students giving their own definitions and letting them share their views on the topic without giving only one right answer at the beginning, made the learning process more effective, as well as the student's attitude more open to learn from experts (Harland, 2003).

Moreover, the variety and care of the projects designed by groups pointed out that the core message on inclusive safety (which is to shape prevention without the blinding prejudice that human beings are all the same and that all react to an emergency in the same way), had been gained by the participants.

5. Conclusions and recommendations

This article starts a conversation about an educational gap in the courses addressed to future teachers. They usually deal with a variety of topics and situations, still the emergency framework remains somehow underestimate in their curriculum.

The main point of the course that has been presented, was to apply the scaffolding method in order to let the students reach a significant learning about the topic of inclusive safety. In order to do this their theories have been collected individually and in group works and then debated in the class in order to put them into a peer-to-peer conversation which raises doubts about the conceptions of singular participants, presents and enforces the scientific theories, then changing the naïve ones.

The students started from a set of definitions lacked of correctness and tend to confuse risk with danger. No one took into consideration the possibility of people aged differently from them or with disabilities.

They were then faced with this challenge: consider the three concepts according to the point of view of people with weakness or disabilities and to rewrite these definition thinking about a specific category. These definitions pointed out that students, while showing a certain degree of confidence in giving the previous general definitions (even when partials), this time faced more difficulties to generalize the concepts and tended to write down lists of possible scenarios. After this, they enriched their considerations with the help of the experts. Eventually, they were able to put their knowledge into practice by designing their own didactic activities about inclusive safety. Even in this step, transposing the theory into a real activity, they had to point out a specific target, environment, timing, instruments, and a method to detect if the didactic goals they had in mind had been reached.

To change the cognition about a topic as safety is not an easy process, especially in this context where students had recently experienced the trauma of an earthquake which had reinforced their theories on an emotional level about what is a safe behaviour and what's not. Enhancing class debate about the topic let them not only share their feelings and experiences, but also to let them correct their theories without a remarkable effort. Confronting their definitions was indeed a way to let them notice by themselves the gaps in their theories. This was pursued by promoting peer's debate and by facilitating this debate.

The method of detecting entry theories and to let the students reflect on their cognitive change after the course confirmed, as many literature and experiences has done in the past years, that holding a course as a "facilitator of learning" rather than as the "owner of knowledge", is a more complicated process while designing the course but its effectiveness can't be taken for granted (Trinchero, 2013). This also because both the experts and the students, if not trained or told previously, tend to expect a frontal lesson. Which is the main way Italian school and university work at the moment. Asking a class to debate, to produce original consideration, and to self-evaluate their products, considering that school and university work mainly by the system of products and grades, is not achieved from one day to another.

For these reasons the topic has been tackled from three different points of view (the personal one, the scientific one, and the one of a weak category of people). To gradually give the students the instruments to confront as a group was part of using the scaffolding approach to let students reach through their own learning process a more scientific and comprehensive

understanding of the subject. Also, the experts where asked to design interactive lectures with a practical part together with theoretical explanations. This initial effort was paid back with more effective and possibly long-lasting result. So, the first edition of the course was a satisfying pilot in order to overcome naïve theories about inclusive safety, and pursuing a significant learning in the class, as the final reports point out.

Some recommendations must be done in order to improve the course's design. First of all, a follow-up will be needed to test the efficacy and the long-lasting effect of the scaffolding action. The lack of follow-up resulted from the ongoing earthquakes that forced the University to rescheduled some lessons at the time and there was no time left for a final discussion. Secondly, the practical part did not have the possibility to be tested with children or adolescents, leaving an open question on the efficacy of the activities designed by the participants. Thinking about future courses about safety, the activities designed by the students could be tested as pilot in real classes and improved by previous participants in the course.

We hope that sorting the process adopted during this course will help further educators in the field of inclusive safety to better face this kind of issues, which are common to all subjects that entail delicate aspects of human behaviour.

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PARENTS` EMOTIONAL SUPPORT DURING THE INTEGRATION PROCESS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

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Abstract: *Parents of children with disabilities may be in a great deadlock and the way they react is very different from one person to another. Thus, various emotional states and reactions may occur, such as shock, confusion, anxiety, uncertainty, frustration, distrust of diagnosis, denial, anger, fury, despair, negotiation, fear, self-blame, accusation of destiny and / or the others, isolation, rejection, depression, acceptance, resignation, and struggle. Often these emotions are not recognized and expressed, which creates multiple difficulties that can be overcome by improving human relationships in a supportive psychotherapeutic intervention. This research aims at identifying their needs and emotional states. The results obtained highlight the need to implement support groups for these parents, groups that focus on the development of emotional abilities and on the most effective strategies for maintaining constructive interpersonal relationships in the process of integration of children with special educational needs.*

Keywords: *emotional support; emotional intelligence; support group;*

1. Introduction

Integration is the complex and lasting process of ensuring that children with special educational needs (SEN) participate in school and social life, along with other children, by encouraging self-knowledge, inter-knowledge and mutual familiarization. It is based on the formula of the active school and considers the acquisition of social competences as the most important purpose of the educational approach for children with disabilities. The success of school integration is the basis of social inclusion. However, the success of integration is dependent on the interaction between these children's parents and teachers, which is often marked by confusion, dissatisfaction, disappointment and anger ((Dembo 1984; Muir-Hutchinson, 1987; Seligman & Darling, 1989). Seligman & Seligman (1980) argue that in order to establish and maintain positive work relationships with parents, teachers need to understand the impact of the child's special needs on parents and others family members.

The deadlock in which the members of a family with a child with SEN can be found is strenuous, and how they react differs from family to family. There may be affective states and various reactions such as: shock, confusion, anxiety, uncertainty, frustration, distrust of diagnosis, denial, anger, fury, despair, negotiation, fear, self-blame, accusation of destiny and / or the others, isolation, rejection, depression (displayed in a form of pain and mourning), acceptance, resignation and struggle. In Hardman, Drew & Egan' view (1996), the parents of a disabled child can go through the following stages:

(1) Shock, the phase in which parents can experience feelings of pain, detachment, perplexity, sadness, anxiety, guilt, numbness, confusion, helplessness, anger, mistrust, denial and despair; it can be overcome by most parents if they are emotionally supported.

(2) Emotional disorganization - where parents experience mistrust in their own powers, self-blame, accusation of destiny / the others, then re-evaluate the meaning of life and the motives of the current challenges.

(3) The realization is characterized by several types of parental behaviours: anxiety linked to one's own coping abilities, irritability or annoyance, self-blame or self-pity, non-acceptance by denial of specialized information, and finally, understanding the needs and constraints that arise with the raising of a child with disabilities.

(4) Defensive withdrawal - parents avoid confrontation with anxiety: some withdraw for a period to a safer and less demanding environment, while others try to solve the problem by searching for specialized institutions.

(5) Recognition - parents are mobilized to create the right environment for the disabled child. They are actively involved in the intervention process by becoming receptive to the information coming from the specialists.

Other challenges faced by the families of children with disabilities are caused by negative social responses and social arrangements that do not take into account the needs, interests and circumstances in which they are (Green, 2007; Olsson, 2008; Ryan & Runswick-Cole, 2008; Resch, Benz & Elliott, 2012). Most parents feel ashamed about their own children's disabilities (Green, 2007; Farrugia, 2009; Gill & Liamputtong, 2011; Francis, 2012) and are overwhelmed by the challenges of accessing poor, inflexible and fragmented services (Rodger & Mandich, 2005; Reichman, Corman & Noonan, 2008; McManus et al., 2011; Browne et al., 2013).

The presence of a disabled child also greatly influences the way the family members relate to each other. In most cases, it is the mother that focuses on the child's special needs by neglecting the others and adapting to the new routine can be difficult because it involves major changes in her life and the others'. Recent studies confirm that the mothers of children with disabilities have two or even three times more chances to experience depression, anxiety or stress (Yirmiya & Shaked, 2005; Emerson et al., 2006; Singer & Floyd, 2006; Bailey et al., 2007; Montes & Halterman, 2007; Emerson et al., 2010; Totsika et al., 2011). However, there is research that prove that this risk is not so great, because most of them seem to adapt (Baker, Blacher & Olsson, 2005; Carnevale et al., 2006; Ylven, Bjorck-Akesson & Granlund, 2006; Blacher & Baker, 2007; Green, 2007; Glidden & Jobe, 2006; Olsson, 2008; Olsson, Larsman & Hwang, 2008). In families experiencing emotional, financial or other problems, a child with SEN can serve as a catalyst for dissolution, can affect the couple, causing strong emotions to both partners, acting as a symbol of demoralization, sadness, disappointment and failure in the couple, remodelling family organization and creating a fertile environment for conflict. The couple experiences anxiety, anger, guilt, fatigue, fear of communication and especially frustration due to lack of time for couple intimacy (Featherstone, 1980).

There are many studies that have found that parents' positive adaptation is associated with better family functioning as well as optimism, positive affects, developed emotional intelligence, internal control and the use of coping strategies centred on meaning and on the problem (Jones & Passey, 2005; Greer, Grey & McClean, 2006; Plant & Sanders, 2007; Lightsey & Sweeney, 2008; Smith et al., 2008; Dabrowska & Pisula, 2010; Ekas, Lickenbrock & Whitman, 2010; Trute et al., 2010; Manning, Wainwright & Bennett, 2011; Bourke-Taylor et al., 2012; Trute, Benzies & Worthington, 2012; Ruiz-Robledillo & Moya-Albiol, 2014).

2. Method

2.1. Research objectives and hypotheses

This research addresses the problems described above by: (a) a qualitative investigation regarding the identification of emotional states experienced by parents and discovering their real needs in relation to their own children with disabilities; (b) a quantitative investigation of the relationship between emotional intelligence and emotional management experienced by them. The research hypotheses are:

(1) Parents' emotional intelligence correlates positively with the frequency of interactions with their own children.

(2) Emotional intelligence correlates positively with intensity.

(3) Parents' emotional intelligence is associated with emotional dissonance.

(4) Parents' emotional intelligence is associated with emotional effort.

(5) The identification of emotions is negatively associated with the regulation of emotional expression.

(6) Managing emotions is negatively associated with the regulation of emotional expression.

2.2. Participants and procedure

There were 50 parents involved (36 women and 14 men) whose children had auditory, mental or physical deficiencies and were integrated in school from Brasov County. For the organization of the focus groups, the sample of subjects was divided into 5 groups of 10 participants and the interview plan for each focus group included the following questions: (1) Under what circumstances did they find out about the child's deficiency and what did they feel at that time? (2) What emotions do they experience in the relationship with their own children? and (3) What are their real needs in this relationship?

2.3. Measure

The parents were invited to individually fill in the following four psychological tests:

(1) Emotional Intelligence Scale - EIS aims at assessing the emotional intelligence seen from an aptitude perspective, based on the original model proposed by Salovey and Mayer, through a self-administered questionnaire. It is composed of 33 items and the Cronbach alpha coefficient is .90 which indicates a very good internal consistency Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper, Golden & Dornheim, 1998). The scale has good psychometric properties in the present study ($\alpha = .86$).

(2) *Test for assessing the four skills of emotional intelligence* – TASEI consists of four parts: (a) perceiving emotions - PE, (b) using emotions to facilitate thought, - (c) understanding emotions, and (d) managing emotions - ME (Caruso & Salovey, 2012). Regarding the psychometric qualities of the test, the results of this research prove an acceptable internal consistency ($\alpha = .61$ for the identification of emotions) and a weak one ($\alpha = .58$ for managing emotions).

(3) *Emotional Labor Scale* - ELS investigates workplace emotion management strategies, regulating emotional experience, and regulating expression with the two subtypes conceived by the authors later on (simulating emotions and hiding them). ELS also targets: the frequency of interactions with customers, the intensity of emotions expressed in these interactions, the variety of expressed emotions, and the length of interactions with customers. The scale has internal consistency coefficients ranging from .68 to .85 for the dimensions investigated (Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Regarding the psychometric qualities of the scale, the

results of this research prove a good internal consistency for the total score (α = .87). The dimensions of the scale vary from an acceptable level of the α Cronbach coefficient (α = .64 - the regulation of emotional expression by concealing emotions) to a low level (α = .59 for intensity).

(4) *Hospitality Emotional Labor Scale* - HELS measures employees' perception of emotional work in organizations that involve direct customer interactions. The scale comprises 19 items grouped into two subscales: emotional dissonance (11 items) and emotional effort (8 items). The original version of the scale has a good internal consistency (α = .89 for the emotional dissonance dimension and α = .77 for the emotional effort dimension) Chu & Murrmann, 2006). In the present study, the results indicate an acceptable internal consistency (for emotional dissonance α = .63 and for emotional effort α = .61).

3. Results and discussion

The research started with the focus group concerning the identification of the emotional states experienced by parents in relation to their own children with SEN and their real needs. The method used for data interpretation was the thematic analysis. As a result, two themes were generated:

(A) *Emotions experienced by parents.* Parents have reported that they feel strong negative emotions that affect their entire personal and professional life, such as: helplessness *("When I heard the diagnosis, I felt the sky fell over me", "I wish I could do more for my child"),* worry and fear *("At the age of 3 months I became aware of the child's problem. It was a sense of fear of the unknown"),* disappointment, uncertainty and shame *("For the family, it was a shock, I was very upset, disappointed at myself and I did not understand why my child had such a problem"," I was ashamed to admit, but I could not handle it anymore"),* frustration, distrust, despair and depression *("I felt the whole universe crushing over me", "When I found out, I felt great pain in my soul").* A while after finding out the diagnosis, most parents argued that initial negative reactions and feelings were replaced by love, joy, acceptance, satisfaction and strength *("Any activity with my child makes me happy", "I feel very good when the baby accomplishes something", "The moments spent with my baby are very beautiful, pleasant, relaxing", "I feel happy with such a cheerful and lively child", "We now feel confident", "When we play together, those are the most beautiful moments of the day", "When I am next to my child, I forget about all the problems and try to make him happy").* However, some of the parents have admitted that they still feel frustration, anger, guilt and pain, especially when their entourage compares their child to the other children.

(B) *The parents' real needs.* The most frequently mentioned needs by the parents were: specialized guidance on deficiency specific intervention strategies *("I did not know what to do and I needed to be told in concrete terms")*, understanding and emotional support from the specialists, the teachers and the members of the extended family *("I thought that without the help of the others I will not cope"),* but especially the need to share emotions and thoughts with those in similar situations *("When the mom of one of my son's colleagues told me what she went through and how much guilty she experienced, I felt completely understood").*

Pearson coefficients show that there are significant relationships between emotional intelligence and the frequency of interactions between parents and their own children with SEN, the intensity and the variety (Table 1).

Table 1 Correlations between emotional intelligence and emotional labor dimensions

	EI	PE	UET	UE	ME
	EIS	TASEI	TASEI	TASEI	TASEI

	EI EIS	PE TASEI	UET TASEI	UE TASEI	ME TASEI
Frequency ELS	**.317***	.213	**.280***	.206	**.296***
Intensity ELS	**.299***	.165	.119	**.314***	.202
Variety ELS	.132	.057	.039	.090	.114

* p< .05

The parents' emotional intelligence correlates positively, statistically significant with the frequency of their interactions with their own children (r = .317, p <.05) and with the intensity of their strong emotions expressed in the relation with the children with disabilities (r = .299, p < .05). Regarding the four abilities of emotional intelligence, the results indicate that three are positively associated with some of the parents' strategies of emotional management arisen when interacting with these children: using emotions to facilitate thought with frequency (r = .280, p <. 05), understanding emotions with intensity (r = .314, p <.05) and managing emotions with frequency (r = .296, p <.05).
In order to verify the following two hypotheses, we performed the correlation analysis and the results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Correlations between emotional intelligence and emotional labor dimensions

	EI EIS	PE TASEI	UET TASEI	UE TASEI	ME TASEI
Emotional dissonance HELS	.155	.280	-.042	.401	.164
Emotional effort HELS	.580	-.053	.114	.193	-.006

p – ns.

Neither affective dissonance, nor emotional effort correlate statistically significant with emotional intelligence and the four emotional abilities.
The Pearson coefficients show that there are significant relationships between some of the emotional intelligence abilities and the regulation of the emotional expression for parents of children with SEN (Table 3).

Table 3 Correlations between ability of emotional intelligence and emotional labor dimensions

	PE TASEI	UET TASEI	UE TASEI	ME TASEI
Regulating the expression - hiding emotions ELS	**-.348***	.091	.042	-.263
Regulating the expression - simulating emotionsELS	-.213	-.147	-.195	**-.356***
Regulating emotional states ELS	-.080	.116	.098	-.021

* p< .05

Out of the four abilities of emotional intelligence, only two associate negatively, statistically significant, with the regulation of emotional expression, as follows: perceiving

emotions correlates negatively with regulating the expression - hiding emotions (r = -.348, p <.05) and managing emotions correlates negatively with regulating the expression - simulating emotions (r = -.356, p <.05).

The Pearson coefficients show that there are significant relationships between emotional dissonance, emotional effort and emotional management for parents of disabled children within their relationships cu them (Table 4).

Table 4 Correlations between emotional labour (HELS) and emotional labour (ELS)

	Emotional dissonance HELS	Emotional effort HELS
Frequency ELS	.020	-.076
Intensity ELS	-.047	.189
Variety ELS	.018	.222
Regulating the expression - hiding emotions ELS	-.043	**.284***[*]
Regulating the expression - simulating emotionsELS	**-.287**[*]	**.348**[*]
Regulating emotional states ELS	-.087	**.459**[***]

* p< .05, *** p< .001

In the context of relationships with their own children who require special educational needs, the discrepancy identified by the parents between the felt emotion and the correct one according to the norms of emotional expression correlates negatively, statistically significant, with the strategies of modification through simulation of the displayed emotional expression. The extent to which they strive to modify their emotions displayed or experienced in interactions with their disabled children is associated with the regulation of emotional expression, both by suppression and simulation, but especially with the strategy of modifying the internal emotional experience so as to become consistent with the rules of emotional expression.

4. Conclusions

In our study, the qualitative analysis of the focus groups has shown that parents of children with special educational needs experience multiple powerful negative emotions such as worry, helplessness, anger, guilt, disappointment, uncertainty, fear, shame, frustration, mistrust, despair, and depression. In this context, there is a great need for emotional understanding and support from specialists, teachers, members of the extended family, for specialized guidance on intervention strategies specific to their children's disability, and the creation of support groups focused on sharing emotions, fears and thoughts with those in similar situations. Thus, parents are more willing to respond appropriately to their children's educational needs, to support a flexible and effective educational and learning process, and especially to engage themselves actively, assuming responsibilities within the multidisciplinary team (teachers, specialists, etc.) , contributing to the success of integrating their own children with disabilities. Gradually, parents' negative reactions and feelings are replaced by love, joy, acceptance, and satisfaction.

Emotionally skilful parents, who process cognitively the emotional information and manage it efficiently are more available to express the strong emotions they experience in relation to their own children with disabilities and to keep in touch with them by actively and responsibly engaging in the integration process. However, the parents' emotional intelligence does not correlate with their discrepancy between the emotion experienced in interacting with children with disabilities and the appropriate emotion according to the norms of emotional expression and to the extent to which they make sustained efforts to modify the emotions they feel or display.

It is worth mentioning the results according to which parents who avoid adopting strategies of changing by suppressing the emotional expression displayed according to the rules of emotional expression are able to perceive and express emotions with precision. Those who do not resort to strategies to modify through simulation the emotional expression displayed according to the rules of emotional expression appropriately manage their personal emotions, as well as their own children's emotions.

Parents who make a considerable effort to modify the emotions they express or feel tend to conceal or simulate their own emotional expressions, as well as to alter their internal emotional feelings so as to become consistent with the rules of emotional expression. Also, those who experience a small discrepancy between the felt emotion and the appropriate one in relation to their own children with disabilities use strategies to modify through simulation the emotional expression displayed according to the rules of emotional expression.

The attitude adopted by the parents of children with SEN can depend on the affective, social and cultural factors of the entourage that influence the way the family lives this reality, the level of family aspiration, and the extent to which the child with disabilities meets the family's expectations for intellectual or social achievement. They need emotional support to overcome these moments and become a real partner in the process of social and professional integration of their own children. The purpose of the integration process is to create conditions that allow children to develop their individuality and pursue their own interests (Năstasă, 2015).

In conclusion, the results of the research highlight the importance of implementing support groups for these parents, groups that focus on developing emotional skills and on the most effective management strategies for their emotions both in the relationship with their own children and in those established with various specialists in order to integrate children with SEN. The objectives and topics of the intervention plan that target the supportive psychotherapeutic approach of these parents should include: (a) awareness, clear and assertive expression of emotional experiences and their management, as well as that of the stress felt; (b) overcoming their own bottlenecks, fears, vulnerabilities regarding their own children's emotional validation and education; (c) identifying the personal resources they can use to maintain constructive relationships in the process of integrating children with disabilities. As in previous research (Năstasă & Mindu, 2016, Năstasă, Stroe & Sandu, 2017), for the implementation of such an intervention plan centred on the parents' emotional support, we propose the use of experiential techniques in expressive-creative therapies and gestalt-therapy because of the emphasis is on self-transformation, on interpersonal relationships and on the here and now experience, which will cause them to discover their own way to cope more effectively with the challenge of raising children with SEN and giving them the chance to negotiate with themselves, to forgive and accept themselves, to appreciate and to gratify in a conscious and responsible way, but especially to change their perspective on the challenges of life. In Truta's vision (2012), emotional management programs include: using inventories to identify specific emotional management strategies, emotion-generating situations, associated personality traits, various role-plays, film use, group readings and discussion.

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OVERVIEW ON TEACHER STRESS MANAGEMENT INTERVENTIONS

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Abstract: *The aim of the article is to give a theoretical and practical overview of occupational teacher stress interventions or programs, their objectives, applicability, and their effectiveness. The paper demonstrates that the lack of empirical evidence on the effectiveness of interventions for teacher stress management is caused by a limited number of studies and especially by the considerable heterogeneity of the existing ones, which makes it difficult to compare various empirical results. There is a need for better conceptualization and theoretical reflection on stress management interventions, the type of effects that could be expected under which conditions and for what length of time.*

Keywords: *teacher stress management; interventions effectiveness*;

1. Introduction

The profession of teaching is recognized as one of the most stressful occupations. Studies have found that almost 25% of teachers frequently experience a great amount of stress in their job (Kyriacou, 1998). Teacher stress is defined as the experience of negative, unpleasant emotions (such as tension, anger, or depression) that teachers feel as a result of some critical aspects of their work (Kyriacou, 2001). The stress experience is very common and it seems to be universal across cultures (Harney, 2008). Teachers' stress is related to negativism, absenteeism, and turnover, which negatively affect the climate of the classroom and lead to both academically and behaviorally poor outcomes for students.

While a significant part of the research has focused on understanding teachers' stress – sources and consequences (Montgomery and Rupp 2005), few professional interventions have been tested in order to support teachers' stress management and wellbeing. Stress management intervention is defined as techniques and programs that are designed to help employees modify their appraisal of stressful situations or to deal more effectively with the symptoms of stress, or both (Murphy 1996).The stress management literature categorizes the interventions designed to reduce occupational stress according to the *focus* of stress management and according to the *level* at which the intervention takes place (DeFrank, Cooper, 1987; Cooper, 2001; de Jonge, Dollard, 2002; Holman, Johnson, O'Connor, 2018).Regarding the *focus* of stress management, interventions are classified as *primary, secondary* or *tertiary*. *Primary interventions* aim to prevent stress from occurring by removing the sources of stress and enhancing the causes of well-being. *Secondary interventions*, the most widespread form of stress management within the organization (Dewe, 1994) aim to reduce the severity or duration of stress once it has occurred and to prevent the level of stress becoming problematic (Holman, Johnson, O'Connor, 2018). Secondary interventions focus on developing in employees stress management skills designed to diminish the impact of stressors exerted on the individual, aiming at raising awareness among individuals about the pressures exerted on them and enhancing individual coping strategies. This category provides employees with opportunities to engage in stress reducing activities and it includes techniques such as relaxation, meditation, cognitive behavioural therapy, mindfulness training, and exercise programmes (fitness, jogging, excursions), as well as other techniques such as training and interpersonal skill development (time management, conflict

resolution strategies). *Tertiary interventions*, which take the form of employee assistance programs (counseling) aim to rehabilitate and maximize functioning for individuals who are already experiencing or suffering from psychological ill-health. Regarding the *level* of the interventions, the most common distinction is between individual and organizational levels, including a third category, individual-organizational level interventions (De Frank şi Cooper, 1987). Individual-level interventions focus on helping employees to develop skills to manage, cope with and reduce stress, whereas organizational-level interventions make more systemic changes to organizational practices that either target all employees or a specific group of workers (Holman, Johnson, O'Connor, 2018). Classifying stress management interventions according to their focus and level implies that both individual and organizational-level interventions can be primary, secondary and tertiary in nature (Holman, Johnson, O'Connor, 2018).

Arikewuyo (2004) classifies the stress management strategies depending on two types of parameters: active or passive strategies and behavioural or cognitive strategies. Combining the two criteria, the author describes four types of strategies: *inactive behavioural strategies* that involve escape and avoidance behaviours; these strategies include physical and recreational activities - practicing a sport or watching a good film; the individual also tends to be isolated from people who could create stressful situations; *active behavioural strategies* refer to confronting or attempting to change sources of stress; these strategies assume that the stressed individual imagines himself as a person who always succeeds, in any situation and under any circumstances, who is mentally organized and devoted as time and energy to his profession. By doing so, individuals try to cope with stressful situations. *Inactive cognitive strategies* imply the individuals' compliance with any of the superiors' expectations, even if they perceive their own helplessness, a state that causes mental tension and discomfort. Thus, the individual is at the disposal of the superiors, accepts any type of task he is trained for, working to fulfil all his responsibilities and the fixed deadlines. Individuals play the role of helpless actors in their workplace, accepting anything even when conditions are inconceivable. It is the case of those organisations that offer employees stress reduction services while subjecting them to demands that cause pressure and mental tension. *Active cognitive strategies* involve assessing problems, analysing stress sources, and searching for information and solutions. These strategies involve identifying stress sources in order to annihilate them, re-prioritize, and clarify the individual's situations in order to identify the most appropriate methods of managing and reducing stress. No method proves its effectiveness in successfully managing stress alone. Rather, a combination of these approaches can be effective. And this is due to the subjective way in which each individual reacts in stressful situations.

2. Synthesis of research on stress management interventions in the teaching profession

2.1. Difficulties in assessing teacher stress management interventions in terms of effectiveness and efficacy

One of the major drawbacks of studies on stress management interventions is primarily their low number, most of them being descriptive and correlational studies that provide consistent information on the causal factors of stress. Another significant limitation is related to the lack of a systematic and real evaluation of the effectiveness of the proposed programs, with very few studies providing empirical data demonstrating the effectiveness of the intervention. The vast majority of studies is unsystematic and provides only professional opinions (their impartiality can be questioned) to generate positive results. On the other hand, the lack of well-designed empirical research based on theoretical conceptions about the

effects of different type of interventions, the lack of longitudinal research design, the lack of a wide variety of research methods to measure the impact of interventions, are all difficulties associated with assessing the effectiveness of stress management programs.

Beehr and O'Hara (1987) also raise criticism of the validity of the results obtained from the evaluation of stress management interventions. The authors highlight the problems generated by internal, construct, and external validity. In terms of internal validity, the authors note that a number of factors (such as events occurring between measurements of a variable made before and after a training program, changes in the respondents due to the passing of time, but also personal characteristics of individuals, such as robustness) may influence the results of an intervention, these characteristics not being taken into account when assessing such a program. Regarding construct validity, an essential question that arises is whether the indicators under assessment (psychological, physiological, somatic or behavioural) really reflect levels of pressure experienced by participants in an intervention program. The solution to such a problem is the use of research procedures involving various investigative methods. In terms of external validity, the controversy may arise in relation to the capacity of an intervention implemented in a given context and within a certain period of time to produce similar effects in another context or under other circumstances, the generalization power being an important criterion in assessing the validity of a stress management program.

The authors describe three situations that may threaten the external validity of an intervention. The first is the *subject-treatment interaction* that occurs when an intervention is effective for a group of participants but not for other groups. A second situation is the *interaction treatment - context* in which intervention gives results in one context but not in another, aspect that can be found even within the same organization (there are major differences between departments in terms of culture or the organizational climate). Finally, there is a situation of *interaction between treatment and history* which suggests that an intervention can be effective in a time period, but not in others (Beehr and O'Hara, 1987).

Ivancevich et al. (1990) highlighted the difficulty of preventing a return to stress levels before the implementation of a stress management program. The recidivism appears especially in situations where the intervention does not bring changes in the environment or working conditions, thus not producing a real change in the stress level of the stressors exerted on the employees. A stress management program can tell people about the presence of stressors and provide them with a range of management skills, but there may be some stressors (excessive workload) that cannot be managed by the individual, but requires a wider change at management level.

2.2. Teacher stress management interventions/ programs

Stress management has been studied in various manners: a) some studies propose only measures to prevent or reduce occupational stress, general measures not addressed to a certain class of teachers with some particularities and specific needs involved in a specific professional context; these measures are either the consequences of complex organizational diagnoses (Travers and Cooper, 1996), or the result of existing research in the literature of occupational stress (Kyriacou, 2001; Maag, 2008), the authors not implementing any of these suggestions; so they cannot assess their impact on the level of stress experienced; b) other studies propose different stress management programs without assessing the impact of these interventions, only asking the participants' more or less objective opinions (Cinamon and Rich, 2005); c) the fewest of them develop, implement and evaluate intervention programs, the research design being an experimental one, including measurements of associated stress-related variables both before and after the intervention (Shimazu, Okada, Sakamoto and Miura, 2003).

This paper synthesizes some examples of intervention that have been proposed or implemented in the educational environment, while analysing the effectiveness of these programs in successfully managing the occupational stress.

In a complex research among British teachers, Travers and Cooper (1996) propose a series of measures to prevent and reduce occupational stress at three levels: individual, organizational (school level) and general (social policy level and educational policies). The first category of measures aims to raise awareness among individuals of the very important role each person plays in managing their own responses to stress. The results of the study have shown that a large number of teachers report symptoms of mental health deterioration and very high levels of anxiety. Physical exercise is one of the solutions proposed by the authors to alleviate the symptoms of those stress-related illnesses. Physical exercise is beneficial as it causes the release of hormones, glucose and lipids naturally released by stress response. This, because the exercise itself is a stressor - causes changes in blood flow, oxygen consumption, blood pressure, heart rate, breathing and metabolism. Physical activity reduces mental stress, acting as a mechanism of mental diversion - release of emotions or physical tensions (Travers and Cooper, 1996).

Many of the participants in the Travers and Cooper study have recorded high values for A-type personality variable, with broad implications in stress response. Consequently, the authors proposed, as part of a personal optimization program implemented at school level, to reduce this individual tendency through four ways of intervention: reducing hostility (which implies a change in lifestyle, because it is manifested especially when the individual is under the time pressure, is in a competitive situation, or when he/ she feels that his/ her self-esteem is threatened); stimulating relaxation (because these people appear to be permanently alert as if their well-being is constantly threatened, resulting in a chronic increase in sympathetic nervous system activity); stimulating physical exercise (thus reducing the risk of coronary artery disease) and reducing the psychomotor characteristics of A-type behaviour (with reference to those coronary risk indicators specific to personality type A - reduction of speech speed, reduction of statements involving self-references, etc.).

Another measure at the individual level proposed by Travers and Cooper refers to the improvement of time management skills, especially because professional activity is also influenced by the activities at home; the authors also list a number of advantages in developing these abilities: increased efficacy and efficiency, increased productivity, increasing leisure time, increasing professional satisfaction, reducing stress, increasing relaxation time opportunities, increasing planning opportunities and identifying long-term solutions, stimulating creativity (Travers and Cooper, 1996).

With regard to organizational stress reduction measures (school level), Travers and Cooper (1996) underline the need for counselling and establishing within the school of support groups for teachers, improving organizational support (qualitative and quantitative improvement of resources, reducing the administrative responsibilities which teachers are charged with, improving working conditions), adopting clear measures and drastic sanctions for students with disruptive behaviour, increasing the quality of school management (in terms of efficient use of human resources, creating a real organizational culture, the appropriateness of the leadership style to the particular context of the school).

Kyriacou (2001) believes that organizational stress reduction is correlated with the concern to identify those features that indicate a "healthy" organization and then to develop and implement organizational policies in line with these characteristics. The author lists some features of a "healthy" school organizational climate: good communication between the members, a strong sense of collegiality, management decisions based on consultation, a consensus on the key values and the standards pursued, the clear definition of roles and

expectations, positive feedback from the management, sufficient and quality material resources, availability for support and problem-solving, clear and easy to follow policies and procedures, building a pleasant working climate, providing career development counselling (Kyriacou, 2001).

A series of research in the stress field has shown that a major source of stress is the interaction between teacher and students (Maag, 2008). Also, the students' behaviours most likely to induce stress among teachers are: lack of respect, lack of attention, poor motivation for learning, poor performance, apathy and social incompetence of students (Hastings and Bahm, 2003). Therefore, Maag (2008) proposes an intervention program (without its implementation), based on the principles of rational-emotive therapy, in order to help teachers to manage the disruptive behaviour of students. The premises of the program are: a) some teachers find it difficult to keep their self-control when they have to deal with disturbing behaviours of students; b) the more emotional the emotional response to such behaviours is, the more likely it is for teachers to manage inefficiently the situations generated; c) high-stress teachers access less effective behaviours in managing student-generated situations; d) experiencing stress is the result of how individuals judge, assess or interpret situations or events, the consequence being the existence of irrational beliefs about students and the educational environment. The rational-emotive therapy (developed by Ellis in 1962) offers teachers the ability to manage the stressful situations generated by the disruptive behaviour of students. Following a program based on the principles of rational-emotive therapy, teachers can effectively control their own emotions and reactions and can easily access effective ways to respond to student behaviours.

Maag's approach is inspired by Miller's research (1986), which has developed an innovative way of recognizing and combating the most common styles of irrational thinking among teachers, styles that cause exaggeration and engaging in counterproductive behaviours. Miller states that, from the multitude of irrational thinking styles, four are most problematic: *demandingness* (the imperative *must*), *awfulizing* which refers to the conviction that a situation is more than 100% worse than it really is, *lack of tolerance* which implies a state of unhappiness for somebody, and *condemning* which refers to the tendency to be excessively critical with one's own person, others or the world at large. Ellis (1980, apud Maag, 2008) argues that the essential way through which teachers can manage their irrational beliefs involves three phases: a) identifying or recognizing irrational beliefs, b) explaining their irrational character, and c) reformulating them in rational beliefs, a process that is not easy, because these beliefs have become unconscious because of their repeated activation.

The program proposed by Maag (2008) requires teachers to be aware of how they interpret and experiment their interactions with students, each of which following the same pattern: *the events* (any situation the individual is part of, interactions with others), *the belief* (the interpretation or significance the individual gives to the situation or event), *the emotional reaction* (the emotions experienced as a result of interpretation – happiness, sadness, anger, frustration, anxiety, depression, guilt, etc.) and *the behaviour* (the verbal and nonverbal reaction to the situation, based on the conviction and feelings attached to it). The described aspects demonstrate that teachers can always choose what kind of response to act out to students' disturbing behaviours: they can use a rational interpretation that allows them to effectively control their own thoughts, feelings and behaviours, or they can allow students to control their behaviour because of an irrational interpretation of what they are doing or saying. As regards the first irrational style of thinking, *demandingness*, or that imperative *(not) must*, the author argues that it is the most difficult to fight to, because the necessary strategies go beyond social conventions. The imperative *(not) must* reflect a series of requests addressed to others, indicating that there is no alternative, the individual being forced by forces beyond his control to act in one way or another. In fact, the individual using these

words, and implicitly this style of thinking, does nothing but attempt to magically change reality instead of describing it and accepting it as it is. The reason, the author explains, is that when assessing behaviour, people tend to confuse the idea of accepting that behaviour with the idea of agreeing with it. In reality, these two notions have to be considered separately. An individual tends not to accept a certain behaviour if he does not agree with it. It is possible, however, to accept that behaviour has occurred, not necessarily agreeing with it. Once the individual accepts that behaviour has occurred, thus accepting the reality of a situation, it is possible to properly assess that situation and to identify effective ways to manage the event. Otherwise, it only wastes time and emotional energy. To combat *awfulizing* or turning things into real catastrophes, the individual must understand and accept that negative events can happen to them and that they can interpret them as either terrible (irrational) or simply unfortunate (rational). In order to avoid *awfulizing*, the author recommends that teachers evaluate the negative events in comparison to other types of events (death, paralysis, etc.) found in the instrument called *the bodily damage scale*. The idea of this tool is that when the individual is able to compare a negative event with a physical injury, a tangible, palpable situation that anyone who is avoiding, he will be emotionally affected proportional to the gravity of the event in question. *Lack of tolerance* and *condemning* are irrational responses easier to combat when the first two irrational thinking styles are controlled. Looking at events in the right perspective (by placing them on the scale of bodily affections), teachers realize that if they can withstand physical pain, they can also manage the event. If the other irrational thinking styles control the individual, it is more likely that he condemns others, the world or himself (Maag, 2008).

The author's conclusion is that when teachers avoid irrational thoughts about disruptive student behaviour, they automatically lower the level of emotional discomfort, being able to effectively manage these behaviours. Consequently, teachers feel they have control, they feel they master the situation, and so the level of the perceived stress is considerably reduced.

Cinamon and Rich (2005) propose a comprehensive organizational program designed to facilitate the overcoming/ solving the "work-family" conflict, a major source of stress, directly related to a number of workplace dysfunctions such as absenteeism, delays, poor performance, but also with increased levels of marital dissatisfaction, a poor performance of the role inside the family. Using an interdisciplinary approach, based on the theoretical models of the "work-family" conflict, on the socio-cognitive career theory (centred on the concept of self-efficacy) and on the literature on the promotion of health in organizations, the proposed program combines primary and secondary intervention strategies, focusing on two target audiences: school managers and teachers, especially debutants female teachers.

The general objectives of the program were: raising awareness among educational managers about the causes and consequences of the "work-family" conflict as an important source of stress; increasing understanding of the need for family-friendly organizational policies; increasing the understanding of the risk group on the structuring of the role identity associated with the profession and the family; improving the skills and attitudes of the risk group regarding the harmonization of the two types of roles; increasing the self-esteem of the risk group in managing the "work-family" conflict. The program was structured in two parts, the first being addressed to school managers (directors, heads of departments, coordinators, etc.), people with direct influence on organizational culture and policies; this component intended to develop managers' awareness on the needs of employees related to work and family life. The second part targeted the teachers vulnerable to the negative effects of conflict role, especially young beginners, with emphasis being placed on the development of coping abilities. Both interventions involved three types of activities: a) exploring personal identity to help participants assess their social identity and personal significance associated with their

professional and family roles; b) information on the various labour policies, the "work-family" conflict and on a series of individual and organizational conflict-reduction strategies; c) development of multiple role management skills, as well as managerial skills in general. The training strategies involved in the program were based on diverse methods such as role-play, collective discussion with feed-back, case studies, presentation and analysis of models or examples of good practice, sharing of personal experiences.

The impact of the implemented program is described by the analysis of the answers given by the participants in an interview. They reveal a series of benefits: a) the importance of sharing experiences, which had as a secondary effect the consolidation of the personal and professional relations between the teachers; b) developing skills related to effective conflict management, addressing conflict situations, providing feedback; c) self-awareness in clarifying the personal meanings given to the different roles, identifying their own style of coping with the stress generated by the role conflict. The authors emphasize the importance of some principles in the development and implementation of the intervention program, as follows: ensuring the confidentiality of the participants, respecting the values and culture of each participant, approaching the program as a possible example of intervention and not as a generally valid model. Although it is a program addressed to educational actors, its implementation needs to be adapted to the particular circumstances and specific needs of individuals in different schools.

The experimental research conducted by Shimazu and his collaborators focused primarily on examining the effects of a stress management program for Japanese teachers on their responses to stress factors, social support as a stress moderator, and coping mechanisms of stress (Shimazu et al., 2003). The program combined cognitive-behavioural training to improve coping skills with relaxation training to reduce stress response. After the program implementation, the main consequence identified by the authors was an increase in the level of social support from the fellow teachers participating in the intervention. Researchers also identified a number of possible explanations for improving social support, as follows: interaction with other colleagues through group discussions and role plays has led participants to be aware of the existence and importance of social support, issues that they had not perceived prior to the intervention; participation in the program has facilitated the opportunity to interact with other members of the school, which has led to an increase in the perception of social support from colleagues. The results also suggested that a program for a particular group may be more effective than for a general one, intervention producing a decrease in the anger level in the subgroup with acute stress reactions and an increase in the use of the coping mechanism (re-prioritization of tasks, renunciation of minor pressure-generating problems) for those with very high level of control of their job. The intervention did not produce any change in coping and stress responses for the entire group of participants. The explanation offered by the authors is that many of the participants (64.7%) joined the program at the direct suggestion of the manager rather than a personal need. Thus, teachers were much less motivated by the program. The involvement of participants in the design and implementation of a program is one of the success factors of any interventions. In this case, the resistance of the participants to the proposed program is also explicable. In addition, the school's schedule made it difficult for teachers to participate in the program, affecting systematic learning (the interval between sessions being two or even four weeks). In addition to the difficulties outlined above, the authors also state that the program was not designed based on the real, particular needs of a school, which led to a decrease in the expected effects. Thus, the more variation in the workload of individuals is, the less likely the program will respond appropriately to individual needs (Shimazu et al., 2003). A general constraint identified by the authors, which applies to any stress management program, is that it takes time for the

participants to transfer the skills of coping in real life, being thus difficult to assess the long-term effects of the intervention.

3. Conclusions

Providing stress management interventions for teachers addresses individual needs and creates a culture of caring and relatedness that has a positive impact on the education general process. Stress management programs provide opportunities for teachers to experience supportive activities and to gain new knowledge about stress, coping skills, and psychological and physical distress, knowledge and skills for managing the increasing demands in their roles.

Ivancevich and Matteson (1987) highlight a number of key principles in developing valid intervention programs on stress: accurate diagnosis of stressors specific to the work context and the extent to which employees experience stress (the level of stress experienced); the use of experimental research design to identify the effects of a specific intervention; the use of longitudinal assessments to examine the long-term effects of the intervention and test their persistence over time; stress assessment through several research methods to avoid the bias generated by the uniqueness of the method.

Similarly, Cooper and his collaborators (2001) propose a series of steps to be taken to enhance the impact and effectiveness of organizational stress reduction efforts: a) identify factors that can be potential sources of stress; b) rigorous assessment of the stress level experienced by employees; c) implementing interventions that focus on problem solving and not just on managing stress symptoms; d) the use of evaluation criteria that examine a variety of outcomes after the intervention, not just an improvement in the general well-being of the individual.

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THE PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL PROFILE OF THE WINNER WITH DISABILITIES

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Abstract: *This paper intends to present a psychological analysis (based on data obtained through tests, interviews, systematic observation, autobiographies analyses, study of documents etc.) of five case studies of people with disabilities who have managed to obtain success in different areas of activity, on personal, social and professional levels, despite their documented handicaps. The main objective of the paper is to shape a psycho-pedagogical profile of "the winner with disabilities", showing what different individuals with different handicaps have in common (in terms of functional levels of personality factors, self-esteem, motivation) that might have facilitated their achievements in different professions. Also, the paper refers to the support of social groups as an active factor in attaining positive results for people with disabilities.*

Keywords: *disability; personality factors; achievement despite disability; support groups; psycho-pedagogical profile;*

Introduction

The present paper aims at studying the cases of extraordinary people, who, although suffering from an infirmity that limits their performance in certain activities, succeed in rising above their disabilities through their results and accomplishments. Thus, they become a model for society and a possible reference point in educating disabled children. Their life stories, their experience, their personalities, the manner in which they relate to the surrounding reality, may generate a series of information regarding intervention in the case of people with disabilities. Through the example of those who have conquered the battle with their deficiency, intervention plans may arise for the development of disabled child in terms of the factors considered by the researcher as having the greatest influence in reaching success. In the current society, a higher interest for disabled people may be observed, through mass-media promotion of people with physical or sensory infirmities who manifest a remarkable potential and perform intellectual, artistic, technical etc. activities which would normally be prevented by their disability. Apart from the appreciation and amazement that people manifest toward them, mentalities and attitudes are beginning to change. The challenge of such a change would definitely improve the situation of disabled people, who are often the victims of a deficient system, of prejudice, or marginalization and exclusion.

The object of research

The present study aims at providing a possible common portrait of the winner with disabilities to the specialists in the domain. This portrait took shape in terms of personality factors, self-esteem, motivation, involvement of educational influencers (family, social environment, school), and also regarding the compensation process. We believe that these are the main aspects that permit educational intervention in order to determine the success of disabled people, especially children.

265

To this purpose, the cases of five disabled people were analysed, five people who have remarkable achievements or accomplishments in various domains. They were subjected to tests, interviews and observations, so that the portrait would be a holistic one. Based on individual portraits, a comparison was made, considering similarities and differences concerning motivational, attitudinal and personality aspects, from which a common portrait of the winners with disabilities might result.

The present paper may serve for psychology specialists, psycho-pedagogues in special learning or therapists who work with disabled people, as a reference point in outlining a customized intervention plan, the main objective of which will be: transforming the disabled child into a winner.

Coordinates of the research

The first objective aims at identifying representative personality factors for the winner with disabilities. *The second objective* entails measuring the level of self-esteem in successful disabled people. *The third objective* refers to identifying the attitude-motivational aspects that led to obtaining the success. *The fourth objective* wishes to capture the influence of support groups on the general development of the disabled winner. *The fifth objective* entails identifying the deficiency compensation methods that determined success in the case of disabled winners. A final *objective* aims at identifying a common portrait of the winner with disabilities.

In order to complete the profile of the winner with disabilities, the most adequate approach was considered to be the case study, since the present study is included in the model of the phenomenological paradigm. The phenomenological paradigm regards the subjective experience of the individual in relation to the social environment and the personalized significance of life events. Therefore, our approach to this research was discovering and signifying the personal, specific, human experience step by step, without hypotheses that could be formulated in an a priori manner.

The research design

For this research, we opted for a descriptive research design that would enable us to access a better understanding level of the potential of people with disabilities that would eventually lead us to think and craft better ways of managing the education, in its inclusive sense.

The research sample is consistent of five participants for this study: four men and one woman. These participants were selected in a convenient manner, depending on their success on a personal, social, educational or professional level. All participants have a severe form of handicap, two of them being blind, two – locomotor impairments, among which one suffers from spastic quadriplegia, and the other has the upper left limb and lower limbs amputated, and one subject who is deafblind. All participants gave their consent to using the data only in the purpose of research, their identity remaining confidential.

The research aimed at collecting data referring to opinions, interests, facts, behaviors, attitude-motivational aspects, collected through qualitative methods, and data regarding personality traits and aspects of self-esteem, collected through quantitative methods. The actual data collection took place throughout 30 days and required travels to different cities in the country, such as Brașov, Constanța and Timișoara.

The research methodology

The main method used for investigating the object of the research is the case study, more precisely the case study. In performing the case study, the following methods were used:

- ❖ Quantitative methods (tests);
- ❖ Qualitative methods (interviews, observations, the biographical method, the study of documents, the analysis of products of one's activity. For the collection of family, medical, professional data, an anamnesis guide consisting of 18 items was elaborated. The first six items correspond to family data, the following six to medical data, and the last six to professional data. The items are grouped as follows: objective with multiple choice (I. 3a, 4, 5; II. 2a, 6; III. 6), and semi-objective with filled out answer (I. 1, 2, 3b, 6; II. 1, 2b, 3, 4, 5; III. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5). This instrument was created with the purpose of finding out a series of general data regarding family situation, state of health and diagnosis and professional direction, so that an overview of the subject might be formed.

For the investigation of opinions, attitudes, beliefs, clarifications, significances, an interview guide was created for the winners with disabilities. The interview is semi-structured, constructed around 20 predefined specific themes, giving the interviewer freedom to add relevant questions throughout the conversation. Also, the interview guide is created according to five dimensions, in accordance with the objectives of the research. Thus, items regard: personality traits that subjects attribute to themselves through self-characterization; aspects pertaining to self-esteem; attitude-motivational aspects; the subject's relation with support groups and their influence on him/her and the compensation process.

In order to better know the subject and his/her relation with the support groups, the interview guide for support groups was created. The interview was applied to a total number of six people pertaining to the support group mentioned by each subject as representing a significant support. The semi-structured interview guide contains seven predefined themes/questions meant to capture the influence of support groups on the general development of the winner with disabilities.

The observation grid was elaborated with the purpose of recording the subject's behaviour during the interview. It is composed of 16 objective items with dual choice (yes/no). By referring to objectives, the observation grid supplies data in accordance with objectives 1 and 2, contributing to the identification of personality traits and reference points regarding the level of self-esteem. Moreover, it comes to verify if what the subject states during the interview is in accordance with certain physiological behavioural, attitude etc parameters. Thus, the reliability of the subject's statements could be verified.

Another instrument used in the present research is Cattell's 16 PF (16 Personality Factors) questionnaire. "The questionnaire in itself is conceived with the purpose of supplying essential information regarding the structure of the personality of the investigated subjects. It has 187 items that seek to highlight 16 personality traits. The questions are formulated so that they allow three answer options (affirmative, negative and undecided), except for factor B, which requires a single answer, the correct one. Each item of the questionnaire matters for a single personality factor.

A last instrument used in the research is the Rosenberg test, which measures the level of self-esteem. The questionnaire consists of 10 items measured on a Likert scale, ranging from "I completely disagree" to "I completely agree". The test has an alfa Cronbach coefficient equal to 0,89, and the test-retest accuracy is between 0,86-0,88.

Data analysis and interpretation

Table 1. Comparative analysis of the subjects' achievements, in specific areas

Comparation criteria	Subject C.P.	Subject R.V.	Subject V.A.	Subject A.T.	Subject C.Z.
Type of disability	Locomotor disability	Sensory disability (visual)	Sensory disability (deaf blindness)	Locomotor disability	Sensory disability (visual)
Personality	The highest scores were obtained for personality factors H (parmia) and C (strong Ego).	The highest scores were obtained for personality factors H (parmia) and C (strong Ego).	The highest scores were obtained for personality factors H (parmia) and C (strong Ego).	The highest scores were obtained for personality factors H (parmia) and C (strong Ego).	The highest scores were obtained for personality factors H (parmia) and C (strong Ego).
	The lowest scores were obtained for personality factors O (anxious distrust)	The lowest scores were obtained for personality factors O (anxious distrust) and Q4 (ergic tension)	The lowest scores were obtained for personality factors O (anxious distrust), L (alaxia), (Q4 (ergic tension)	The lowest scores were obtained for personality factors N (cunningness) and O (anxious distrust)	The lowest scores were obtained for personality factors O (anxious distrust), Q4 (ergic tension)
Self-esteem sine	- High self-esteem. - The deficiency did not affect his self-image, in fact he couldn't imagine what life would be life without having this deficiency.	- High self-esteem. - The deficiency did not affect his self-image, in fact he is taking into consideration that in its absence, very bad things might have happened to him.	- High self-esteem. - The deficiency did not affect his self-image, being very satisfied of what he has accomplished under these circumstances.	- High self-esteem. - The deficiency did not affect his self-image, believing that this is what put him on the right track.	- High self-esteem. - The deficiency did not affect her self-image, believing that it gave meaning to her life.

Motivation	Relates to situations he encounters in terms of the motivation derived from the belief in God and the inner power given by his personality. He takes Jesus Christ as his mentor.	Relates to situations he encounters in terms of the motivation derived from the desire to exceed himself and be recognized. There were several mentors who inspired him, among whom the manager at Cisco, where he volunteered, and who taught him what project management meant, as well as a colleague and friend's father, who initiated him into the secrets of developing a successful business.	Relates to situations he encounters in terms of the motivation derived from curiosity, his desire for self-accomplishment and knowledge. The mentors who inspired him throughout his life are Helen Keller, a deafblind writer in America, and Florica Sandu, a teacher who succeeded in making him produce sounds and aided in his general development.	Relates to situations he encounters in terms of the motivation derived from his faith in his own powers, as he does not believe he is limited in any manner.	Relates to situations he encounters in terms of the motivation derived from her desire to be happy, to find herself, to exceed herself and to attain self-accomplishment. There is a mentor who inspires her, namely a person close to her.
Support groups	-Within the hierarchy of the support groups that represented the greatest aid, the subject placed his family first. - In his relation with society, he encountered prejudice and discrimination.	- Within the hierarchy of the support groups that represented the greatest aid, the subject placed his family first. - His relation with society was marked by prejudice, discrimination, and exclusion.	- Within the hierarchy of the support groups that represented the greatest aid, the subject placed his teachers first. - His relation with society continues to be a positive one, although throughout time, he has encountered prejudice and discrimination.	- Within the hierarchy of the support groups that represented the greatest aid, the subject placed his family first. - His relation with society is marked by a battle against the Romanian system, against prejudice and discrimination.	- Within the hierarchy of the support groups that represented the greatest aid, the subject placed her friends first. - Her relation with society is not at all a positive one, but rather marked by prejudice and discrimination.

Education and vocation aspects	The subject's achievements are noted in the educational sphere, more precisely, the domain of psychology and the artistic domain.	The subject's achievements are noted in the educational sphere, both as pupil-student, and as adult in the domain of informatics.	The subject's achievements are noted in the educational sphere, in the beginning as a pupil-student, and then as an adult in the domain of special psycho-pedagogy, and artistic achievements in the domain of sculpture.	The subject's achievements are noted in the educational sphere, in the domain of psychology, as a student.	The subject's achievements are noted in the educational sphere, in the domain of psychology, as a student.
Compensation	Compensation was made through technical means –orthopedic prostheses. They represent the pillars without which it would have been impossible for him to continue his studies and attain his accomplishments.	Compensation was made by training his other analyzers: auditory, tactile-kinesthetic, olfactory, and gustative. His entire psychological development and professional activity took place on the basis of compensation.	Compensation was made by sharpening his tactile-kinesthetic, olfactory, gustative, vibratile and thermal senses. Moreover, he is using a tiflo-technical means typical for blind people, the white cane. In addition, through exercise, he has attained accomplishments and thus, the compensation process took place. Without compensation, the subject would have remained at the same stage as before the age of 11, when psychic processes were delayed, his movement took place on all four limbs, and his connections to the outer world were almost non-existent.	Compensation was made by using technical means, such as the wheelchair or a vehicle adapted for disabled drivers. By compensating his disability on a physical level, he succeeded in performing the activities he desired and evolving in accordance with his aspirations.	Compensation was made by sharpening her auditory, tactile-kinesthetic, olfactory and gustative senses. Based on those senses, she is also using a technical means, a laptop fitted with a software for blind people. Without compensation, her accomplishments would not have existed, due to her impossibility to adapt to college requirements.

270

Based on comparative analysis between the subjects of the studies, on criteria in accordance with the pursued hypotheses, a common profile of winners with disabilities emerges. Thus, the disabled winner is a person characterized by *courage, audacity, dynamism, sociability, spontaneity, wide emotional resonance and sentimental and artistic interests.* His/her ego is strong, showing emotional stability, maturity, calmness, good morals and nervous resistance. Despite difficult situations that arose together with their disability, the disabled winners continued to have a *positive self-image* and faith in their inner powers, showing limitless *perseverance*. This high self-esteem became a motivational factor in itself, along with their desires, aspirations and mentors, who inspired them in their battle against their disability. The social environment closest to them became a support and a resource that determined a change in their evolution. Society, as a whole, showed prejudice and discrimination, but the winners with disabilities learned how to fight against them, by attempting to change their mentality and their attitude. Their own model became proof for society that the disability is nothing more than a limit that man sets for himself.

Conclusion

Education has become, in the case of the winner with disabilities, not just the bridge toward self-accomplishment, but also the starting point, and then the pillar on which adaptation to new environment conditions was built. Through education, be it in the intellectual, moral, artistic or technological domain, the disabled winners evolved in their complexity and succeeded in attaining a series of extraordinary achievements. The winners with disabilities compensated their deficiency, by educating and developing their body's adaptation capacity. Either by using technical means, or by training their other analyzers through constant and intensive exercise, they eventually managed to attain accomplishments, which not only helped them in their adaptation, but ensured their success in a certain domain. Therefore, although there are particularities under the aspect of the manifestation's content or frequency or intensity, the psycho-pedagogical profile outlined above may serve as reference point in the psycho-pedagogical intervention on people with disabilities.

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GENUINE AND DECLARATIVE FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING. PROFESSIONAL OF EDUCATION AS RESEARCHER – VERSUS RESEARCHER AS A PROFESSIONAL

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Abstract: *In the academic world, a kind of Hamlet's type question has become almost obsessive: a scholar/ academic staff should be or should not be more a professional of teaching activity, or more a researcher.*
*The paper presents the coordinates of a long-term and thorny debate about the topic of the balance between teaching and research in the context of academic staff status. This presentation is based, on one side, on the analysis of the different opinions expressed on wide geographical areas of the academic world; on the other side a research about the topic within Romanian context is announced and presented. The methods of collecting opinions were investigation based on questionnaires, focus groups organized and run in different contexts and on different occasions and managed observation on a wider category of teachers, beyond the academic world, in pre-university system. The reason of extended the area of observation is that the manner of the entire teaching staff assessment tends to be focused more and more on **the proofs** of research and less and less on the teaching **performance** reflected by the students' performances.*
A clear distinction between the professor as a researcher and the professional researcher, as a defined status, is argued. The conclusion of this investigation is put into the context of the worldwide opinion on this topic.

Keywords*: teacher as a researcher and professional researcher; balance between teaching and research in education*

1. Great dilemmas of contemporary world

Nowadays when the 5G symbols of progress or the robots habitat extension knock at the gate of the human modern world, a set of big questions arose into education. They are focused on the specificity of the new generations of students, on the challenges of the future world they will be confronted with as adults or on the appropriate type of teaching staff for these new generations.

Within this context, the educational research and the teaching activity are two important issues that imply huge concerns. The question is how the proper answers to these two aspects have to be balanced, aiming to obtain a genuine quality in education. It seems to be a real danger to obtain faked results, buried in diplomas, certificates and impressive numbers of credits as proofs of *almost nothing*.

Our research has as roots an impressive number of complaints appeared mostly within informal contexts about the manner of assessment and promotion of the teaching staff in Romania and in other parts of the world, firstly on the academic level and during the last decade also in the pre-university educational system.

The essence of these complains was the reason for a documentary research about the explicitly expressed worldwide opinion on the issue. An important number of researches and published papers are focused on the balance between teaching & research has been found. They come from the East of the Earth (Australia, New Zeeland), Europe (a consistent number

273

of countries) and The West of the World (the especially USA and Canada). The opinions have different nuances, depending on the period they have been expressed and the type of staff investigated.

2. Teaching and research – two components of the activity within the educational system

The question of the need to rethink the teaching-research report appears on all the meridians of the globe. A number of ideas are milestones in the area.

Firstly, there are voices that claim the necessity to consider the research in education as a priority, not only declared but visible and well understood. These voices seem to be the expression of a new "fashion" in the education of nowadays. They claim that the education must be mainly assessed through the performances in research of all the representatives of the teaching staff. It is the reality of nowadays**.**

But, even if this trend seems to be enough strong, some voices consider that the research tasks of the academic staff was absolutized/ maximized, without a rational distinction between research and the educational activity itself. They highlight the idea that education, expressed generically by teaching, remains the very essence of the educational system, the very purpose of the educational institution. Consequently, the performances of the teaching process, expressed mainly by the quality of the graduates' competencies, should be the milestone of the higher education quality.

Speaking metaphorically, it seems as if one asks the forester to investigate how to improve the life of the forest, or asks the gardener to increase the yield and beauty of his garden, while they themselves manage and implement the practical activity in the forest and in the garden. Both the Forester and the gardener do their own research, they make improvements, as a request of even their practical and productive work. They are not robots, they need to be creative. In the same way, the teaching staff is not formed by robots. They must teach in a creative manner, answering constantly to the changing needs of their students.

On the other side, these practitioners must receive and above all, apply the research results to those who, by profession and daily main activity search for optimization paths, the professional researchers.

The distinction between the professionals of research in any area of knowledge and the practitioners with open-minded and permanent inquiring attitudes of these areas must be clearly done. Just like Ying and Yang, the work of the two categories must be matched.

This because the foresters, the gardeners, or the teachers themselves if neglect the trees, the flowers or the students focusing their attention on how would be better to do their works the results cannot be good. A professional is strongly solicited in the area of the activity (research or implementation of research) so that a twenty-four hours day must be rationally used. Otherwise, the old saying according to which one running after two rabbits doesn't find finally anyone is fully proved.

This truth is expressed in different ways in different papers. I selected only some few examples from the literature as an introduction to my own reflections based on inquiry and observation while a long-term controlled observation (within informal and formal contexts).

The papers focused on the delicate relation between teaching and research highlight some other important issues. A selection of them is further presented.

Mohammad Ayub Khan (2017:342) put three important questions which, explicitly or only implicitly, are found in all the papers focused on the issue of the rapport between teaching and research. These questions are concerned about: (1) the importance for the higher education institutions to bring the teaching and research activities together as an effective strategy for the quality education; (2) the necessity of an optimal integration between these

teaching &research, considered as different but interrelated education components; (3) the potential implications associated with the integration of teaching and research activities for the institutions of higher education.

A consistent number of papers appeared, trying to find possible answers for these questions or others derived from them. The answers are based on reflections, observations or intended research.

A first issue arose from the investigation of different opinions. It stresses the increasing complexity of academic teaching staffs' activity, with both positive and negative consequences.

Turk Marko, Ledić Jasminka (2016) shows that an academic teaching staff has some core fields of activity: teaching, researching, and community engagement. But these three areas are completed with some others as project preparation and management, collecting research funds, application of new teaching methods based on pedagogical research (unvalued at a proper level), recognizing and using new opportunities, taking initiative, effective networking etc. One can find here the extension of the field of action for the representatives of teaching staff in university. But, the first two places are covered by ***teaching and research.***

Khan Mohammad Ayub (2017:342) shows some similarities and differences between teaching activity and the research activity. Thus, the author considers (quoting Gibbs.G.2002) that both of them (teaching& research) "require dedication, motivation, and resources to be performed. Both have tangible and intangible benefits for the educational institutions, teachers, and students. To be a good teacher is as much important as to be a good researcher". Between similarities is highlighted that a research paper at a conference giving public speeches on scientific research outcomes requires exactly the same level of knowledge and skills as required by teaching a lesson at school/ university. Also, the course management functions (planning, delivery, and evaluation) demand many of the knowledge and skills of research planning, development, and assessment of a research activity. But "however, there are some specific differences and similarities between these two important components of higher education programs and services" highlights Khan Mohammad Ayub (2017:342). The author presents a synthesis of the ideas coming from other authors from specialty literature (Hattie J., Marsh H. W.1996; Marsh H. W., Hattie J, 2002; Khan M. A. et al..2015) stressing that these similarities and differences gravitate around the following issues: (1)The objectives of and needs for teaching and/or research;(2) The process required to carry out teaching and/or research activities; (3) Resources needed to carry out teaching and/or research activities; 4) The impact of teaching and research on the educational institutions; (5) Qualification (knowledge, abilities) needed to perform either teaching or research; (6) The importance and benefits of teaching or research for the teacher or researcher. A relationship of mutual dependence and the idea that they should be complimentary are underlined.

Another important issue what is coming out of the mentioned literature papers is that of the teaching staff's opinion regarding the balance between teaching and research. This balance is analyzed firstly form the point of view of chances for genuine performance in both of them, secondly, from the point of view of its effects especially upon the teachers' motivation for work etc; and, finally from the point of view of its implication for selection, payment and promotion in both in the academic world and in a pre-university system.

A study made in Croatia (1996 quoted by Turk Marko, Ledić Jasminka, 2016:95) started from the idea to analyze the balance between the arguments of those who advocate the synergy of research and teaching as components of educational activity (Brew & Boud, 1995; Jenkins, 2000; Neumann, 1993) and those who advocate their mutual independence (Hattie & Marsh, 1996; Ramsden & Moses, 1992).

The same paper (Turk Marko, Ledić Jasminka. 2016:103) presents several quoted opinions of members of teaching staff, that appear to contain a very often heard truth coming both from teachers and academic teaching staff as well belonging to very different educational systems. The merit of this paper is that these opinions are obtained in the context of a research based on structured interviews. Usually, especially during the last period, these kinds of opinion are strongly expressed only in informal contexts. The promotion in career done with a direct connection to this over-evaluation of the research has produced deep negative feelings mainly between the professional with a high respect for the genuine quality of their work. But, unfortunately, the teaching staff I interacted with seems to have not enough courage to openly express these negative feelings in a formal context. I can say that opinions, as the quoted by the mentioned papers (presented below) have been often heard in informal context during my long-term inquiry.

Thus, an Associate Professor, NI, S&H says (Turk Marko, Ledić Jasminka. 2016:103)
> "*As a teacher, in our conditions, it is very **difficult to be a researcher**. There are not enough funds for any larger research. I've been in the system only for the past five years (...). As soon as I arrived, I noticed how things are, and that **I can't engage in serious research if I want to be a good teacher, considering I have around 600 students annually (...).** Only to glance at every one of those 600 students and write their grade in five places takes full time engagement*".

Full Professors say (Turk Marko, Ledić Jasminka. 2016:103)
> "*Still, I see myself as primarily a teacher simply because that's a duty, part of my job that is ongoing, that takes a specific amount of time, so you mustn't fail. (...) teaching implies a much bigger workload – to prepare in time, to teach properly, then there's the evaluation of students, and it's not like you don't care whether you're a good or bad teacher. (...) In time, you simply end up feeling more as a teacher, less as a researcher*" (Full Professor, S&H).

"*Investment*" in teaching, which is the result of the need to satisfy new teaching programmes and the large number of students, is also connected with the participants seeing themselves primarily as teachers: "*(...) since I've introduced a lot of new courses, I've spent the last few years investing a lot of time in preparation for class and for those courses, so I've probably concentrated more on that than on research*" (Full Professor, PI, N&T).

Three core ideas are highlighted by these opinions: (1) the complexity of teaching activity that requires a lot of time and effort in order to be properly done; (2) the time as a inevitable restricted resource which cannot be effectively distributed if the workload for a member of teaching staff is not rationally considered; (3) the funds for teaching and research which are not enough for doing both on an effective level.

The essence of these ideas can be easily found in any discussions one has with professionals of the university. They are completed by others, as the quoted paper presents further: (1) *I'm mostly engaged in research, but I personally prefer my role as a teacher*" (Associate Professor, NI, S&H, Turk Marko, Ledić Jasminka. 2016:104) or (2) "*Because of my personal scientific appeal propensities, always as a teacher, my whole life. (...) in that context, when I think about the positioning of our university, which is unambiguously research oriented, with this [teaching] dimension being rather weak, I personally don't feel good*" (Full Professor, PI, S&H, 2016:104).

The taste of frustration (present in the statements above) and its motivational consequences on the results of teaching and research, should determine a serious concern about what can mean genuine quality in education, for all the decision-making factors in higher education worldwide.

These presented opinions, coming from an organized research are in perfect consensus with all the opinions collected through informal discussions at different conferences along the years since the issue of the balance between teaching and research became a more and more important aspect of the teaching staff concern (at the beginning only at the academic level and then, step by step becoming a pre-university issue as well). A selection of conferences where deliberately our colleagues' opinions regarding this issue have been collected according to an intended observation based on some aspects specifically inquired is presented: (a) EDULEARN16, organized in Barcelona 2016 by IATED; (b) International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies. International Conference in Ottawa 2015; (c) 3rd World Conference on Learning, Teaching and Educational Leadership (WCLTA-2012); (d) 1st World Congress of Administrative & Political Sciences (ADPOL-2012), Antalia, Turkey; (e) International conference ESREA Network on Adult Educators & Trainers, Thessaloniki, Greece, November 2009; (f)International Conference, RIFEFF, Guadeloupe, **2007.**

An interesting idea must be highlighted. There is a stronger opposition to an overstatement of research, especially for full professors who no longer have the issue of career advancement as a preoccupation, compared with younger staff. Young people's representatives have two types of attitudes: (1) are retained to express an opinion, even in an informal setting but to unknown persons; (2) it seems to be bold to declare themselves as supporters of the dominant researcher's status, as long as the officials consider research to be a priority criterion. This happens even though, among their friends, they express different opinions, often similar to the full professors' ones.

3. Selection, assessment, and promotion in the educational system

The yearly assessment in both levels (academic and lately even in the pre-university educational system), and especially the promotion in career are intimately connected to the balance between teaching and research.

And yet, the reality shows an increase in the share of research in the promotion process. The research itself is differently assessed.

When it is about promotion in the academic world, only the specific scientific or technological areas of research are considered as important. The research focused on the teaching and learning process was not enough value. Even when the criteria for promotion contains reference about teaching activities the wording of presentation are vague enough so that they are difficult to become operational.

The Report presented by Cashmore A., Cane C.& Cane R, p. 6 underlines that: "*Commonly, teaching and learning was considered of secondary importance to subjectspecific research, and in some institutions there were no policies to utilize teachingand learning activity in promotion criteria whatsoever. (…) Clearly, improving the quality of teaching in higher education is now high on the agenda (Department for Business Industry and Skills, 2011; National Union of Students, 2012; Million+ Group 2012), but without appropriate recognition and reward for those involved in teaching this will be hard to achieve.*"

This is another example of statements existing in official documents without proper echoes in the real world.

The mentioned paper (Cashmore A., Cane C.& Cane R., w.y) presents (pp.17-19) a research done on a number of institutions of higher education (with statistic results considered

less representative), but which made possible to be established a Structure of Promotion Pathways despite the wide diversity of the used criteria for promotion.

Three manners of promotion have been identified: (a) three-track pathway; (b) two-track pathway; (c) single-track pathway. Each of them has specific criteria. (Fig.1)

Promotion-track pathway

Three-track pathway

1. Teaching Track-

2. Teaching and Research Track –

3. Research Track

Two-track promotion system:

1.Teaching Track

2. Research Track

Single-track pathway

Involves roles with elements of **both teaching and research** (as well as administration and enterprise in some cases), and promotion is typically gained on the basis of a combination of criteria relating to these elements

Fig. 1. Structure of Promotion Pathways

The authors consider that the most common model is the first one which" *includes three distinct tracks for career advancement. (…) these promotion policies allow for academic career progression to be focused along either a research route, a teaching route (frequently referred to as 'teaching and scholarship'), or a teaching and research route. Some policies of this type have these distinct routes for promotion all the way to the most senior levels (professorial level). Other policies contain distinct tracks that come together at a senior level (normally professor, but in a limited number of cases senior lecturer), with a single set of criteria within which teaching or research (or even enterprise or administration, which are included by some institutions) can be emphasized as part of the case for promotion"* (Cashmore A., Cane C.& Cane R (w.y),p.17).

The second model seems to be less among the policies examined for this report. It *„contains structures for career progression that are based on two pathways with separate role profiles and promotion criteria for each. In some policies, these pathways clearly separate research-focused positions and teaching-focused positions, while others include a 'teaching and research' track and either a 'teaching' track or a 'research' track. Where a 'teaching and research' track is included, the balance between teaching and research varies, with some flexibility allowed. In particular, where the other track is 'research', the research involved in the 'teaching and research' track can often be pedagogic.* (Cashmore A., Cane C.& Cane R .w.y,p.18).

The third model *„involves roles with elements of teaching and research (as well as administration and enterprise in some cases), and promotion is typically gained on the basis of a combination of criteria relating to these elements. In most of the policies examined, this combination of criteria is sufficiently flexible to allow for academic careers with different foci.*

278

For example, promotion might be reliant on three criteria (teaching, research and enterprise) with 'sufficient' performance being necessary in two and 'outstanding' performance in the other" Cashmore A., Cane C.& Cane R .w.y,p.19).

The presentation of these three models has been done by quoting because the specificity of the UK analysis was intended to be caught with accuracy.

4. Some conclusions of a Romanian investigation in the area

The issue of the balance between research and teaching became a real concern in Romania as well. This is the reason for an attentive analysis of what our colleagues think and declare in different formal or informal context regarding the mentioned topic. I have investigated the topic along the last decade firstly because the criteria of the promotion have been changed significantly and the bureaucratic aspects of the teaching activity appeared to suffocate the staff.

The methods of collecting opinions were: investigation based on questionnaires, focus groups organized and run in different contexts and on different occasions. A considerable number of teaching staff has been involved; the most recent investigation of the topic has been done within the context of a workshop run at the International Conference" Competence", Brasov, Romania, 2018).

The gathered results were connected to the conclusions of a long-term managed observation on a wider category of teachers, beyond the academic world, in the pre-university system. The reason of extended the area of observation is that the manner of the entire teaching staff assessment tends to be focused more and more on *the proofs* of research and less and less on the teaching performance reflected by the students' performances. This paper doesn't intend to present quantitative data, but some interesting conclusions may be highlighted.

First of all, a significant difference between the answers given within a formal context and in an informal context by both academic staff and pre-university teachers must be stressed. Usually, within the formal context (questionnaires or formal focus groups) the answers are not very conclusive, many subjects declaring that it is normal to consider research as an important area of activity and criterion for promotion, probably because this type of answers is considered as suitable. I present this statement because the same persons express opposite opinions within informal contexts. They appear not only in the academic world but in pre-university context as well, even if the meaning of research is understood differentiated from person to person. Thus, it is interesting and symptomatic for the authenticity of responses that often the same subjects who within the formal context express these kinds of opinions, within informal contexts are among the strongest challengers against research as a priority promotion criterion in their careers.

Another interesting aspect is that the quantitative research is placed on a socle even in areas where measurement and quantitative approach are not only hard but less significant.

A considerable number of teachers and academic staff consider that the research activity is important for education but as a source of updating the information to be taught and as an activity of the teaching staff focused on developing and improving the teaching activity itself, not as the most important criterion for promotion.

The difficulties for a genuine research, especially within the didactic area are often highlighted by a significant part of the subjects.

Connecting these opinions with what the previous subchapter has presented, one can say that the same ideas can be found on all the meridians of the world. Maybe a serious research on this topic, using effective instruments and serious observations in the field, connected to the research of other important aspects of the school/ university life (motivation

for teaching, motivation for learning in students' case, wellbeing of the educational communities, the real results of the institutions of education expressed by their graduates' competencies) should be the focus of the research activity for the professionals of research aiming to solve in a better manner this thorny issue of the balance between teaching and research, for the benefit of the society as a whole.

5. Proposal for partial integration without affecting the status of the university

University as an educational institution has as essence the training of specialized professionals for different areas of activity. It is true that this top educational institution as representative of the tertiary level education has to be concern about the research issues but for sure the balance between teaching and research should be carefully considered.

Ramsden and Moses (1992) show three possibilities to conceptualize the teaching-research relationship: (1).*completely integrated*, starting from the idea that if one wants to be an active researcher the starting point should be being a good teacher; (2). *independent*; even if a relationship between them is considered but they are, finally, mutually independent

(3). *partly integrated*, which is based on the understanding that research work and teaching need to be interrelated, not on an individual level, but on an institutional level (division/department). (Turk Marko, Ledić Jasminka (2016). Between Teaching and Research: Challenges of the Academic Profession in Croatia).

Having as a starting point this last alternative, an institutional integration can be prefigured, taking into account the possibilities, the competences of each scholar and the needs of the university to integrate optimally among those conducting teaching and research activity. The figure nr. 2 presents a possible structure of a university where this integration ensures a balance between research and teaching activity in the benefit both of each member of the staff, and the university as a whole.

The figure highlights two tracks:
- ➢ the track of the faculties (with their departments) where are active two kinds of teaching staff: one focused only on teaching, another one focused on teaching and research, mainly but not exclusively research on the didactic area.
- ➢ the track of the academic institute of research where are active professional researchers: some focused on only on research according to their specialties, others having the possibility to teach as part-time of their work.

The promotion should be ensured according to the specific activity of each category of staff, based on defined specific criteria.

Thus, professional educators can have as their priority to make education better, using their accumulated experience and sometimes research activities, but not forgetting their purpose: to rain new professional for the requested fields by society.
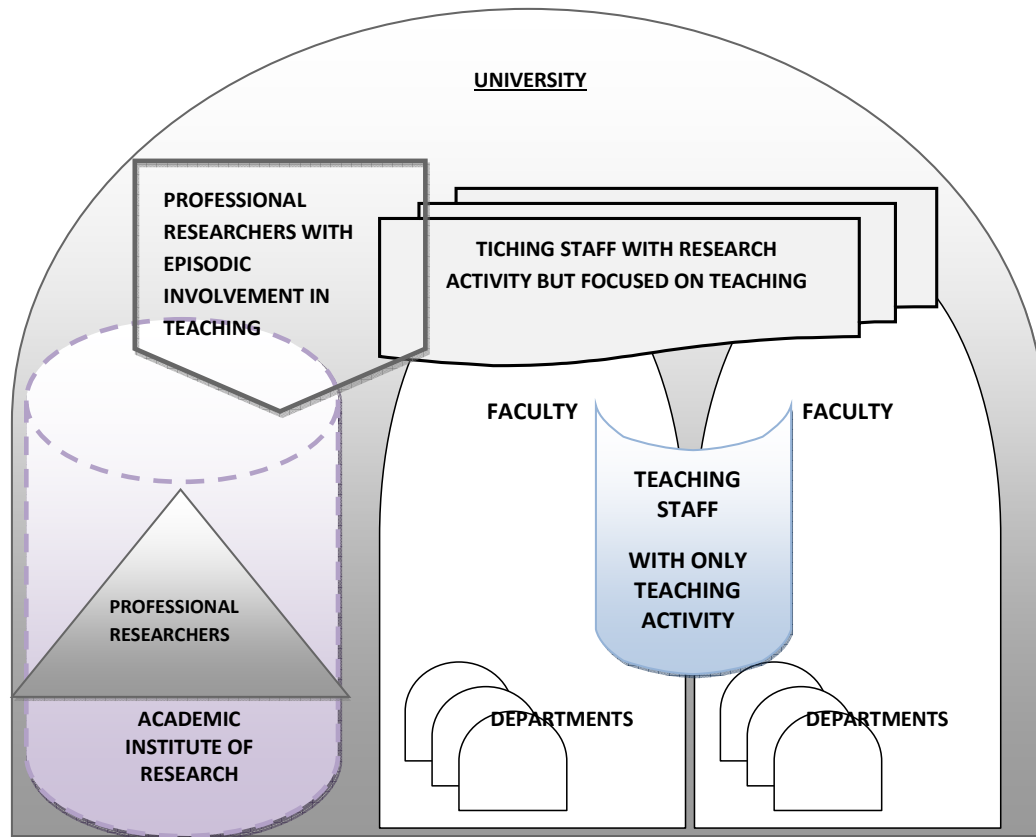
Fig. 2. *The structure of a university with defined tracks for teaching and research and a combined area*

There are also researchers working in the university. Their priority is the research activity. Their experimental field may be specific areas of sciences, social, political, medical or other types of activities, but also the education as a determinant of the quality of all the people in the society.

The quality of the specific work of these defined categories of scholars (focused on teaching, research or both) should be the mirror of the quality for each university, the source of a genuine prestige.

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HYPOSTASES OF THE COMPETENCY PROFILE FOR THE PROFESSIONALS OF EDUCATION

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Abstract: *The competence concept comes almost as an obsession within the context of nowadays scientific world. Scrutinizing the competence concept is proposed by this paper, in terms of its implying into syntagma: „professional competence profile".*

The meaning of this phrase:" professional competence profile" is explained; a structure under a clear matrix form of this profile is presented, as an original contribution of the author, firstly existing in her Ph.D. thesis. The processes of recruitment, selection, and continuing training in the professional field are explained as the beneficiary of the professional competence profile built as a clear matrix. This is the focus of the second part of the paper.

The final part of the paper analyses the topic of the competence profile in the teacher/professor status case, according to the multiple hypostases in a multicultural world. The managerial hypostasis of a teacher, including the leadership one, is put together with the hypostasis of curriculum designer and the actor of the basic implementation of the curriculum are presented within the context of specific requests of a multicultural world.

Keywords: *competence profile; managerial and teaching hypostases of teacher;*

1. The professional competence profile as a concept

The world of professions became a really complex area with multiple angles of analysis. A professional is defined as a person engaged or qualified in a very specific profession. To become a professional, a human being passed through a long-term process of development, first as human and only later during the ontogenesis process as a professional.

The holistic view over the personality involves specific areas of development: physical development (including health), cognitive development (where the communication ability is intimately involved), moral development (involving internalized values and adequately learned behaviours), socio-emotional development. The education is the most important factor in this evolution, leading and often supplementing or correcting the influences of heredity and of the physical and socio-cultural environment.

This genuine truth gives to the educational process (especially to the formal education hypostasis) a huge responsibility. The professionals of education must be highly responsible for all what the human resources of a society represent when it is about the future of mankind. This should be probably the core concern of any discussion about the professionals of education.

The education is in charge of training all the professionals for any other working areas. This is definitely the reasons for the presence of the idea of considering education as a priority for any national and political context. Unfortunately, this issue seems to remain more a theoretical statement than a genuine reality when it is about offering to educational field the proper attention. The reality is that it seems that neither the society and nor the professionals of education are entirely and profoundly aware of this truth.

The first steps of the educational process are done in the family context and they are subject to the synergistic effect of the non-formal and informal education, as long as the early education as a formal stage of education seems to be more a theoretical issue than a reality.

The formal education starts its explicit influence at the moment when the child is involved in an institution for education where professionals in the field begin their intentional, voluntary educational influence. This influence passes through a long and nuanced process adapted to the psychological specific of each student's age. The preschool and the primary level of formal education offer the fundamentals of the development of the personality, the instrumental culture necessary for the further development of the general culture. They are responsible for the development of the general and transferable competencies of the students. Both of these levels of culture are, on their turn, fundamentals for the specialty culture which develops and nuance the specific competencies of the human being that reached the age of the young maturity.

The high school level and the tertiary education level of education are responsible for the training of young people as professionals in different areas of activity.

Thus, one of the angles of the analysis of the "professionals" concept is that of their training.

Another angle is that of the defined requests for each specific job, for specific professionals.

The existence of a so-called "competence profile of a professional" is important both for the professional training and for the insertion of the already trained person for a determined activity area in the working market. (Fig. 1)

The history of the concept „competence profile" (or" profile of competencies") is intimately connected to the history of the concept of competence/ competency itself. The debates involved in the issue of competence-competency meanings are somehow projected to the concept of competence profile, as well.

The concept is defined mostly from the business point of view and it entered into literature as „job competency profile".

"*For some organisations Job Competency Profiles define the essential levels of competence required by individuals performing particular tasks in order for the organisation to meet regulatory requirements*."(HedgesBen , 2014)
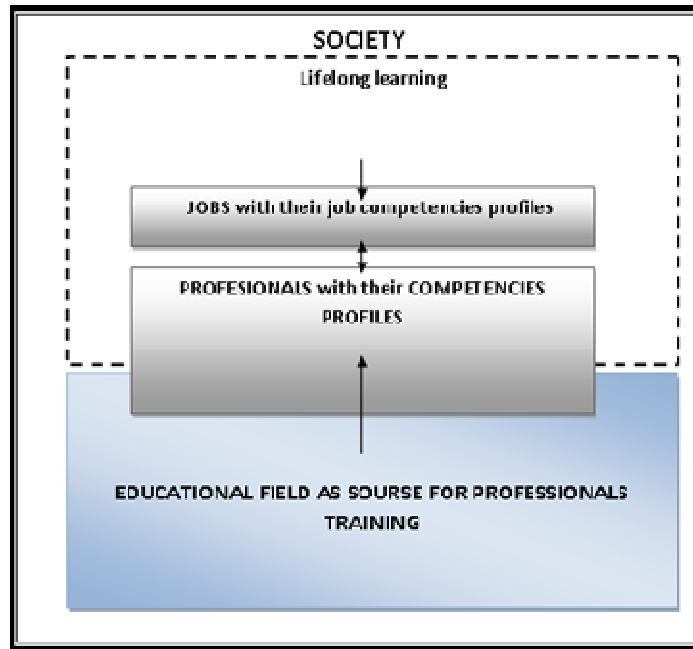
Fig.1. Determinations for competencies profiles

These different angles of looking to the concept in the discussion have determined a wide range of definitions that have in fact common aspects to be considered. It is not here the place to debate this issue. The field of education is the area of approaching and analysing the syntagma "profile of competencies" in this paper. The definition, with the meaning I have given to this concept, was firstly presented in my Ph.D. thesis in 1995, where a design of competencies profile for the main managers existing in the educational field had been described. Then, the concept has been detailed in the book focused on curriculum theory (Niculescu R.M., 2010:117-125) were the following considerations come from. The topic has been extended to other areas very important for the educational phenomenon in this second decade of the third millennium (Niculescu R.M., Bazgan M., 2017).

The competence profile is defined, in my vision, as "a matrix with a stable structure that defines the composition of a portrait afferent to a specific status: a school graduate of a given level, a manager of a stated institution/organization, or a professional in a specified area" (Niculescu, 2010, in Niculescu & Bazgan, 2017:17). It can be put into connection with what in French literature is called *référentielle*. This structure includes competencies (transversal/ transferable and specific competencies) distributed on fields of action specific for each professional status (recognized occupation) or on fields of knowledge when the profile of competencies refers to students graduating different school levels.

The previously mentioned two angles of analysis are shortly further presented.

1.1. The competencies profile as a final point for the training process

The curriculum design of training must start with the analysis of the final profile of competencies aimed to be developed for each future graduate.

The competence profile should be considered as an expected outcome of the educational process in a specific area, from the point of view of the educational field. The defined competencies involved in the matrix are *evolving competencies* for the students who are under a training process.

Thus, the competencies profile represents a landmark for the curriculum design of training program and a final point of the implementation of the program; it should be seen as a source of defined criteria of the training efficiency.

1.2. The competencies profile as a landmark for the recruitment, selection, and in-service training process within a professional specific field

The profile of competencies should be seen as a starting point, for the working area, as a reference aspect for recruitment and selection of interviewees, and a matrix of reference for a further continued training of the selected persons. The involved competencies within the matrix, even if they are essentially the same as in the case of the first angle of analysis (from the educational point of view) are, this time, *concrete competencies in practice*, that could be developed and nuanced through the professional experience and a continuing training process aiming specifically the filling out of the competence profile on each individual level.

The matrix is structured on specific fields for each profession, with specifically detailed competencies. These competencies are considered as synergic results of their components: knowledge, capacities - abilities, attitudes, including values; each of them is detailed on levels of importance in a specific moment, in terms: must/should/ would; this structure is adapted from some job descriptions that use it(fig. 2).

Table 1: The matrix as core description of a competency profile

Matrix	General Competencies Transversal or transferable competencies		Specific competencies	
Detailed competencies on:	General educational level	Speciality education level	General educational level	Speciality education level
Functionally structured knowledge	Would	Would	Would	Would
	Should	Should	Should	Should
	Must	Must	Must	Must
Capacities or capabilities/ abilities	Would	Would	Would	Would
	Should	Should	Should	Should
	Must	Must	Must	Must
Attitudes including values	Would	Would	Would	Would
	Should	Should	Should	Should

2. The role of the competence profile for recruitment, selection, and continuing training in the professional field

The moment of recruitment asks for each possible candidate to correspond to an announced *competence profile* for the advertised job. Talking about this moment the site of Garuda Research Institute, Denmark states that „The Competence Profile is designed to give a very detailed view of personality related competencies and skills in relation to a given job profile. The comprehensive questionnaire uncovers 16 personality traits - all key factors to successful leadership. The competence profile appears as being a very solid tool for recruitment and selection" especially at CO and managerial levels. I can stress that such a competence profile could be a very effective tool helping the selection for any type of job.

Garuda Institute presents an interesting view of what a recruiter should have in mind when a job is to be assigned/ occupied after the selection process. It is about their model called The Garuda *HEAD, HEART AND LEG MODEL* where the *Head* implies the cognitive competence, the *Heart work* involves the social-communicative competence, and the *Legwork* represents the moment of practice, of the independent activity and responsibility. The model is dedicated to managers but it can be considered for any kind of jobs, with accents for one or another of the three components, or for a specific combination among them.

A competence profile shows, in fact, all the three components of the Garuda model. The operators of what the model put under the term *LEG* are the *necessary capacities* to succeed in the work context. Any capacity cannot be elaborate without at least a minimal level of knowledge (even in the case of the physical activities) and higher and higher levels of knowledge for the complex activities. *Knowledge* part is considered the *HEAD* component of the model. All the different types of human work need vectors for ensuring the right direction, consistency, and effectiveness. This is the role of the HEART in the model that stresses the necessity of a more or less highly developed socio-communicative component, according to the specificity of each job. The HEART component is represented in the structure of the competence profile by the *attitudes based on values*.
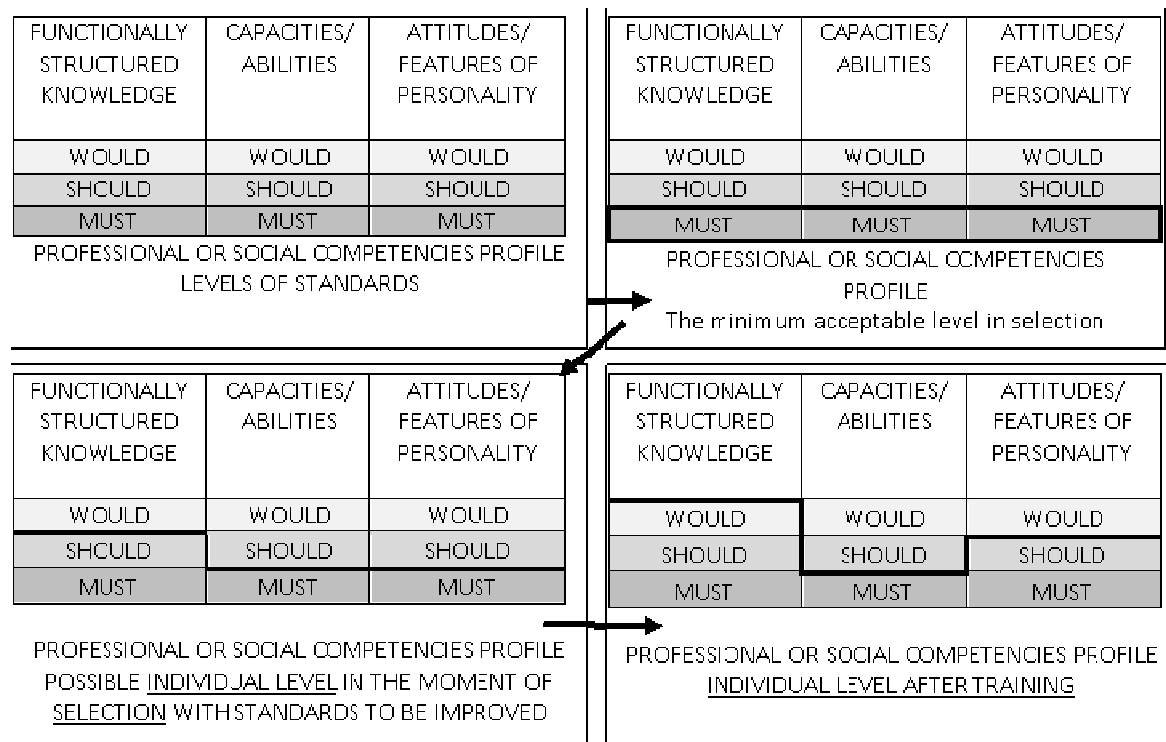
Fig. 3. The role of the competence profile in recruitment, selection and in-service training

This competence profile is extremely important for educational activity in the initial training stage, as final point establishing the expected outcomes of the entire educational process. But it has at least an equal importance for the recruitment activity. In this case the competence profile is referential of acceptance as minimal standards (the *must* items in terms of knowledge, capacities, and attitudes for each area of activity of a given occupation). Further, the same competence profile functions as referential for what it is supposed to be the directions and the outcomes of successive in-service training activities. These are conceived to fill the gaps between the individual level of the professional competence profile in the

moment of the assignment in a job and the general competence profile features for the given job. (Fig. 3)

3. Teacher's competence profile structure according to the multiple hypostases in a multicultural world

One of the most important professions within the working market was and remains the teaching one, for all the educational levels involved in the formal educational systems. This profession can provide specific answers to the questions considered crucial by Garuda Institute for assessing a professional and, in fact, for every possible assessment.

What gives the person's job satisfaction? One can say that this profession gives the most obvious satisfaction expressed by the important work with subjects belonging to childhood and youth. Building characters with patience and mastery mean a genuine satisfaction for a dedicated professional in the education field. For this purpose, is necessary to have a high level of communication competencies, on all the three main types of communication: verbal, nonverbal and paraverbal.

An effective teacher must prove a high level of sociability, of socio-emotional competencies in order to be able to integrate himself /herself with other people and to develop these competencies to other people. For doing this on a high level it is necessary that the professional of education to have high levelled and genuine internalized values and to e able to respect and tactfully impose the respect for the social and moral norms. And maybe, most of all, a professional in education must have a prompt and effective reaction for change, must understand in advance, and in an adequate way, the directions of social change in order to properly prepare the generations for the future life of society.

For all these difficult requests a professional educator must be motivated, and, unfortunately, the human society, all over the world, seems to not understand that it is necessary to give to „Caesar what is of the Caesar". But first of all, it appears that the Caesar himself is not enough awareness about the own value and role in the life of human society.

A teacher or a professor, first of all, is responsible for the teaching process whose manager is on the tactical level. Secondly, he or she is the manager of the group of students he works with. Often, in most of the educational systems in the world, the teachers/ professor could be as well managers of the educational institutions. Thus, even if in some countries or provinces, the management of the school is professionalized, the recruitment of the candidates for training as principals/ heads, directors of schools have to belong firstly to teaching staff.

For all these hypostases of management in the educational field, specific competencies profiles should be established. There are a significant number of common features for each hypostasis on international level. This core competence profiles generally appropriate all over the world, must be differentiated on school levels, because teaching activity with pre-school children, pupils in primary education, teenagers in gymnasium and high schools, or with university students requires distinct specific competencies.

More than this, the worldwide shared competencies profiles must be completed with elements of specificity for each national context.

On the other side, specific competencies profiles should be provided for the previously mentioned types of managers of social groups in the educational fields (a group of students, teachers belonging to the same subjects, or even schools as institutions). This is the issue of the middle managers within the educational institutions.

The presented matrix can be used for each of these cases as a shared structure, filled with what it is specific for each situation: fields of action, detailed necessary competencies.

The final of this presentation wishes to be an invitation for an in-depth reflection about a thorny issue that becomes more and more actual nowadays. It is about the teaching excellence assessment and its role for the career development because of an unclear balance between teaching and research. Debates appeared since the last decades of the previous century with pros and cons for the integration of these two criteria of promotion in university career. Nowadays the issue of the balance between teaching and research seems to extend its shadows on the pre-university system as well. Maybe, a detailed and distinctive competency profile should be done for the two hypostases: the professional of education as a researcher – and researcher as a professional.

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Profile of an effective manager for managerial excellence in the united nations (without year)

Office of Human Resources Management DIVISION FOR ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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"JUNCTIONS" BETWEEN GYPSIES AND NON-GYPSIES. POSSIBILITY OF CONNECTING LINKS BETWEEN GIPSIES AND NON-GIPSIES

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Abstract: *"Justitia generalis … virtus prout a charitate imperator, potest dici quodammodo charitas, et charitatis praeceptum tota lex." (Billuart, 1829).*
It is known that culture as a scale of values in ethnic groups, like the Hungarian gipsy communities, is specifically a whole, in spite of its special character, in which every value is in connection with other values and is a part of the whole European culture. So, the government in power should make it possible for both the majority and minority what is vital for human life e.g. food, clothing, healthcare, work, education, culture, authentic information, the possibility of founding a family etc. (See "Gaudium et Spes – encyclical letter, 26)

Keywords: *values, diversity; cooperation; pedagogy; andragogy;*

Introduction

Increasing and worrying inequality such as poverty, affliction may be experienced among the gipsy population. The huge economic, social and cultural differences between the Hungarian majority and the gipsy minority may get unbearable, besides these inequalities are inconsistent with social justice and equity and with human dignity. They may jeopardize social peace. (See "Gaudium et Spes – encyclical letter, 29)

The questions arise: Can the culture of Hungarian gypsies be developed? Do young gipsy people have the chance to develop their abilities? And how?

There are not ready-made answers to the solution of "how" neither in pedagogy nor in andragogy. Solution may only be found after carefully studying and considering all the circumstances.

Differences and recognizing each other's values

Nowadays different approaches to the notion of inconformity can be observed in research and in the media. It is doubtless in the view of considering the material and the behavioural culture of Hungarian people and that of the gipsy people that a lot of differences can be found in many respects. They both should learn about these differences and mutually recognizing them start building a bridge between the majority and the gipsy ethnic groups enriching each other's culture.

Saint John Paul II of blessed memory wisely called our attention to the strategy of connecting links which increase and enrich both the majority and minority's culture. According to John Paul II instead of differences, tensions and conflicts those elements should be emphasized which may help to connect the two parties and lead mutual cooperation while keeping the values and diversity of both cultures.

There are some possibilities of finding connecting links in the mutual way of the process of getting to know and recognizing each other's values and what might be learned from gipsy's attitude.

In my opinion the helping attitude might be sought for in the personal world view. Readiness to help is typical attitude of the gipsy population.

Short flashback to historical roots

Perhaps it is due to the fact that they had become Christians (Armenia VII century) before we did in Europe. At that time, they got integrated and incultured in a definitely more individual centred world of Byzantine Christianity. This influence still exists not only vertically in the form of asking for transcendental help but horizontally as well when besides looking for material help, they seek for spiritual comfort in different Churches and religious communities.

Due to their historical position gypsies endured fear, prosecution and were subjects of humility for centuries. In their defencelessness they passively adopted themselves to different nations. At present the only guarantee of successful integration is forming active and creative compliances with the gypsies' cooperation and with our personal help in educational institutes, self-organized cultural communities, in the Churches and at work as well. Mahatma Gandhi's ideas should be followed: to serve the whole society with patience and activities free of violence or exclusion and the same time the values of both the majority and minority should be kept. To achieve this goal is to turn with fellow-feeling interest to gypsies and to accomplish by recognizing mutual interest with empathy.

The strength of Gipsy communities

In gipsy communities the retaining power is stronger than in other communities. So young gipsy people leaving their community may easily get into doubtful or dangerous situations in this consumer's profit-hungry society built on individualist ideas. These young people often become victims of exploitation. Considering all the facts and situation, unnecessary segregation and assimilation could be avoided if the leaders of gipsies and those of the "gadzso" (non-gypsies) were honest, creditable and reliable people and if the principle of congruity could be realised.

In a gipsy community the child is the most important person – the soul of the community. The attitude of a gipsy family towards children is retaining love which is true for intrauterine life, too. Gipsy mothers have always been refusing abortion. It is a nice example of the respect of human dignity. It would be truly wonderful if this sort of attitude could be included in our modern world-concept. Another principle my be observed in gipsy communities; when an important decision has been made, they accept it positively and unconditionally.

According to Carl Rogers it would be worth applying the above-mentioned principles to our connections between majority and minority.

Service, kindness, humbleness

Let me mention the three principles set up by Sándor Karácsony, late professor of Debrecen University, in his work: "Hungarian Peace". In his view the core of pedagogical vocation should be: "service, kindness, humbleness" (Karácsony, 2001).

In my opinion these words ring with the keywords of pedagogy and andragogy and these concepts should appear in structure of connections between Hungarians and Gipsies. There is no empathy without service, no acceptance of each other without kindness and no credibility without humbleness.

Finally, to sum up our task let me quote professor Karácsony again: "I connect, intermediate or lead if I could be threshold honestly, truly, patiently, modestly by God." (Karácsony, 2001)

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MUSIC, SUPPORT FOR THE INTEGRATED APPROACH OF SCHOOL LEARNING IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

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Abstract: *A defining element of the progress of knowledge is the interdisciplinary approach. Success in life is given by the ability to get out of the box of school subjects, to make connections to solve everyday problems. The interdisciplinary approach involves bridges between disciplines by using the conceptual and methodological devices of several disciplines used in interconnections to examine a topic or a problem but above all to develop transversal and interdisciplinary integrated competencies. What we propose to you in this paper, starting from the Keep Pace Workshop, held in the PIPP National Conference, The Fourth Edition "Teachers Building the Future" is a way of creating an appropriate educational context for the integrated approach of school learning, through an activity in the field of music and movement, mathematics, language and communication, practical skills, drawing, personal development and their encounter in an interdisciplinary way.*

Keywords: *Music; integrated approach; primary education;*

1. Introduction

Child, teacher, actor, artist, painter, musician at the same time. This is how the experience of the music studio "Hold the rhythm!" Can be described. Through this workshop held at the PIPP National Conference, the 4th Edition "Teachers Building the Future," we aimed to demonstrate that music can be the foundation, the support, the basis of the achievement of integrated schooling at the level of primary education. The workshop took place in groups of 5-6 students. It started from a text in the Romanian Language and Literature Manual, the second class, chosen by the students, and with the help of the new music we went through the fields of knowledge specific to the primary education pupils: plastic arts, music, movement, mathematics, sciences of nature, practical abilities, personal development, and so on.

2. Conceptual delimitations - integrated learning and interdisciplinary approach

Integrated learning, supporting the interdisciplinary approach, allows the learner to learn by linking ideas and concepts in different fields. Students who learn in this way are able to apply the knowledge acquired in a discipline to another different discipline as a learning experience. Integrated learning allows students to build their interdisciplinary path through an effort they feel meaningless. It is not too difficult to find a theme crossing the disciplinary boundaries of literature, art and history or science and mathematics. Thematic study is a way to bring together ideas, resulting in a more meaningful, motivating learning, learning for life. This can happen, allowing students to choose their own subjects, capitalize on their potential, abilities and skills. Learning is deepened deeply when the student is given the opportunity to reflect on the links between what he has learned in different disciplines.

One of the issues raised in the way of achieving integrated learning, supporting interdisciplinary study, is the need for educators to collaborate, especially for making creative, flexible, but at the same time very in-depth teaching design. This can be difficult to achieve, but not impossible. Interdisciplinary teaching and learning is maximized when professionals

in different disciplines work together, specifically to deliver didactic design, to serve a common goal, and to help students connect different disciplines or domains. Such an interaction is in support of the constructivist paradigm that allows students to build new knowledge and a deeper understanding of ideas than disciplinary study.

Constructivism is a theory of how people learn. This theory suggests that people create their own understanding and knowledge of the world through experiences and reflections on their own experiences. Constructivism implies that when students meet new ideas, they integrate them into the system of ideas and previous experiences, connecting new knowledge to something already known. Above all, theory assumes that each is the active creator of one's own knowledge. The teacher has the task of preparing, creating an environment in which students ask questions, explore and evaluate what is known or learned. Students involved in interdisciplinary studies therefore build their own understanding and knowledge of the world through personal choices, by capitalizing on their potential by satisfying their own development needs.

Integrated learning implies applying separate topics to students so that students can achieve authentic learning. Veronica Boix Mansilla, project coordinator for Project Zero Interdisciplinary Studies, advocates "when students can bring together concepts, methods from two or more disciplines or fields of knowledge established to explain a phenomenon, solve a problem, create a produce or raise a new question "they demonstrate integrated learning. For over a decade, researchers from the Zero project at the Harvard Graduate School of Education have studied integrated learning in a series of studies. They have shown that integrated learning through an interdisciplinary approach in school is essential for students with modern thinking (Boss, 2011).

3. Purpose of the research

This paper aims to emphasize the ability of music to be a support, a link to interdisciplinary approach, to achieve integrated learning, to facilitate the formation of cross-curricular competences and the learning of some curriculum content.

The aim of the workshop was to prepare students, future teachers, to create an educational environment that facilitates learning, starting from the competences and contents of the second-grade school curriculum.

4. Research hypothesis

Integrated learning, through an interdisciplinary approach, during the workshop will spark interest and bring more motivation to students.

5. Description of the research

Realization of the workshop where the contents of the subject were associated Romanian Language and Literature, music poems - creating a suitable rhythm and melodic line, making a drawing that sends the message and a poster that centralizes the whole activity provided interdisciplinary approach and integrated learning, exercising transversal skills. In particular, transversal competence will be exemplified: the ability to communicate in different life contexts.

A teacher of music and a teacher of pedagogy, a former primary school teacher, created an educational context appropriate to the integrated approach to school learning, with the aim of raising interest, enhancing motivation, creating authentic and sustainable learning.

It was an activity in which music and movement, mathematics, language and communication, practical skills, drawing, personal development met in an interdisciplinary way.

The activity took place in groups of 5-6 students. He began with a moment of intercourse, which consisted in associating the state of each participant, to a rhythm shared with colleagues in the group who had the task of guessing the state of expression.

Then, in a creative activity, the participants composed a song, for a text in verses, chosen by them. The texts were selected from the second-grade Romanian textbooks.

They have written the rhythm of the song, using the suitable musical values. On the basis of musical values, arithmetic exercises were performed by a frontal activity. In addition to simple arithmetic exercises, math problems can also be created based on time values of musical notes. Or vice versa, starting from arithmetic exercises, the musical notes can be drawn, and thus value time is set, corresponding to each musical sign.

At a time of the workshop, after the melody was established and the message of poetry understood by each member of the group, some of the students learned to play a musical instrument on the created piece, others made a drawing or painting to represent the text message, others made decoration elements. Then they all contributed to the transposition in an artistic moment of creation: a musical or popular dance, using the décor made in the workshop.

At the end of the workshop, a poster was created, containing the text of the second-class Romanian textbook, the rhythmic writing of the composing song, the drawings and handmade workpieces, starting from the song's message. Everything they have done has been demonstrated by each group in the end-of-day summary.

Students have discovered the pleasure of singing, they have found the will to get out of the comfort zone, in an action that did not seem exciting at the first impression, and even generated a slight fear; as they said, "I chose the musical workshop just to practice a field that they felt stranger and scared me". And, look, they have learned to "Keep the rhythm!"

Each activity can be considered as an experience of exercising the ability to communicate in different contexts through different messages, channels and modes: rhythm, sound, drawing, painting, movement.

6. Results

The results of the activity were the posters, but especially the artistic moments of each group that included all the work done by the students in the workshop. But especially the state of well-being and the joy experienced by each moment of activity.

It was a workshop that tasted both students and coordinating teachers. It was an opportunity for professional enrichment to achieve school learning in a relaxing psycho-active environment, to achieve an activity with active participation of each student and impact on each participant.

It was an activity that exploited the theory of multiple intelligences and at the same time an interdisciplinary approach to integrated schooling.

"We were at the same time: children, teachers, artists, actors, painters, musicians!" Appreciates the participants.

7. Conclusions

The interdisciplinary approach allows the synthesis of ideas and the synthesis of the characteristics of several disciplines. At the same time, it addresses individual student differences and helps develop important, transferable skills. These abilities, such as critical

thinking, communication and analysis, group work, are important and constantly develop in all stages of life.

Educational experiences serve students best if they allow and encourage students to build their own way of knowing. This approach provokes interest, stimulates love for learning, sparks a spark of enthusiasm, offers the opportunity to harness the potential, the availability, the skills and the different needs of the pupils and thus increases the motivation through the satisfaction of the success.

Integrative learning comes in many varieties: connecting skills and knowledge from multiple sources and experiences; applying skills and practices in different regions; using various and even contradictory views; and understanding the contextual problems and positions "by making connections in a major field, between fields, between curriculum, coaching, or between theoretical and practical knowledge" (Huber, M.T., Hutchings, P., & Gale, R. 2005).

Linking the different concepts, through an interdisciplinary approach, using them to practice skills, is essential in integrated learning.

Here are some other advantages of studying this way:

Students are very motivated because they have a great interest in following interesting topics for them. As a result, content is often rooted in life experiences, providing an authentic learning goal and connecting it to a real-world context. Consequently, learning becomes meaningful, intentional and profound, resulting in the learning of the experiences that stand with the student throughout life.

Students cover topics in depth because they take into account the many and varied perspectives from which a subject can be explored. Acquiring knowledge is not a goal of learning, it is the result of exercises of description, understanding, analysis, application, synthesis, evaluation.

Transversal competences are used and developed because students look beyond disciplinary boundaries to consider other views and also start to compare and use concepts in different areas.

Students begin to reinforce learning by synthesizing ideas from multiple perspectives and consider an alternative way of acquiring knowledge, not as a goal but as a result.

Exploring topics from a range of disciplines motivates students to pursue new knowledge in different areas.

The transferable skills of critical thinking, synthesis and research are developed and are applicable to future learning experiences.

Interdisciplinary knowledge and the application of different disciplines can lead to greater creativity.

Through their own experience, students, future teachers, have been able to taste the benefits of interdisciplinary approach and integrated learning, in order to have the desire to create a similar educational environment.

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THE EFFECTS OF MUSIC ON LEARNING AND CONCENTRATION

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Abstract: *In times when everything is in constant agitation, the environment and entourage bombard us with information, advertisement, and colours that we are not surprised to find that our thoughts invade, thoughts appear and change in our mind with a dizzying speed. Accelerated thinking is the syndrome resulting from this continuous movement which shakes our peace and life. Among the methods to combat the accelerated thinking syndrome is ambient music. The research aims to highlight the effects of music on the body, on people suffering from accelerated thought syndrome, on the ability to concentrate.*

Keywords:*Ambient music; Accelerated Thought Syndrome; Concentration;*

1. Introduction

In the century of speed, when time does not reach for all the proposed activities, in which everything moves with unimaginable speed, even thoughts are no longer settled. During the course of a certain activity, the mind goes in completely different parts. Discussions are no longer coherent, there is an invasion of ideas, and there is a desire to discuss those ideas. These manifestations Augusto Cury in the book "Glamorous parents, fascinating teachers" fit them into Accelerated Thinking Syndrome (S.G.A.).

2. About Accelerated Thinking Syndrome

Researches in the field have identified the manifestations, causes, and especially the solutions that music proposes to diminish unwanted manifestations and improve the state.

2.1. Ways to manifest accelerated thinking

Accelerated thinking may have different ways of manifestation:
- difficulty concentrating attention on a task;
- fatigue even if exercise or exercise is lacking;
- sensitivity, anxiety, high stress;
- affected memory;
- poor management of thoughts and clarity of mind.

2.2. Causes of accelerated thinking

Causes of Thinking Syndrome Accelerates may be multiple. Premature birth can be one of them. Babies born prematurely did not have time to "mature", return, start to the cervix, prepare for the trials of life. They are born full of energy and many of them become hyperactive. Hyperactivity is not genetic, but comes from the lack of psycho-emotional adaptation. This occurs when the foetus barely falls into the womb of the mother and he must slow down his movements, relax. On an environmental background that disturbs them, babies born prematurely very easily may become hyperactive.

Another cause is the large number of visual and environmental stimulus. Just because life has become so complex and technology is handier, and there is more and more stimulus.

Excessive information is another cause. Libraries, bookstores, but especially the Internet containing the most information, which in many cases may be useless or wrong.

Advertising psychology, consumer policy (excess colour) is another cause that is wasting energy and concentration. To attract the consumer and make him buy a particular product, to consume it, is packed attractive, as colourful as possible.

In a real way, it's not just a single cause. Usually there is a cumulation of factors, an intertwining of several stimuli that bombard the brain, which consumes a lot of energy just to process thoughts.

2.3.Who's Affecting Accelerated Thinking Syndrome?

Accelerated Thinking Syndrome affects both children and young people but also adults.

Hyperactive children cannot stand still, do a job, look for an explanation, they get upset, repeat mistakes, they bother around of them. Only then can they calm down, they can calm their own person. Even the reproaches of adult people cannot reassure them. These children concentrate very hard only when something new draws their attention and stimulates their interest for a short time. Smart children, in a little while they manage to concentrate, are able to achieve satisfying school results, a good grade. With maturation they learn to focus and develop stable life projects.

At the adults, there are three forms in which Accelerated Thought Syndrome can compromise mental health:
- the memory of the past - a sense of guilt;
- suffering through anticipation;
- concerns and worries about existential problems.

3. How can S.G.A be reduced?

Accelerated Thinking Syndrome is rather an acquired behaviour than a disease, and any behaviour that any learning has and unlearn. It can be reduced by:
- reducing the time spent on television and in the presence of incentives that favour it;
- control of thoughts;
- reducing and filtering information we receive across channels;
- Emotional involvement of pupils in the teaching-learning process. The more emotional involvement increases, the more concentration and willingness to participate; acts as a barrier to disturbing factors, other stimulus in the mind; which facilitates concentration and favours learning;
- the use of ambient music, calm and produces positive emotions.

4. Ambient music in the classroom

"The objectives of this technique are: to deaccelerate thinking, to calm anxiety, to improve concentration, to develop the pleasure of learning, to educate emotion," says Augusto CURY
If learning is proposed in an environment without emotional involvement, it is very clear that it will not be achieved; transmission of information does not generate anything in the pupil, apart from waste of time and effort.

Ambient music helps mathematics, chemistry, foreign languages or other subjects to be no longer arid, but to have an emotional dimension.

5. Advantages of using ambient music

Consistent use of ambient music during school activities:
- promotes musical and emotional education;
- creates the pleasure of learning during "less friendly" classes;
- diminishes SGA, quiet thinking, improves concentration and assimilation of information;

In everyday life, normally and in general, especially young people, prefers the noisy music, 21st century music, with text and message, according to their thoughts, feelings and emotions. In directed learning activities, to diminish, they can create an environment with ambient, calm, soothing, relaxing music.

The effects of ambient music are somewhat amazing. Ambient music should be used from childhood, even from intrauterine life and listening to become a skill.

6. The qualities of music that are recommended for systematic learning activities

For music to be favourable to the reduction of Accelerated Thinking Syndrome and learning, some features are needed.

Is recommended:
- classical music - Mozart. The Mozart effect was Alfred A. Tomatis's name following experiments and research based on Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's music. He realized that listening to Mozart's compositions, improving thinking, can increase IQ, in children under the age of three, it actually helps to develop the brain and there are a multitude of positive effects in the body;
- soft and quiet - Music is created out of emotion and in turn, it transmits emotion. If the music is loud and agitated, automatically and the state it induces will be a stir;
- instrumental - Voice music captures the attention even through the text attached to the song. Instead of this relaxation, it puts the brain in motion to decode and process the message of the song.

7. Conclusions

Studies on the effect of music on the state of comfort, tranquillity, learning to learn have had a positive result. Confirmations are therapies for tranquillity, relaxation, concentration based on classical music, music combined with sounds of nature, which bring man closer to his nature and creation.

In a questionnaire handed out to 216 students from Lucian Blaga University in Sibiu, 75% appreciate that the quality of the pedagogical course and seminar considered ambient music used as a learning facilitator.

Certainly, some students do not like musical backgrounds in learning activities, but through systematic exposure, these conditions will change. Augusto CURY argues: "After six months of calm and quiet music, the emotion of students / young people is prepared and stabilized."

If music develops intelligence, IQ increases, silences the human psyche, means that bring the mind and the brain to a state conducive to learning.

Ambient music during classes, through emotional training, diminishes the accelerated thinking syndrome and increases learning efficiency.

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PARENTS' ROLES IN CHILDREN'S MENTAL REPRESENTATIONS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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Abstract: *The world today treats gender issues delicately and under the authority of political correctness. Gender equality, the rights and obligations of men and women, and equity in their authentic establishment are topics treated differently according to the given socio-cultural context. This study explores the impact of this context on children's mental representations, and presents an in-depth description of their image of mother and father, in a young democracy, where religion unites the national perspective and vocally defines gender roles. For this research, the drawings of a group of primary school students were analysed (n=215). Also, students were asked to describe their mother and father in an open question survey. The analysis presents separate images of the two parents, puts together common characteristics, and makes connections with the socio-cultural environment. The voice of change is heard through the aspects encountered in children's mental images.*

Keywords: *parents' roles; children; mental representation; socio-cultural context;*

1. Introduction

The first part of children's life takes place in the family, and this fact leads to decisively curving their personality. At the individual level, in future terms, parents' image, with their roles deeply and instinctively analysed and absorbed by children, translate into a perpetuation of psychological characteristics, which, good or bad, are resistant to change, and the probability to direct their future family life is high (Winnicott, 2018).

At macro level, the parental model, culturally impregnated (Hussain, Naz, Khan, Daraz, & Khan, 2015; Liben, 2014), is carried on by children through the common denominator found in mental images and expressed in behaviour(Eccles, Jacobs, & Harold, 1990; Knafo & Galansky, 2008; Reilly, Neumann, & Andrews, 2016), that further define social values, believes, and attitudes (Vygotskiĭ & Cole, 1978).

Still, the world is changing. Where does this change come from? The voice of children, as an echo of processing the mental images in relation to the changes in the socio-cultural context – much more dynamic and, at the same time, more uniformized by social mobility (Gariup, 2017; Ivic, 2016), produces transformations in the common denominator (Surr, 2017). In this process of transformation, children's perception of parents, with their already modernized roles in a constantly changing socio-cultural environment, is an important variable.

1.1. Children's mental representation

Intergenerational relations have become more and more important (Bengtson, 2001; Bertram, Baayen, & Schreuder, 2000; Saraceno, 2008; Swartz, 2009). When analysing our society, problems regarding the family as a social unit are important variables to take into consideration. Here, the intergenerational relations are examined through the relations between parents and children. The study of this relation requires a two way look: first, the impact of parents in children development (Vandell, Belsky, Burchinal, Steinberg, &

Vandergrift, 2010), and second, the *new* reversed by children in their own families and in the society, in general (Jans, 2004; Woodhead, 2006; Vandell et al., 2010).

Mental representations are the background for our attitudes, behaviour and believes. A drawing can be a valuable source of revealing children's mental representation (Cox, 1993; Farmer, Spearman, Qian, Leonard, & Rosenblith, 2018; Klepsch & Logie, 1982). What children can't express in words, we can find in their drawing.

Karmiloff-Smith (2018) articulates, regarding children's drawings, that "development is accounted in terms of reiterated cycles of change from internal representations specified as a sequentially fixed list, embodying a constraint that was inherent in the earlier procedural representations, to internal representations specified as a structured, yet flexibly ordered set of manipulability features" (p. 40).

Concerning parents mental representation in children's minds, Halford (1993) argues that cognitive development is experience driven. These experiences curve the mental images of models that children will further represent. A series of factors build these experiences and the result is not an accurate representation of what is perceived, but a cumulation in witch new correlations merge in original outcomes.

For this study, the variables inside children's mental representation process are the mother's role, the father's role, and the socio-cultural environment.

1.2. Socio-cultural context and parents role

The city of Sibiu, the place where this study was done, is situated in central Romania, in the region of Transylvania. Along the history, the place, like the country as well, passed through a series of cultural and demographic changes. Different parts of today's territory of Romania were in the composition of Dacia, the Roman Empire, the Ottoman Empire, the Russian Empire, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. From 1945 to 1989 Romania was under the communist regime. Since 1989, the country is a democracy, administrated as a semi-presidential republic.

At present, the majority of the population in Sibiu is represented by Orthodox Romanians (94%), besides Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic and the Evangelical-Lutheran (INSSE, 2018). The proportion characterizes the population of Romania as well.

Is important to mention the inhabitants religion because, as studies report, parental style is influenced by the religious beliefs and the image of God defines gender roles (Baring, 2012; Chou & Uata, 2012; Landor, Simons, Simons, Brody, & Gibbons, 2011). Romania has a European-national orientation, 51% of Romanians claim to be equally proud of being Romanians and Europeans. Still, Romanians define their cultural identity through their religion, namely being Orthodox, and their birth place, geographically located inside Romania's boundaries (Standard, 2012). This important variables defines life in all its aspects and echoes parenting as well (Lebedeva, Nadezhda, Dimitrova, Radosveta, Berry, 2018).

As mentioned above, Romania is a relatively young democracy. Although, more the 40 years of communism have deeply influenced the lives of Romanians in all life aspects. The Family Code issued in 1954 enforced the principles of equality betweenmen and women in public and private life. Both man and women had to be employed with supposed equal rights, and the state was to be responsible for their children education. As Dumanescu (2014) states, traditional roles of the women (raising children and domestic activities) were actually doubled by jobs, leading to overwhelming responsibilities. Fathers remained entirely providers for their families and education was to be ensured by state schools. This was the ideal family in communism. Still, a duplicity of behaviour was observed (Falls, 2011). The phenomena were essentially a way of maintaining the traditional roles, while obeying regime ideology.

Today, the nuclear family, with traditional roles, remains dominant (Mihai & Butiu, 2012). "Women tended to embrace pre-communist assumptions about their own status in society, most notably the value of their role in the family and the deep differences between men and women", articulates Robila (2002, p.147). The author also concludes that "it is still expected, both formally and informally, that women should find their satisfaction primarily in family and motherhood. While parenthood is highly desired by both men and women, household tasks are expected to be performed by women" (p. 147).

Studies regarding parental roles in Romanian families expose similar conclusions. The purpose of this study is to assess the impact of this family image in children's mental representation, having in consideration the changes brought by the new socio-cultural environment. Also, the voice of change encountered in the processed mental images of children is searched.

1.3. Research questions

In order to reach its purpose, the following questions guided the study:
1. What parent roles depart from the written description and mental images of children regarding their mother and father?
2. Are these rolesimpregnated with socio-cultural beliefs? Are there contradictions/novelties?

2. Method

2.1. Participants

This study involved 215 students aged 6 to 11. The students are enrolled in a public school in Sibiu, Romania. Geographic positioning, as stated, is important because one of the independent variables is the socio-cultural environment itself. The distribution of the participants is presented in Table 1.
The socio-economic level of the students' families is appreciated as average. 95% of children are of Orthodox religion. Of the total, 3% of participants come from monoparental families. No special needs student participated in this research.

Table 1. Direct participants

Gender	Preparatory class	1st grade	2nd grade	3rd grade	4th grade
Boys	23	18	19	18	21
Girls	20	22	24	20	30

2.2. Procedure

The children were given a questionnaire with the request to first fill in data such as sex, age, and grade. In the questionnaire, students answered two open questions that they had the suggestion to fill in as they please. The statements were "*My mother is ....*" and "*My father is ....*". The free space to complete was two rows for each description.

Below, two equal text boxes were outlined. Here children were asked to draw separately their father and mother. The request was "Please draw your father and your mother as you imagine them now". Children started to draw without receiving any other specifications related to the positioning of the drawing, which part of the body to drawn, how

many elements should be included in the representation, or whether to use colours or pencil. No time limit was set. The size and quality of the support paper for drawing was the same for all distributed questionnaire. The researcher observed children drawing the entire time and answered any questions. The procedure followed the first two steps of Corman (1964).

2.3. Coding

Questionnaires were coded[vii] using grade (0 –preparatory grade, 1- first grade, 2 – second grade, 3 – third grade, and 4 – fourth grade), name initial, age, and sex (B – boy, G – girl). Data was analysed using NVivo 10.

2.4. Ethics

Legal consent was obtained priori starting the research. During the actual study, students receive the information that they can withdraw at any time. The initials used in coding are fictive and do not refer to the real names of children.

3. Results

3.1. Open questions

In Table 2 and Table 3 we will present the words that link children's description of their mother and respectively their father merging in a common denominated image.

Table 2. Mother description in words

Word used	Frequency in text
kind	66
lovely	53
beautiful	45
hardworking	38
caring	18
gentle	13
clever / smart / intelligent	10
the best mom	10
understanding	9
pretty	7
generous	7
helpful	6
patient	6
makes jokes / is funny	6
good housekeeper / cook	5
happy / cheerful	4
attentive	3
merciful	2
bad	1

To the words in the table we can add expressions such as:

[vii] Code e.g. 1T9G, for a first grader 9 years old girl

She lets me go out.
She is good with me only when I do not do stupid things.
She loves all children and she is kind to them.
She is good with people around.
She buys me everything I want.
She is cool.
When I get sick, she sits next to my bed and gives me the necessary medication.
She teaches me only good things.

Boys use more descriptions of physical appearance and specify what the mother's job is. We observe that the stated professions are socially prestigious (doctor, nurse, medical assistant, and translator). In the boys' description, "beautiful" often appears, and the attention to this aspect is revealed by details like "she has a ring".

Girls use words like "housekeeper", "hardworking", and "kind" when describing their mothers. One of the girls says her mother is "obedient" and another uses the word "vigilant".

Table 3. Father description in words

Word used	Frequency in text
kind	55
industrious	38
loving	23
good worker	16
tall	16
strong	11
clever / smart / intelligent	9
brave	8
makes jokes	8
understanding	6
cute	5
the best dad	5
attentive	5
patient	5
happy / cheerful	4
big	3
gentle	3
a good cook	2
handsome	2
bad	2
protector	2
householder	1
honest	1
fast	1

Fathers are also described in expressions such as:
He buys everything I want.
My father is more severe sometimes, he always tells me to tell the truth, and not to lie.
He likes sport.
If I do not know something, he helps me.

My father has a BMW.
Dad is very good and he wants nothing bad to happen to me.
He's always trying to make me go through difficult challenges in order to be strong and ready for life.

Children also notice the soft part of fathers:
Every night he gives me a good night's kiss.
Dad is careful and good to me.
Dad is good with all kids.
My father is hardworking, he brings the food home, he irons clothes, and he cooks.
He is an extraordinary chef.

The occupations mentioned for fathers are professor, doctor, and actor, but girls also mention jobs like line-worker and manual worker.

Mothers and fathers have 11 commune characteristics, namely they both are: kind, beautiful/handsome, clever/smart/intelligent, the best mom/dad, understanding, patient, make jokes/are funny, good housekeeper/cook, happy/cheerful, attentive, and bad. The frequency in text for these common characteristics is higher for mothers, with the exception of last two, respectively fathers are perceived to be more attentive and worse.

Mothers are described using 8% more words then fathers. For mothers we found 19 features mentioned with different frequencies, and for fathers 24, but with lower frequency. Mothers are therefore described with fewer characteristics, but in more words.

Regarding the drawings, although the request was "Please draw your father and you mother as you imagine them now", 24% of the children draw in the left box the mother. This aspect is important to mention for perceptual hierarchy (Edwards, 2016). Further data collected concerning the children's drawings are presented below.

3.2. Drawings

Drawings analysis was done through three aspects: the graphic level, the formal structure level, and the content level (Corman, 1964). We will present those elements of the drawings that we can link to the study interest variables, namely the parents' roles and the socio-cultural environment. Appendix also contain various drawings as argument for the results presented in this section.

3.2.1. Graphic level

Two aspects are important at the graphic level: the extent/dimension and the force/contour stress used in the drawing. Depending on the temperamental type, children use either large or short/segmented lines in the graphic representation of their parents. In the first case, the drawing expresses an image full of vitality, and in the second case, the tendency to return to one's own person. It is worth mentioning that the drawings were made using the same type of line (see Figure 1). If the father was drawn with ample lines, the mother was drawn the same.
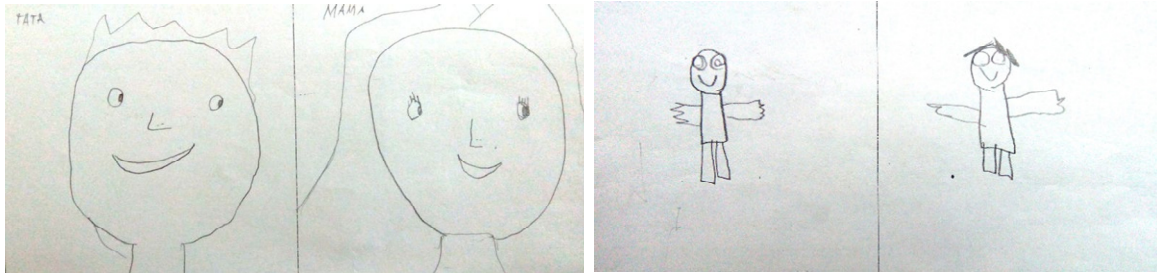
Figure 1. Extent and force in representing parents (4S11RB – left, 0T7OB – right)

The same observation can be stated about the dimension of the representation. The image of the father is roughly equal to that of the mother, and vice versa. Children rarely cross the contour of the outlined box. The drawings are rather positioned in the middle of the box, with the inclination to attach them to the bottom, which suggests connection to primordial instincts.

White areas were also observed in the drawings, especially in the lower part of the paper, but this observation about the "little depressed" could only be verified by talking to children who made the drawings (see Figure 2).
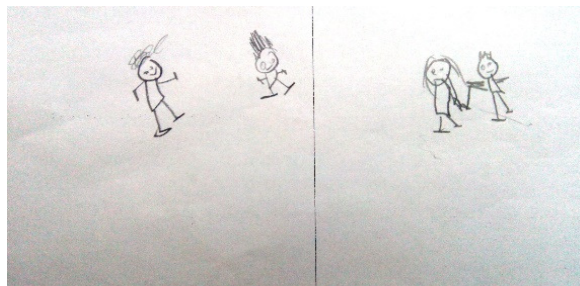
Figure 2. White area (0H6B)

The drawings are not outlined with strong lines which would indicate suppression of violence for none of the parents, nor with lines drawn poorly, which would make us think of the impossibility of affirming in drawing the mental image of their parents.

Most of the drawings have a progressive construction (from left to right, see Figure 3) when other elements are added next to the parent's image. This observation indicates a natural perceived continuity regarding the family.

Figure 3. Progressive drawing construction (0G6B)

3.2.2. Formal structure level

As far as the graphic structure is concerned, we mention that the degree of perfection of representation increases with age. Still, preparatory grade children can be quite accurate in their representation (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Accuracy in drawing and age (Preparatory grade – left 0V7B, fourth grade – right 4J11G)

Another important remark found in most drawings is the use of straight lines in detrimental curved ones (Figure 5). The observation expresses a nuance of rigidity and isolation.

3.2.3. Content level

Here we come back to the hierarchical order and we reiterate that 24% of the children did not follow the direction of drawing first the father, then the mother. Regarding the content itself, besides the representation of the parents, we mention that the following elements have been added: houses, sun, the flag of Romania, children (probably personal representation), butterflies, hearts, flowers, trees, kitchen furniture in the mother's image, working instruments in the father's image, and details of the mother's clothes (see Figure 6 and Appendix).
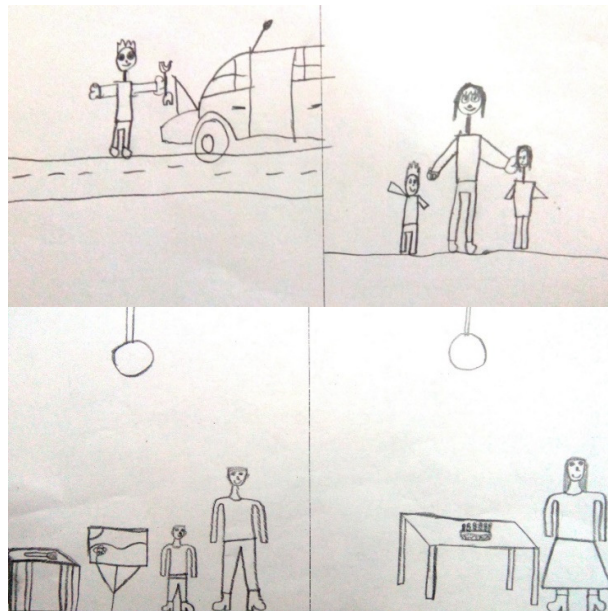
Figure 5. Straight lines (0U7B – up, 0R6B – down)
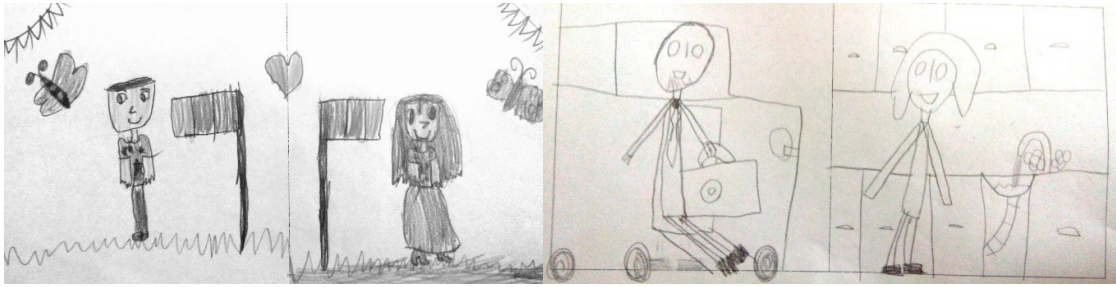
Figure 6. Content elements (1K7G – left, 1C7B – right)

The affective tendency is to value parents by adding elements equally to the mother and to the father. If a child drew his mother in detail, he did the same for his/ her dad.

4. Discussion

Certainly, the first aspect that we can bring into discussion is the equality of parental roles in children's vision. This observation characterizes most of the written responses and drawings of children. The deviations from this common denominator will be discussed below in order to answer the first research question, namely what parent roles depart from the written description and mental images.

From the interpretation of the results gathered through the open questions, we conclude that the father's image is dichotomic. He has both the role of provider, protector, strong handy man, and, in the same time, is sensitive, caring, and helps the mother in daily home responsibilities. So, the father conserves the traditional role, but adds in a new one that overlaps the mother's.

Mothers remain stable in their traditional role. They are the kind, beautiful, hardworking, gentle persons that fill the lives of children with affection. They are described with more words. Physical appearance is important. Mothers are beautiful. Details about their beauty and the accessories that they put on are noticed by children.

The new element seized in the perception of mother is the respect for their high-status jobs that children have to mentioned and draw, when describing what their mothers do for a living.

So, we can answer the second research study too. The roles of parents are impregnated with traditional socio-cultural beliefs, but novelties also arise. Fathers are becoming more sensitive, and mothers' high-status jobs are to be mentioned. Related to other aspects extracted from children words and drawings, the change occurred in mother's role has a nuance of appreciation. But she is still caring, gentle, and "has a ring".

5. Conclusion

The roles of the mother and father, as they are extracted from children's words and graphic representations, are mostly traditional. Mother is in charge of gently raising children and thoughtfully resolving domestic activities, and father is a provider, and a protector. Even if the content of the drawing is different depending on gender (kitchen furniture for mothers, working instruments for father), the images of the two parents are drawn in mirror. Equality is captured from drawings and word description as well. In fact, 34% of written descriptions use the same characteristics in feminine and masculine forms.

The *new* seized in children's mental representation is the high-status job appreciation regarding mothers and the sensitive, caring, and helpful in daily home responsibilities part of fathers.

Children fill in their drawings with symbols like houses and the flag of Romania. The impregnation of this elements reverberates deep socio-cultural believes.

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Appendix

2J9G
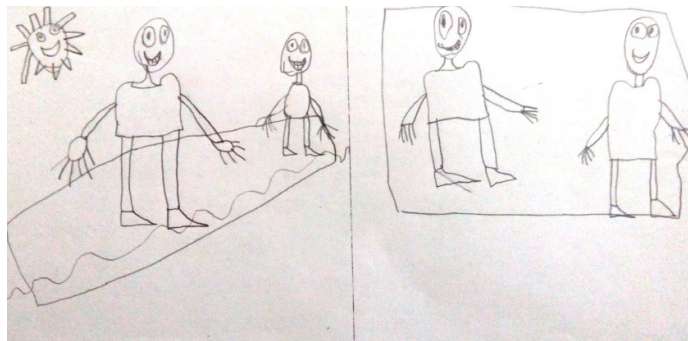
1G6B
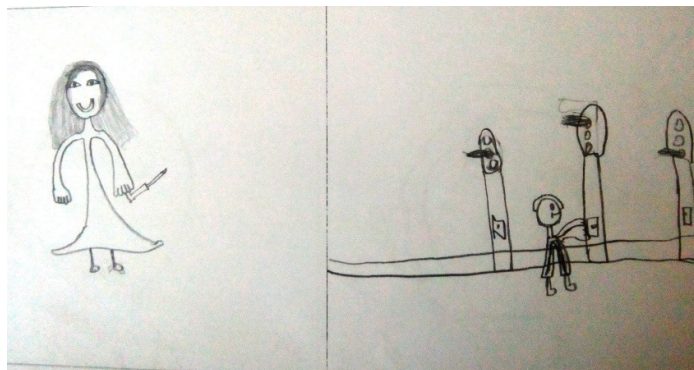
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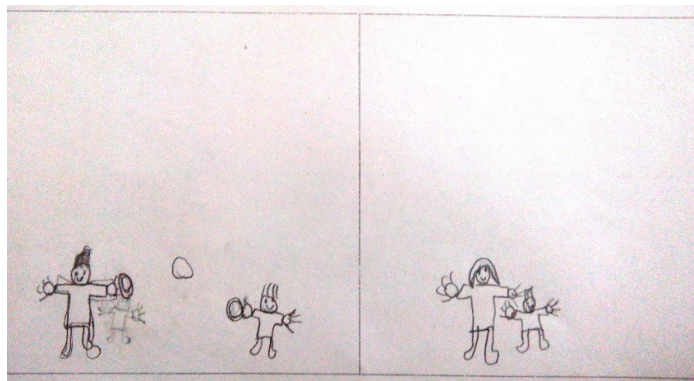
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MINDFULNESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract: *The mindfulness practices have conquered the Western world since 1980, but in Romania they are still in their infancy. This study investigates the relationships between mindfulness, self-esteem and academic achievements. Research assumptions were: (1) we assume that the higher the level of mindfulness, the higher the level of self-esteem is. (2) we assume that there is a significant positive correlation between the level of mindfulness and the level of academic performance. The main method used in this research was the questionnaires survey. The research instruments were a demographic data questionnaire and reporting relevant grades: average study years, the mean of the final exams, Rosenberg (1965) Self-Esteem Scale and Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire. The obtained results show that there are moderate correlations between the studied variables. Cultivating mindfulness within the curriculum at the academic level and not only, can bring substantial benefits to educational agents: teachers, students, pupils.*

Keywords: *academic performance; mindfulness; self-esteem;*

1. Introduction

The world is in a continuous search for ways and means to improve the quality of life.Psychologists and researchers discover and rediscover new ways to respond to people's need to solve the current problems they are facing. Some of the current challenges relate to academic performance. Not only obtaining the academic achievement is important, but the way to that aim is important too. This journey can be sprinkled with stress, sorrow, industrious effort or it can be one characterized by joy, hope and mindfulness.

1.1.Mindfulness

The term *mindfulness* is the translation in English of the term's *sati* from Pali and Sanskrit term *smrti, the first translation being attributed to T. W. Rhys Davids.* Mindfulness is defined as „non – judgmental, direct observation of mind and body in the present moment, along with a claim that this kind of observation is peculiarly efficacious'' (Gethin, 2011, p. 267). Mindfulness is seen by some researchers as a self-regulation of attention (Bishop, et al., 2004).

It is considered a contemplative practice, of meditation or focusing attention on everyday activities. Mindfulness is used in order to „help the individual perceive reality more clearly; enabling students to understand themselves and others better and enjoy a more fulfilling and joyful life" (Albrecht, Albrecht, & Cohen, 2012, p. 3). Mindfulness enables the circumventing of automatic piloting as well as disconnection from one's self and from physical and social environment (Gaspar, 2018).

One of the first westerners that used mindfulness in clinical contexts is Jon Kabat-Zinn. His studies, beginning in 1980, included mindfulness as a method of reducing stress (Kabat-Zinn, 1982). Starting from the clinical context (Chiesa, Serretti, 2009), the concept gained new uses in various contexts: in the workplace (Hülsheger, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013), in the educational environment (Flook, Goldberg, Pinger, & Davidson, 2015).

Research shows the strong influence of mindfulness techniques on stress reduction (Bluth et al., 2015) on the reduction of anxiety (Carboni, Roach, & Fredrick, 2013), on the quality of life (Wallace, & Shapiro, 2006), on increasing the level of concentration of attention (Jha, Krompinger, & Baime, 2007), improved performance (Broderick, 2013), as well as other benefits that influence the well-being of the individual.

1.2.Self-esteem

In 1890, William James was one of the first to use the concept of self-esteem. He described as a sense of self what depends on how we strive to be and do.As well, James affirmed that the success and achievement desired depends on what one think about his own person (Pajares, Schunk, 2001). Recently, researchers have suggested that the self-esteem system works automatically in assessing the likelihood of acceptance versus the exclusion of the concerned individual by others.

The research conducted by Baccus, Baldwin and Packer (2004) demonstrate that the self-esteem system stores this information in the form of positive or negative associations with the Self, and these associations can be modified by the acceptance-conditioning procedure. Cognitive foundations of implicit self-esteem suggest that self-esteem reactions are rooted in associations between self-perceptions and expectations of social positive or negative feedback (Baccus, Baldwin, Packer, 2004). This seems to be one of the reasons why interpersonal relationships influence self-esteem and, implicitly, academic achievements (Baccus, Baldwin, Packer, 2004).

Research shows that there is a significant, positive and moderate correlation between the relationship between self-esteem and means of academic grades. The weak correlation is supported by research that postulates that the weak association between self-esteem and academic performance is determined by students who are more cognitively and academically successful, but who have a more critical view of their own person and students with modest academic abilities, but who compensate for their lack with a high general self-esteem (Yanti, Hidayatulfathi, Ismarulyusda, Syarif, Nur, Baharudin, 2012).

1.3.Academic achievement

Often academic achievement is defined by adhering to a higher level of quality in terms of academic activities, requirements and aims of the educational programs (Popa, Voicu, 2015). Grades received at final assessments, the exams result in areas as math, science, annual averages are the main indicators of the level of achievement (Sirin, 2005).However, these indicators do not only reflect the level of competence reached by the student and the wealth of his knowledge, but also the level of competence required by the educational institution, the teacher's standards.

Factors influencing the level of academic outcomes are often classified into: individual and social contextualities. The contextual factors category includes the external influences exerted by family, group of friends, community, the characteristics of the study group, characteristics of the educational institution, relations between teachers and students. Individual factors are classified into biological (health, developmental) and psychological factors as: intellectual potential, emotional regulation, motivational level, attitudes and values, level of self-regulation of learning behavior, mechanisms of awareness, etc. (Antičević, Kardum, Klarin, Sindik, & Barač, 2018).

Specialized literature proves the existence of relationships between mindfulness and academic achievement in typical individuals (Franco, Mañas, Cangas, & Gallego, 2010;

Morisano, Hirsh, Peterson, Pihl, & Shore, 2010; Lu, Huang, & Rios, 2017) as well as those experiencing learning difficulties (Beauchemin, Hutchins, & Patterson, 2008).

2. Method

The *research aimed to* investigate the relationships between mindfulness, self-esteem and academic performance.

Research assumptions were: (1) we assume that the higher the level of mindfulness, the higher the level of self-esteem. (2) we assume that there is a significant positive correlation between the level of mindfulness and the level of academic performance.

The main method used in this research was the questionnaires survey. The research instruments were a demographic data questionnaire and reporting relevant grades: average study years, the mean of the final exams, Rosenberg (1965) Self-Esteem Scale and Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire.

Academic acheivement has been operationalized by considering the final average obtained at the final exams and the average of the years of study in high school. The grades were reported by each research participant. An arithmetic mean of the two evaluations was made. The underlying arguments for this choice are: baccalaureate is a synthesis test and the possibilities for the student to hit subjects for which he is not well prepared are great; not always the final exams grades reflect the student's competences in full; the average of study years reflects better the student's potential, level of involvement and level of knowledge, the average of study years reflects the student's commitment over the last 4 years.

The level of Mindfulness has been operationalized as "the awareness that emerges through paying attention to purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment" (Kabat - Zin, 2003, p. 145). Investigating the level of Mindfulness was carried out by completing the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (Baer et al., 2006). The scale of 39 items evaluates 5 „facets of a general tendency to be mindful in daily life: observing, describing, acting with awareness, nonreactivity to inner experience, and nonjudging of inner experience" (Teodorczuk, 2013). Scoring of items is done through a 5-point Likert scale ranging from a maximum of 5 which means very often or always true, to 1 which means never or very rarely true. The Cronbach alpha coefficient obtained for each sub-scale is: observe = 0.81, describe = 0.87, act with awareness = 0.85, non-judge = 0.83, and non-react = 0.79. The results are similar to those reported by the scientific literature (r: 0.80 – 0.88) (Baer et al., 2008).

The Self Esteem level was evaluated by completing the Rosenberg (1965) Self-Esteem Scale scale. This scale indicates the extent to which respondents believe they have qualities, are satisfied with their own personality and achievements. Items are ranked on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (total disagreement) to 5 (total agreement). Half of the items, 5 of which are ranked in reverse (eg, "I would like to respect myself more"). The Cronbach alpha coefficient obtained for this scale is at the values presented in the scientific literature of α = 0.82, α = 0.80, α = 0.88, and α = 0.89. Who were the authors reporting these values and for which of the dimensions?

Participants

The group of participants consists of 134 first year students. Of these, 40 are enrolled at the Faculty of Psychology and Science of Education, 40 at the Faculty of Medicine, and 54 following the Faculty of Economic Sciences and Business Administration. Of the total number of participants, a number of 105 respondents which represent 78% of the total are female students and 29 respondents which represent 22% are male students. The age group is

between 18 and 26 years of age. Regarding the residence environment, we can state that a number of 113 students which represent 84% come from urban areas, and 21 students reside in rural areas.

Data collection

The setting and location from where the participants were recruited was Transilvania University of Brasov. The data collection period was 1 May – 15 June 2018. The eligibility criterion for selection of participants was their student status enrolled in the first year of study and participation at an introductive course of mindfulness. In order to avoid any potential sources of bias, the questionnaires were applied by other persons because the investigators were teaching to the students eligible for participation in this research.

Data analysis

The respondents' answers were collected using an IMB SPPS Statistic 21 data editor. The database has no missing data. The statistical analyses that were applied were proportions, means, standard deviations and Pearson Correlations.

3. Results

The results are presented in Table 1 Descriptive statistics: Mean (M), standard deviation (SD) for all the variables show the characteristics of the study population.

Table 1 Descriptive statistics: Mean (M), standard deviation (SD) for all the variables

	GPA	SES	OBS	DESC	ACTA	NONJ	NONR
M(SD)	8.67(1.04)	12,75(1.06)	3.23(1.14)	3.45(1.05)	2.61(0.97)	2.80 (1.10)	3.15(0.95)

The first hypothesis *we assume that the higher the level of mindfulness, the higher the level of self-esteem*, is confirmed. All correlation coefficients have acceptable values at a statistically significant threshold, as can be seen in Table 2 Correlations coefficients between the variables.

The second hypothesis: *we assume that there is a significant positive correlation between the level of mindfulness and the level of academic performance* is confirmed. As we can see in Table 2 Correlations coefficients between the variables, the correlation coefficients have average values at a statistically significant threshold. Thus, there is a weak correlation between GPA and SES ($r = 0.214$, $p \leq 0.001$) which translates into: the higher the GPA, the higher the self-esteem level is.

The observe sub-scale (OBS) correlates strongly and positively with GPA with $r = 0.402$ and a threshold of $p \leq 0.001$. The describe sub-scale (DESC) correlates strongly and positively with GPA with $r = 0.515$ at a threshold of $p \leq 0.001$. The act with awareness sub-scale (ACTA) correlates strongly and positively with GPA with $r = 0.653$ at a threshold of $p \leq 0.001$. The non-judge sub-scale (NONJ) correlates strongly and positively with GPA with $r = 0.573$ at a threshold of $p \leq 0.001$. The non-react sub-scale (NONR) correlates strongly and positively with GPA with $r = 0.589$ at a threshold of $p \leq 0.001$.

Table 2. Correlations coefficients between the variables

	GPA	SES	OBS	DESC	ACTA	NONJ	NONR
GPA	1.000	.214**	.402**	.515**	.412**	.336**	.363**
SES		1.000	.620**	.572**	.653**	.573**	.589**
OBS			1.000	.640**	.628**	.610**	.632**
DESC				1.000	.678**	.630**	.651**
ACTA					1.000	.700**	.780**
NONJ						1.000	.810**
NONR							1.000

(Pearson correlations)

Legend: ** = significance level p≤0.01, (strong statistically significant), GPA= grade point average, SES = self-esteem scale; OBS = observe sub-scale, DESC = describe sub-scale, ACTA = act with awareness, NONJ = non-judge, and NONR = non-react.

4. Conclusions

This study demonstrates the existence of significant positive ties between academic performance and mindfulness, but less strong as other studies report, for example Nivenitha, & Nagalakshmi, 2016. Higher correlations are observed between mindfulness and self-esteem. This confirms the results of other studies that highlight the relationship between mindfulness and unconditional self-acceptance (Thompson, & Waltz, 2008). The reported results are consistent with the literature (Beauchemin, Hutchins, & Patterson, 2008; Caldwell, Harrison, Adams, Quin, and Greeson, 2010; Rosenstreich, & Margalit, 2015). We consider mindfulness as being one of the strategies that can optimize learning and development of students and teachers as well. Using mindfulness in education is a perspective from which we can cultivate strengths andprevent the occurrence of unpleasant phenomena as the occurrence of the self-deprecatory thoughts (Beauchemin, Hutchins, & Patterson, 2008).

This study also has its limits that we will outline further. The unrepresentative number of respondents and the presence of a majority of female respondents are some of the possible sources of bias in this study. We desire to introduce mindfulness courses in Romanian university programs or at least to familiarize students and teachers with such techniques that are beneficial to productivity and personal satisfaction (Hülsheger, Alberts, Feinholdt, & Lang, 2013).

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ON THE PROFILE OF THE OLYMPIC STUDENT IN MATHEMATICS

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Abstract: *In this paper we aim to study the possible motivations for students to obtain performance in Mathematics. We also try to outline a general profile of students who wish to achieve mathematical performance. The study is based on authors' eight years of experience in coordinating mathematics performance training programs for students in Braşov, Romania.*

Keywords: *motivation;performance; profile of Olympic student in Mathematics;*

1. Introduction

In the present paper, according to Ş. Mircea, we agree that "performance is an exceptional achievement that exceeds the level customarily achieved" (Mircea, 2006, p. 269).

Many authors study the possible factors for students to obtain performance in Mathematics.Some of these are presented in the following. "Proficiency in languages, science, and mathematics is seen as an essential precursor to success in modern society" (Mata, Monteiro, Peixoto, 2012, pp. 1-2). "More recent studies point to a positive correlation between student attitudes towards mathematics and student academic achievement" (Mata, Monteiro, Peixoto, 2012, pp. 1-2). Other factors include: "differentiated classroom instruction, flexible grouping, and immediate intervention for students who are not mastering math standards give students the individual instruction they need to succeed in math. Teacher collaboration, within and across grade levels, acknowledges the importance of year-to-year continuity in mathematics instruction. The quality of math teachers, particularly with regard to their content knowledge of mathematics, is critically important." (Improving Math Performance-US, Department of Education, p.5). T. Williams and K. Williams give another perspective about performance:"studies of the relationship between self-beliefs and performance tend to draw on this or related theories and usually endorse the notion of reciprocal determinism at a substantive–theoretical level. However, attempts to model this postulated mutual influence of self-beliefs and performance are few and are focused on the relationship between self-concept and performance. The reciprocal determinism of self-efficacy and performance seems to be without direct empirical support, probably because the longitudinal, repeated-measures data often considered necessary for this purpose are not available. It is possible, though, to model reciprocal effects with cross-sectional data" (Williams, Williams, 2010, p. 453).

There is an essential goal for educators to identify internal mechanisms which would determine a student to obtain performance in Mathematics. K.R. Wenzel and A. Wigfield consider that "students' social motivation, and their relations with teachers and peers, strongly influence their academic performance and general adjustment to school", and that "ways in which students integrate and coordinate their academic and social concerns has a powerful impact on their academic success at school" (Wenzel, Wigfield, 1998, p. 1). Starting from Bandura's results, B.J. Zimmerman shows that self-efficacy could be an essential reason to learn: "as a performance-based measure of perceived capability, self-efficacy differs conceptually and psychometrically from related motivational constructs, such as outcome expectations, self-concept, or locus of control". From his study it results that "self-efficacy measures focus on performance capabilities rather than on personal qualities, such as one's physical or psychological characteristics. Respondents judge their capabilities to fulfill given

task demands, such as solving fraction problems in arithmetic, not who they are personally or how they feel about themselves in general" (Zimmerman, 2000, p. 83). The general idea of self-efficacy is different from self-concept, this fact being proved by M. Bong and E.M. Skaalvi: "self-efficacy is presumed to explain and predict one's thought, emotion, and action. However, efficacy judgment is less concerned with what skills and abilities individuals possess. It considers more important what individuals believe they can do with whatever skills and abilities they may possess" (Bong, Skaalvi, 2003, p. 5). Here, the authors proved "that self-efficacy acts as an active precursor of self-concept development and suggest that self-concept research separate out its multiple components and subprocesses and invest more effort toward making students less preoccupied with normative ability comparisons in school." (Bong, Skaalvi, 2003, p. 1). But where does the self-efficacy perception come from? Some objective measurements of a students' self-efficacy in mathematics could consist in his/her achievements at several competition (for example Olympiads), the attitude of the teachers, parents or classmates concerning his mathematical capabilities. The internal motivation which determines a student to make an effort to obtain mathematical achievements could be the passion for this subject or the desire to be a winner.

2. Purpose of study

Starting from the previous ideas, the main purpose of our study is to analyse the possible motivations for students to achieve performance in Mathematics. We also try to offer a perspective on the profile of the Olympic student in Mathematics.

3. Method

The participants in the study were 61 fifth-to-twelfth grade students from different schools and high schools in Brasov, Romania. They were all participants in the Mathematics performance training program, 65 % girls, 35% boys aged between 11-18. A number of 46 secondary school students and a number of 15 high school students. A number of 36 parents of the previous students and 11 maths teachers involved in this program (5 women, 5 men) were also participants to the survey.

The following methods were used in order for the aims of the paper to be achieved: the analysis of school papers, with the instrument the curricula of Mathematics (Mathematics performance training programs for students in Braşov). We also used the survey method, having as instrument a questionnaire addressed to secondary- and high school students, parents and teachers, all involved in this program. The questionnaire with 3 multiple-choice closed items (Q2-Q4) and one open item (Q1) was based on students' experience in preparing for participation in Olympiads and other Maths contests. The items were organised around the theme: the profile of the Olympic student in Mathematics. Questionnaires were administered to the participants in order to be filled in, in the last face to face meeting of the program, under the supervision of the second author of the paper.

4. Findings

For the purposes of our paper, there was made the primary analysis of the results related to the 4 items regarding the profile of the Olympic student in Mathematics.

The ability to perform greatly in mathematics could be a native gift, but this is not sufficient to obtain good results at local or national competitions. The scholar curricula contain all concepts that are required by mathematical competitions. However, these curriculaare rather concerned on learning problem solving algorithms and computing

techniques. We prepare our students two hours a week, teaching them how to use the concepts they have learned at school, in a creative way. Furthermore, we encourage students to work a lot individually. Concerning this idea, interviewees have been asked: Q1: "How many hours of supplementary work per week would be necessary to obtain great performance in mathematics?" Most of the interviews considered it between 7 and 14 hours a week. (41% of the parents, 50% of the teachers and 59% of the students). Almost a quarter of both secondary and high school students considered 14 hours a week not enough for an excellent performance. On the other hand, 17% of secondary school children agreed that training less than 7 hours per week is enough for achieving good performance in mathematics. No high school student shared this opinion.

For the item Q2, referring to the possible motivations for students to obtain good performance in Mathematics, whose general statement is: Q2: "Which is, in your opinion, the main motivational which influence students' performance in mathematics?

   a) Passion
   b) Results at competitions
   c) The desire to win
   d) Prizes offered for the winners", the answers given in Fig. 1 and the interpretation are the following:
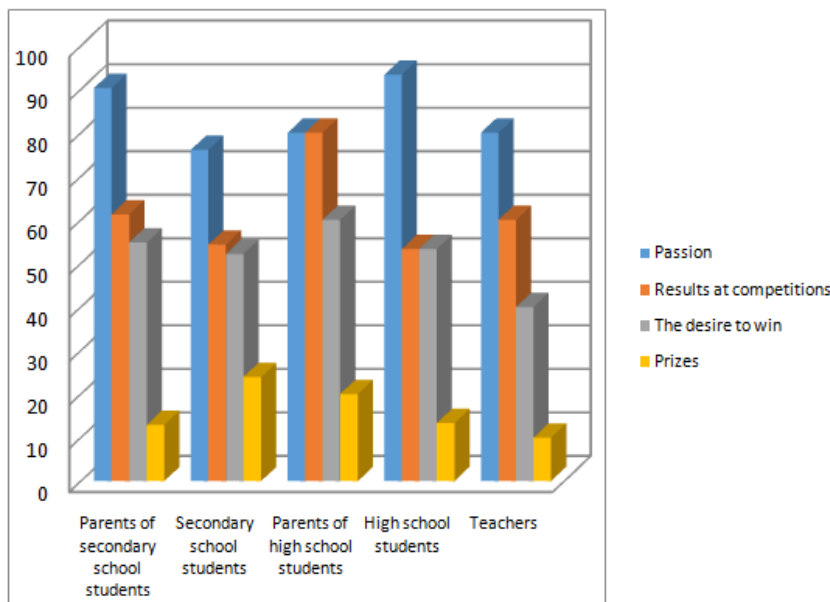
Fig. 1. The best motivation for a student

It was predictable to find out that all categories agreed with the internal motivation, the passion, and considered the offered prizes not such important. However, prizes seem to be useful to motivate some of the secondary level students, 23,91% of them choosing this motivation. An interesting fact is the difference between the high school students and their parents. The students consider passion to be the main motivation (93%); results at competitions and the desire to win are perceived as a good motivation, both around 50%. Parents of the high school students feel that results of competitions are as important as passion, these being the main motivation for their children to achieve great performance in Mathematics.

Also, for the purpose of finding to the possible motivations for students to excel in Mathematics, when the participants were asked, by administrating the Q3 item: Q3: "Which would be the most appropriate methods to increase students' motivation for performing well in Mathematics?
  a) Parents' support
  b) A special timetable schools
  c) The attitude of classmates
  d) The appreciation from teachers", the answers obtained are given in Fig. 2.
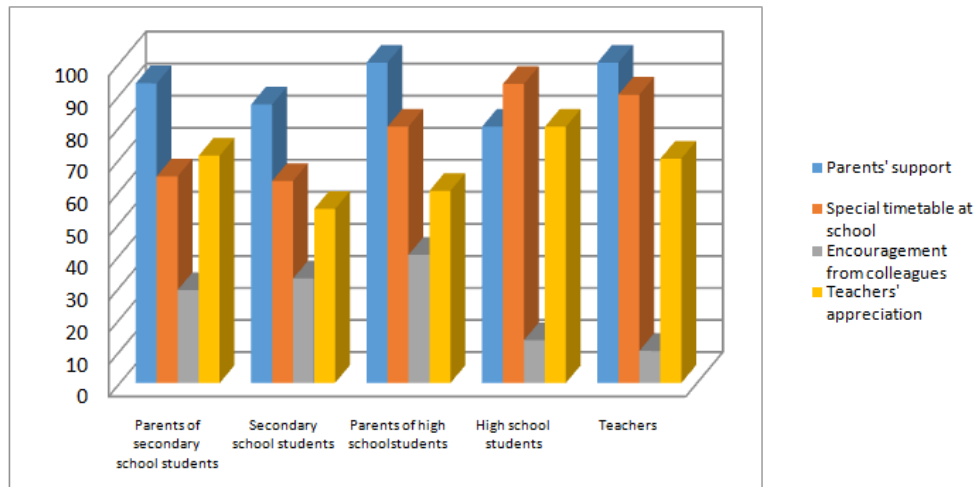
Fig. 2. Things that motivate students to achieve great performance

The analysis of the answers shows that parents' support is considered to be the most important fact which helps students to achieve good performance: 86,95% of secondary school students, 93,54% of parents and all teachers. Only high school students think that a better motivation to work more to obtain well performance at Mathematics is a special timetable at school (93,33% considered that). This timetable allows students to deepen those areas where they can excel. For all categories of participants, the least important fact which helps students to achieve performance is the encouragement from colleagues (32,6% secondary school students, 30% parents, 13,33% high school students and 10% teachers).

The answers of the Q4 item, given in Fig. 3, regarding the statement: Q4: "Which are, in your opinion, the main qualities of a student who wishes to achieve great performance in Mathematics?
  a) Interest
  b) Rigour
  c) Logical thinking
  d) Patience
  e) Perseverance",
and their interpretation, offer other perspective on the profile of the olympic student in Mathematics and are presented in the following:
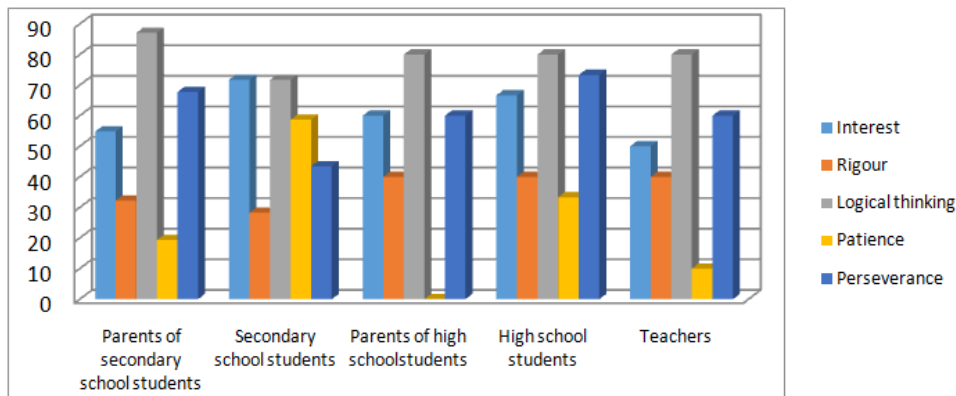
Fig. 3. The most important qualities of a student who achieves good performance

The results show that logical thinking is the main quality which all the interviewees have chosen (71,73% secondary school students, 87,09% parents of secondary school students, 80% high school students, their parents and teachers). The second quality necessary to achieve performance at mathematics has been considered by parents of secondary school students, by high school students, their parents and teachers, to be perseverance (67,74% parents of secondary school students, 73,33% high school students, 60% their parents and teachers), followed by interest. Another opinion has had secondary school students, which choose interest to be the second necessary quality (71,73%), followed by perseverance (43,47%). The patience is considered a necessary quality only by secondary school students (58,69%), this fact being justified by their age. Hard work at mathematics, more than 2 hours per day, demands patience from a 11-14 age child. Moreover, at this age, the success can delay and students need more patience to persevere to achieve performance.

4. Conclusions

The results presented focus on two mains provide answers to the purpose of the study. The factors that help achieve good performance in national and international Mathematics competitions are: sustained work (more than 14 hours per week), parents 'support and a special timetable at school.

As a second conclusion, the quantitative analysis also revealed the fact that all the students consider passion to be the main motivation to achieve great performance in Mathematics and the parents of the high school students feel that results of competitions are as important as passion.

This research revealed also that parents' support is considered to be the most important fact which helps students to achieve good performance by secondary school students, parents and all teachers. Only high school students think that a better motivation to work more to obtain well performance at Mathematics is a special timetable at school.

Our findings concerning the main qualities of a student who wishes to achieve great performance in mathematics show that logical thinking is the main quality which all the interviewees have chosen. The second quality necessary to achieve performance at mathematics has been considered by parents of secondary school students, by high school students, their parents and teachers, to be perseverance, while interest has been considered by secondary school students to be the second necessary quality.

One final observation puts emphasis on the fact that teachers have to look for passionate, hardworking and logical thinking students for obtaining performance in mathematics.

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CULTURAL DIFFERENCES IN YOUTH PERCEPTION ABOUT ONLINE FREEDOM OF SPEECH

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Abstract:*The Internet is one of the greatest inventions in the history of mankind and that it has opened new horizons for human evolution. No matter how good and indispensable the web has become, it has inevitably emerged ways in which it can harm those whom it is meant to serve. Our research team has developed the project Keeping youth safe from Cyberbullying, aiming to deeper understand the dynamics of cyberbullying in online environments among youth. Our focus was in analysing the cultural differences between Romanian, Belgian, Turkish and Spanish youth perception about online freedom of speech, in 507 high school students. Results show that there are statistically differences in the opinion of Romanian, Belgian, Turkish and Spanish youth regarding the "voice" that should be heard on social media. Conclusions and implications are discussed.*

Keywords: *cyberbullying; online freedom of speech; cultural differences;*

1. Media literacy and online freedom of speech

Nobody can deny that the Internet is one of the greatest inventions in the history of mankind and that it has opened new horizons for human evolution. No matter how good and indispensable the web has become, it has inevitably emerged ways in which it can harm those whom it is meant to serve. Research has shown that excessive use of the Internet can cause problems for youth (Aker, F., 2015; Deniz, L., 2010; Tam, P., 2013).

Communication has always been essential in the evolution of the human species, which has been perfected for centuries by the efforts of linguists, sociologists and even the masses. The 20th century has brought an explosion of communication, and nowadays everyone can enjoy mobile telephony, email, social networks, wireless connection and more, people having access to it all in most of the populated areas of the globe.

Young people are the most open population to new technologies, and most of those living in the urban area have smartphones, computers connected to the internet, email addresses, social networking accounts, and increasingly use these tools to keep contact with relatives and friends.

Freedom of expression is the fundamental right of man to say whatever he thinks. It is a natural right that is related to the essence of the human being, as well as the right to life, to dignity, being probably the most important right for the functioning of a free and democratic society.

At the individual level, freedom of speech is a prerequisite for the development, fulfilment and dignity of each individual. This right helps us to know and better understand the world in which we live in, through the free exchange of ideas and information with our peers. Everyone has the right to freedom of speech. This right includes freedom of opinion and the freedom to receive or communicate information or ideas without the interference of

public authorities and without taking into account the borders. (Article 10.1 of the European Convention on Human Rights).

Freedom of expression is not only important as a right in itself, but also because it is essential for respecting other fundamental rights (access to information, political freedom, religious freedom, national minority rights, sexual rights, etc.).

Without free expression there is no exchange of ideas, there is no public debate, there is no possibility to inform, to choose, to express ourselves artistically. Our everyday choices, the way we dress, the music we are listening to, the books we read, the media we are informing about, are all expressions of the right to free expression.

Freedom of expression works in close connection with equality, the two being interdependent. Freedom of speech offers marginalized, minority, disadvantaged groups the opportunity to present their problems, the needs, the expectations of the society. Equality in the exercise of the right to free speech ensures or ought to ensure an equal voice in the public space of every group and individual in society, including marginalized groups. Access to public debate must be fair in order to prevent and combat social marginalization, concealment of the problems of underprivileged groups and dominance of the public agenda by majority / ruling groups (the dominant voice in society).

2. Research

The internet has exceeded the stage of traditional media, a simple means of mass communication. This environment provides access to a public space where information is instantly available, often free of charge, at the request of anyone. The exchange of opinions is accomplished with minimal effort over a large number of communication channels. In this context, the legislator is in a difficult situation to regulate through general rules in such a dynamic field, the content of which being comparable to human infinite and constantly changing mind.

The project *Keeping youth safe from Cyberbullying*, ID 2016-3-TR01-KA205-036619 under Erasmus+, had been developed by our research team aiming to deeper understand the dynamics of cyberbullying in online environments among youth, to develop educational resources for professionals involved in youth activities in order to prevent these type behaviours. One of our objectives is to analyse the cultural differences among the 4 participant countries related to youth opinions about online freedom of speech. In this regard, our team has designed an online questionnaire aiming to gather descriptive data, general perception about the frequency and typology of cyberbullying type incidents, perceptions about the safety of the educational environment, perceived parental support, and an auto evaluation scale centred on self-efficacy perceptions.

This research that is focused on measuring online youth perceptions about freedom of speech, assumes that single item measures owns the same efficacy in identifying statistical trends like multiple items scales. Single item measures have been successfully used by researchers when measuring quality of life (Zimmerman et al., 2006). Single item scales are usually used to represent global constructs that are conceptualized as mono dimensions, like the one we have focused on, online freedom of speech.

The item that measured the perception about online freedom of speech is:

Item F – *Please rate your opinion regarding the following affirmation: I have the right to choose and to say whatever I want in the online environment.*
1. Totally agree; 2. Agree; 3. Neutral; 4. Disagree; 5. Totally disagree.

We start from the assumption that there is a statistical difference between Romanian, Belgian, Turkish and Spanish youth regarding the perception about online freedom of speech.

In order to test our hypothesis, we have used SPSS' one-way ANOVA analysis, where online freedom of speech perceptions were statistically observed based on residence country.

The study was conducted on a random sample of 507 high school students: 98 from Romania, 130 from Belgium, 224 from Turkey and 50 from Spain, aged 17-19, of both sexes, 68 male (48.6%) and 72 females (51.4%), from both rural and urban environmental origins.

In Fig.1, there are graphically depicted the mean differences among the four participant countries on the perception about online freedom of speech dimension. On scale from 1 to 5, where 1 stands for total agreement and 5 for total disagreement, Romanian youth has a mean score of m=3.11, Belgian youth score m=2.02, Turkish youth score m= 2.51 and Spanish youth score m=3.1. We can observe that Romanian and Spanish youth population show no statistical difference in between, slightly disagreeing with the fact that anyone can say anything with no censorship in the online environment. There is then a slight agreement with the statement that says that anyone can express anything they choose to in the online in Turkish youth, and on the last position, there is a disagreement with this statement in Belgium youth population. In other words, Romanian and Spanish youth are more carefully in choosing their own words when going online, then Turkish and Belgian youth.
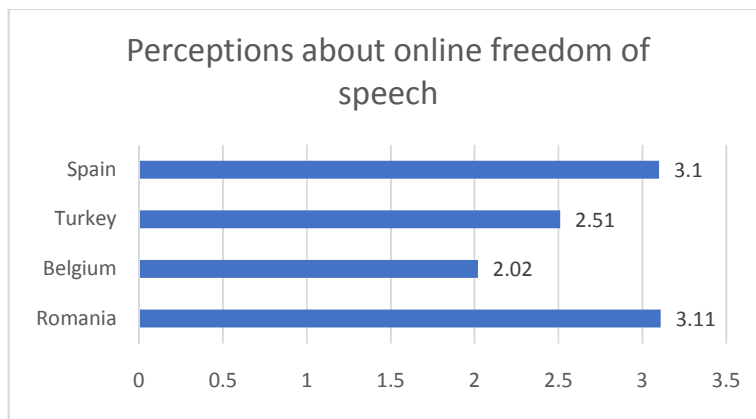
Fig.1 – Youth mean perception about online freedom of speech

Checking for statistically differences among these results, we can observe in Table 1. that our hypothesis is partially confirmed, meaning that there is no statistical difference between Romanian and Spanish youth responses, only between these two and Belgium and Turkish responses.

When running one-way ANOVA analysis, we have obtained the coefficient F=14.556, significant at a $p<0.01$, data that support the assumption of cultural differences among the 4 countries related to youth perception about online freedom of speech.

Table 1. – Cultural differences on the perception of Romanian, Belgium, Turkish and Spanish youth about online freedom of speech

Descriptives								
I have the right to choose and to say whatever I want in the online environment.								
Country	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		

Romania	98	3.11	1.399	.141	2.83	3.39	1	5
Belgium	130	2.02	1.184	.104	1.82	2.23	1	5
Turkey	224	2.51	1.497	.100	2.31	2.71	1	5
Spain	50	3.10	1.199	.170	2.76	3.44	1	5
Total	502	2.56	1.429	.064	2.43	2.69	1	5

ANOVA

I have the right to choose and to say whatever I want in the online environment.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	82.529	3	27.510	14.556	.000
Within Groups	941.178	498	1.890		
Total	1023.707	501			

3. Conclusions and implications

Due to the fact that youth are excessively encouraged to be permanently alert and to report any behaviour that can generate emotional discomfort, feelings and experiences that have been considered part of daily life, such as when you are dissatisfied with somebody's political opinion, are now more likely to be treated as dangerous to mental health.

Nowadays youth face unique stress factors such as the ease of harassment activities in online social media. But instead of helping, the culture of victimization is not confronting but not only is at the centre these problems - fear of failure, ridiculous situations, discomfort, stigmatization, uncertainty. Our culture does not prepare young people to cope with the inevitable threats, in fact, despite being raised in a safer and better society than past generations, youth are now reporting higher levels of anxiety.

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TEACHERS' ATTITUDE ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SOCIO-EMOTIONAL COMPETENCIES AT CHILDREN WITH AUTISM

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Abstract: *Autism is a developmental disorder of neurobiological origin and is considered one of the most severe neuropsychiatric childhood disorders. It is manifested by: the decrease in social relations, the reduction of communication power, the restriction of activities, repetitive and stereotypical interests and activities (DSM-IV). Competencies are defined, according to the Law of National Education, as "a multifunctional and transposable assembly of knowledge, abilities and skills necessary in different situations". Art. 13 of this law emphasizes that lifelong learning is a guaranteed right for all children; the development of socio-emotional competencies thus becomes a major educational target.The purpose of this study is to investigate the strategies that develop socio-emotional competencies and their use by teachers, who have students with autism spectrum disorders in their classroom. A number of 50 teachers from the primary cycle filled in a questionnaire structured in three parts: emotional recognition, acceptance and self-regulation; social networking and social problem solving. The socio-emotional education includes all the learning activities that lead to the acquisition of individual experience of social and emotional behaviour, the formation of emotional and social competencies. Thus, children acquire emotional abilities: to understand, express and regulate emotions and social skills: to initiate and maintain a relationship and to integrate in a social group. The results have shown that the strategies of socio-emotional development among teachers are poorly developed, and this is directly proportional to the inclusion of children with autism. We have identified the need for training in terms of development strategies used for socio-emotional competencies among teachers.*

Keywords: *autism; children; inclusion; teacher; competencies;*

Introduction

The ethology of the autism spectrum disorders (ASD) has a complex multi-factorial character, the field literature referring to it in terms of genetic and environmental aspects. Davis III, T. E., White, S.W., Ollendick, T. H., (2014) state that more people are diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders in the last 20 years.

According to the criteria of DSM-IV, the autism spectrum disorder is defined as the meeting of the following criteria: a) the persistence of deficit in communication and social interaction in different contexts, environments; b) the existence of some behavioural patterns, interests or activities having restrictive and repetitive character; c) the symptoms must be presented in the period of early growth stage; d) the symptomatology determines significant impact in social, occupational terms or in other areas important for daily activities; e) the impact on the activities is not made clearer by intellectual disabilities or by global developmental delays (American Psychiatric Association,2013).

The general issue determined by autism spectrum disorders and their impact at social level requires that each human link from the system contributing to the formation or recovery of the child with ASD (parent, educator, various specialized therapists, doctors, etc.) to be aware of possible obstacles that could be encountered during the recovery-integration process. All the above-mentioned actors must be prepared to meet all the challenges that the autism implies with professionalism, patience, creativity. The need for a systematic and coherent approach of the ASD issue is determined also by the fact that the prevalence of autism is bigger from one year to another - the autism spectrum disorders tend to be more common than cancer with children, juvenile diabetes and AIDS all together (Blumberg, Stephen J., et al., 2013).

The context of the issue of autism spectrum disorders in Romania

The issue specific to therapeutic interventions aimed to children with autism spectrum disorders may be considered relatively new in Romania, and shaping some strands of action and intervention in this field is still in an early stage. In the late 90s and beginning of 2000s, even in psycho-educational and medical academic environments, the issue specific to ASD had an exotic nature, given the fact that there were only brief descriptions of the autism. Even if in the last years were registered significant modifications in approaching the issue analysed by us, we may say that in Romania only from 2010 onwards is shaped a change of perspective in terms of specific intervention (Law 272/2004 on the protection and promotion of the rights of children, Law 151/2000, Law 200/2013 for the amendment and supplement of the Law 151/2000 on integrated specialised services of health, education and social intended for persons with autism spectrum disorders and associated mental health disorders).

Social - emotional competence - Integral part of the pedagogical process

In the sense intended by the European Commission, the definition of key competencies is the following: "The key competencies represent a transferable and multifunctional package of knowledge, skills (abilities) and attitudes all in the individuals need for the personal fulfilment and development, for the social inclusion and professional insertion. These must be developed until the completion of the compulsory education and must act as a basis for continuous learning as part of lifelong learning."

The English psychologist M. Argyle (1998) proposed a descriptive and explanatory model of social competencies, where seven components are determined:

• Assertiveness represents "the support of personal rights and the expression of one` own thoughts, feelings and beliefs in a direct, honest and proper manner without the violation of other person's rights" (Constantinescu: 1998);

• Gratitude and support are the key for friendship and interpersonal attraction in response to three fundamental needs that all people have: acceptance, approval and appreciation. The support consists of "supporting the others in a situation or relation." (Argyl, 1998). In Constantinescu`s opinion (2011. apud Robu: 2011), "the gratitude and support constitute a particular social ability, needed in the education of children, generally, and in the education of incorrigible or uncontrollable children, especially". In Paul Popescu-Neveanu`s opinion (1978:302), gratitude is defined as "the feeling of affection, duty and goodwill towards a person who helped you, did you a lot of good".

• Non-verbal communication is the nearest to the issuer's reality. It can be accessed by persons with development disorders from autism spectrum / Asperger syndrome and allows the observation of certain aspects and sentiments that are not expressed verbally. (Mehrabian, Weiner apud Constantinescu 2004) refers to body language, face expression and voice tone.

Contrary to sociolinguistics and neurolinguistics, psychology does not differentiate the non-verbal communication from para-verbal communication (probably is a matter of time until the re-operationalisation of these two concepts). In fact, other disciplines from the social and human field clearly recognize the two types of communication (verbal and non-verbal), and the para-verbal communication (voice tone and musicality) consider it a space of interference between the two forms of communication.

• Verbal communication is shown from a broad perspective in the field literature and, in summary, represents the process of information exchange using words. It may or may not be mediated by analogical or digital technique, direct or indirect, intermediated by specific apparatuses. It has an informational content concerning data, feelings, opinions, etc. There are cases when, through the intervention of the social self, the informational content issued by words is in greater or lesser dissonance with reality.

• The empathy and cooperation are important components in the interaction between individuals. So, David (2006) says that empathy refers to the fact that the other "understands what is communicated as being in its place, as being this one, without identifying with it". The empathy generates mutual trust, offering a warm, tolerant and understanding interpersonal environment. The process of social inclusion is represented by all multidimensional measures and actions in the field of social protection, employment, living, education, health, information - communication, mobility, security, justice and culture, intended to fight social exclusion and to ensure the active participation of persons to all economic, social, cultural and political aspects of the society. (according to art. 6 let. cc) of the Law 292/2011, Law on social work).

Methodology of research

General objective:
Identification of the teachers` attitude concerning the development of social competences of children diagnosed with autism spectrum, between the ages of 6 and 15, in order to sustain the process of inclusion in our society.

The specific research objectives:
SO1: Identification of specific activities leading to desirable social competencies and to the reduction or replacement of socially non-functional behaviours.

SO2: Analysis of the teachers` role in the inclusion of children with autism spectrum disorder, by developing their social competencies.

Analysis, processing and interpretation of results

The quantitative research was conducted between March and April 2018 on a sample of 50 teachers at national level, who included in their classroom children with autism. The questionnaires were applied in 10 schools.

The questionnaire's structure included a set of open and closed questions organized on the following dimensions: development of functional communication skills: language and alternatives of communication as system of images, gestures and signs, assertiveness, perspective of playing and mutual-aid relation, relation between children affected by ASD and teachers; management of sensory difficulties; recognition and expression of emotions.

The questionnaire analysis showed that 89% of the teachers (n=44) consider that they need training in order to learn strategies for the development of socio-emotional competencies for children with autism, included in mainstream schools.

For most teachers, the most important source offering help for the child's school inclusion is represented by the school psychologist, the support being assessed as important and very important, and ranked first in the order of preferences, followed by other categories of persons who offer support for the child's school integration. These persons are the support teacher, speech therapist, social worker, private therapist, nurse, school mediator.

The data analysis of the playing and mutual-aid relation reveals that 3% of teachers state that sometimes children with ASD play with their school colleagues, 17% of teachers/professors state that children with ASD are involved in playing activities at school with colleagues almost daily, 27% state that this is happening quite often, and 53% state that the colleagues never played with a child with ASD at school. Children with ASD are helped by colleagues only sometimes, according to the answers of 42% of teachers, 31% state that offering help to children with ASD happens quite often, while in 9% of the cases the help is offered almost daily, 17% of respondents stated that they never offered help to children with ASD.

The component referring to the perception of teachers` knowledge in managing the disruptive behaviours of children in the classroom ("How to react to behavioural disorders of the child diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders when it occurs in the class") emphasises that 15% of educators know to a very large or to a large extent how to react to behavioural disorders of a child with ASD. 18% of respondents consider that they know how to react. There are cases when the teachers` knowledge is hardly manifested - 30%, and 37% of the variants of response show that this type of knowledge is totally missing.

The open-minded attitude and the wish to include the child with ASD in teaching activities are reflected in the way in which the teachers know how to involve the child with ASD in the teaching process. A percentage of 18% of respondents considers that the teachers have no knowledge about the involvement of a child with ASD in school activities. 33% of respondents considers that only sometimes, in certain situations, the teacher pays attention to the involvement of this kind of children. The children with ASD are quite often involved and are receiving sufficient attention, according to the opinion of 37% of respondents, 7% consider that this happens often/to a large extent, and 5% consider that the teachers involve children with ASD in teaching activities to a very large extent.

Closely linked to the previously analysed aspects is the teachers` perception of the specific effort made by them in order to integrate a child with ASD in schools ("Teachers are making every effort to include my child in mass education"). 21% of respondents considers that they make everything possible to integrate the child to a very large extent. A percentage of 8% of respondents consider that the educators endeavour to integrate the child with ASD in mainstream education to a large extent, and 23% considers that this happens only to a certain extent. For a percentage of 36% of respondents, the activities performed by teachers are hardly including any action of inclusion for children with ASD and, unfortunately, a percentage of 12% undertake no actions in this respect.

"The number of children in the class is a number that allows you to take account of the special needs of a child with ASD without affecting the other children", represents a statement that 11% of respondents consider to be true to a very large extent. For a percentage of 29% the statement is valid to a large extent, for 8% to a certain extent, for 50% hardly, and for 2% not at all.

Discussions

The participants to the study considered that the solutions for the needs concerning the development of socio-emotional competencies at children with autism included in mainstream schools, are:

- Training the teachers with techniques of behavioural therapy allowing them to help children to be as independent as possible (complementary to intervention services offered by specialists);
- Involvement of the authorities in the elaboration of policies and programmes of coherent medical and psychosocial assistance.
- Admission of children with autism in mainstream schools and access to types of schools offering an adequate professional training for the needs and potential of people with ASD;
- Services of lifelong psychological support for the entire family

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AN EXPLORATORY INVESTIGATION OF AESTHETIC RESPONSE TO MUSIC AND MUSICAL PREFERENCES, BASED ON YOUTUBE MUSIC VIDEOS

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Abstract: *In the 21st century, informal education through the online video environment increasingly influences the training of young people's musical taste. From the age of 13 to 14, young people have a great plasticity in the development of aspirations, options, musical tastes and they experience cultural and social choices, they also form their preferences, passions, beliefs; that is why many of the media products are intended for them and produce significant influence in their lives. Between cultural life and the theoretical approaches, the predominant advertising and commercial logic of the media and the educational logic, there is a tense relationship, which needs to be investigated in order to propose favourable ameliorative solutions in order to make musical education more efficient.*

Through a poll, the research aims to make a correlation between the number of views of YouTube pop music videos and youth preferences, to see if the number of views influences their musical preferences and to explain why certain musical pieces are first places in these charts. In this regard, we will look at the musical, visual and choreographic aspects that are the basis of the prediction for certain pop music videos on YouTube channel.

Our article will address current issues, regarding whether the consumption of modern, commercial music is a method of distinction and individualization among young people in contemporary society.

Keywords: *YouTube;musical preferences; music education; aesthetics;*

1. Introduction

Throughout history, the general purpose of musical education was to provide the students with a set of valid tools for their choice in qualitative music (Rose, Wagner 1995; Finnas, 1989). As North and Hargreaves state in a research from 2007, there is an obvious correlation between the choice of music and lifestyle, between the predilection for the musical genres and the attitude towards life in general. The findings confirm that the young people, who read more, have a predilection for classical music, compared to those who dedicate less of their time to reading, who prefer pop or rock music. The taste for the musical genre also influences the place where the young people spend their free time (the concert hall for the classical music lovers, clubs and bars for pop and rock lovers). These aspects emphasize the need for early and consistent musical education, coordinated by specialists, a subject for a future research.

In what concerns the musical taste, there are three hypotheses, which already constitute the subject of other researches, to be taken into account. First, it was found that the repeated exposure to a musical style favoured the taste for that genre (Bartlett, 1973; Bradley, 1971; Getz, 1966; Heingartner & Hall, 1974), and that the musical preference can be influenced by the authoritative figures in a young person's life (professors, parents, and others) (Greer, Dorow, Wachhaus,& White, 1973; Dorow, 1977; Steele, 1967). Lastly, the

constitutive elements of a musical creation (tempo, rhythm, texture, instrumentation, tonality) can influence the taste of the music lovers (LeBlanc & McCrary, 1983).

The present research brings further arguments to support those hypotheses, in connection with the influence the music channels, especially YouTube, has in promoting the so called "young music".

If, in a paper from 1974, Asghar Fahti and Carole L. Heath said that "*the largest percentage among the mass culture listeners indicated that their current taste in music was acquired directly from radio*", in 2018 a shift was noticed: „*the Internet has become more than just a platform to obtain information or make purchases; it has become an "interactive and participatory" arena (Freeman & Chapman, 2007) in which lively debates take place. One of the most visited websites in the world is YouTube, which started in 2005*" (Keskin, 2018). It can be hypothesize that the role of the radio, for the 70s, was gradually taken by the internet nowadays, by sites such as YouTube.

It has been stated, in this regard, that: „*As music educators, we have much to learn by examining successful music communities that lie outside of our 'regular' scope of music school and music school genres, and this includes teaching musical skills necessary to be active participants in genres other than those perpetuated by music schools*" (Janice Waldron, 2012). This idea underlies the importance of the internet as an informal method of musical education.

Due to the fact that YouTube is a technology that has provoked and influenced the way we understand the concepts of music, musician and public (Thibeault, 2009), the phenomena deserve to be studied and understood. Thus, by means of a survey, we aim to make a correlation between the number of views on the YouTube of some of the pop songs which made the top of the international charts and the musical preferences of the Romanian youth, observing if the preferences are influenced by the number of views. On the other hand, we will try to analyze the reasons why some songs reach the top and what are the musical, choreographical and visual aspects that enhance the predilection of some of the pop song videos on the YouTube. As a conclusion, suggestions for the musical performance and future studies will be made.

2. YouTube – Background, Motivation, and Challenges

YouTube is „*an intense emotional experience, a social space*" (Strangelove, 2010) or a „*website full of amateurs wasting their time posting poorly made videos, while for others it is their chance at stardom, their most understanding teacher, or their meeting place with closest friends*" (Cayari, 2011). In the same time, it can be a „*global marketplace for music from unconventional regions*", a „*microcosm of the digital media ecosystem and its competing stakeholders and interests. It is a site of collective expression, collaboration, discussion, and learning for the amateur and semi-professional users who create, share, watch, and comment on videos hosted by the website. It is also a platform for media rights owners to cultivate an audience for their properties, and a window for advertisers to promote products using interactive and viral marketing strategies*" (Mueller, 2014).

Even from its beginnings, in February 2005, as a video sharing website, YouTube has registered, even from the start, great audience, reaching, sixteen months after its broadcasting, 100 million clips viewed by American users by day, according to comScore (2006). In october, 2008, the data confirm the fact that the internet site was visited by 100 million American viewers per day, a number which represents over two thirds of the American internet users (comScore, 2008). According to the statistics made by Alexa in 2010, YouTube is on third place as the most visited website in the world, after Facebook and Google. In 2013, YouTube was garnering nearly 20 percent of all global traffic on the Internet.

If, at the beginnings, YouTube represented a platform where video clips were loaded, of any free song broadcasted on ratio or TV, today, YouTube is a highly regarded platform used to inform, connect and inspire people who share their thoughts (in Vlogs mostly), their music, or any other activity. Also, it represents a way of being up to date and it is able to create an amazing bond between a singer and his/her fans and to make a song viral.

Another interesting aspect is that considering your latest search and your interest field, YouTube is able to suggest other videos related or similar to the ones you searched. Users of YouTube can create an account where they can subscribe to other channels and they can even like and comment to the videos they are enjoying or not. In addition to this, advertising became popular too, and the advertisements are presented before the start of the current video; they can be skipped if the user is not interested. The users can load their clips, express their opinions, comment or answer other comments, and express their taste by hitting the like button.

3. Purpose and Issues

Starting from the hypotheses stated in the introduction of the present research, we aim to observe id the musical preferences of the Romanian youth are influenced by the informal education of the online environment and if the number of view on the YouTube is a trigger of the musical choice of the Romanian youngsters. On the other hand, we have attempted to find which are the musical genres preferred by young people and what are the elements of musical construction they are attracted to.

4. Compositional Features

In order to correlate the musical preferences of the youngsters with the number of views on YouTube, five pop songs that reached the international tops and had an impressive number of online views were selected: *Shape of You* – Ed Sheeran, *UpTown Funk* – Mark Ronson ft. Bruno Mars, *See You Again* – Wiz Khalifa ft. Charlie Puth, *Despacito* – Luis Fonsi ft. Daddy Yankee, *Gangnam Style* – Psy.

After a brief analyze of the compositional particularities, Ed Sheeran's *Shape of You* reveals an accompanying musical phrase which constitute the ostinato background for the vocal part – constructed as the melodic recitative. The syncopated rhythm of the repeated accompaniment, polyrhythmic with the vocal part, creates the dance atmosphere, specific to modern pop music. Another significant feature is the complete harmony, encoded as I, IV 7, VI, VII.

Fig. 1. Accompaniment phrase of the song

In what regards the song *UpTown Funk* – Mark Ronson ft. Bruno Mars, the rhythmical structure is also dominant is the accompaniment, a fact which ensures the dancing characteristic. Various rhythmic particularities can be noticed: the anacrusis, the counterpoint

and the syncope. The melodic line belongs to the recitative genres, and the harmony emphasizes the plagal relation D minor 7 – G7. The intro for the song lasts for 17 seconds, longer than usual, and this sets the stage for the rest of the song, introducing the catchy "*doh doh doh*" vocal and the clapping drum sound, which is made using a Linn drum machine (Botta 2015). Belonging to the same musical genre as Michael Jackson's songs of the 1980s, UpTown Funk is richly orchestrated, including bass, snare drums, cheery guitar, horns and a swishy synthesizer effect, which, together with the upbeat lyrics, give the song its funk feel.

See You Again of Wiz Khalifa ft. Charlie Puth was written as a tribute to actor Paul Walker. The whole musical composition accommodates the lyrics, which makes obvious the lyrical character of the vocal part and the plainness of the piano intro, followed by a discreet instrumental background. The vocal is mixed with hip-hop rhyming, bringing forth the message of the song. The main theme of the song is underlined by the repeated line "*When I see you again*", and the drums roll that signals the entrance of the drum accompanying the other instruments in the last few eights of the song brigs up the climax to get the message across one last time before it ends. (Chabfe 2015)

The song *Despacito* – Luis Fonsi ft. Daddy Yankee is a reggaeton, a genre borrowing from the rhythms of the Latino dance style. The vocal line combines the recto-tono recitative with the melody, in the Latin style (in Spanish). The dance song registered the most views for a clip on YouTube in January 2018.

The South Korean *Gagnam Style*, sung and composed by Psy, was registered by the Guinness World Records as the most viewed pop song video on YouTube in September, 2012. compoed in the K-pop style (Korean pop – having electro influences and powerful audio-visual effects), *Gagnam Style* promotes a colorful video and an original dance style. The vocal line is recitative and the accompaniment involves short, repetitive musical formulas, and electro-dance rhythm.

5. Methodology

The bibliography shows that the studies on the subject of YouTube are constantly increasing in number, and are available on the web, magazines, editorials or blogs. They are focused on various aspects, such as: the network structure of the platform (Cha et al. 2007, Paolillo 2008), user session and behaviour (Halvey, M. and Keane, M. T. 2007), and the improvement of user experience (Coyle et al. 2008, Chatzopoulou et al. 2010, Siersdorfer et al. 2010).

It has been said that there are two types of activities on YouTube, *content sharing and content seeing, and the constant and continuous stream of videos can potentially result in addictive behavior among users* (Haridakis and Hanson, 2009). Other researchers have looked at various activities, as seeing, liking, sharing, and commenting on social media content under the common umbrella term of "*engagement and interaction*" (De Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012; Khan, 2017).

Matthew Thibeault wrote an article in 2014, called *Media as an Invitation to Rethink Music Education*, where he explores, from a philosophical perspective, the way mass-media and the audio recordings create an environment having different consequences for the musical education. The media, seen as informal education, leads to the idea of the compliance of taste in music with the online song selection.

The importance of the musical taste among youth population was demonstrated in a research on 2,532 participants by Adrian North and David Hargreaves (2007). The researchers found a pattern of musical preference and the choice of lifestyle, where the taste for a specific music genre represents a cause for social discrimination. Thus, the influence of the media on the musical taste becomes an important phenomenon. Burgess and Green (2009) focused their

research on the popular music clips on YouTube, showing which are the most viewed, the most "favourited", the most commented clips, while others focused on the influence of YouTube on the culture and society (Lange, 2008), or on the educational potential of the site.

The pro-social messages of the music nowadays influence the social attitude of the young population and are a decisive factor of the musical taste, according to Nicholas Ruth's article, with the title "*They Don't Really Care…": Effects of Music on Pro-social Content and Corresponding Media Coverage on Pro-social Behavior* (2017). The consumerist sound art of today aims not only to create the atmosphere, but it is a decisive factor for the social action of the young population. Daniel Albert comes with the proposition to place the musical education into the space where the young people of today "live" their present: the online, in order to create learning experiences. His research, Social Media in Music Education, published in 2015, is a plea for the interaction between the social media and music education.

6. Participants

The research instrument for the scientific analyse below is the questionnaire. It was constructed around closed questions with multiple-choice, but semi-closed questions were also included in the questionnaire. It was applied on a sample of 102 respondents, with an average age of 25 years old. Among the 27 men and 75 women included in the survey, 63% have graduated a form of higher education. As the research aimed to collect data about the music taste of young Romanians, the questionnaire was applied to Romanian respondents.

7. Results

Since the survey is focused on musical preferences (as a secondary hypothesis of research), it included questions about the favourite musical genres of the respondents. As the char below reveals, the first positions are occupied by pop (21.9%), jazz and blues (18.6%) and rock (15.7%), followed by the other genres provided as a choice in the questionnaire.
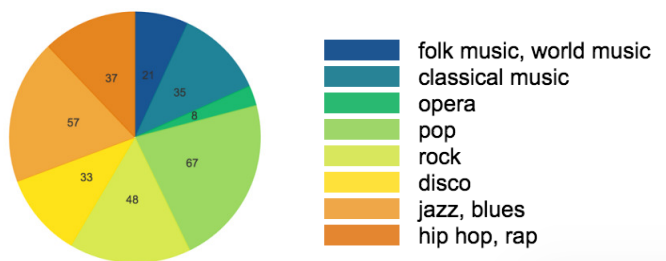
Fig. 2. Musical genres

Among the most viewed music video clips on the YouTube, five international pop songs launched between 2012 – 2017 were chosen, due to their top position in the international charts (in more than 10 countries simultaneously). The choice was made to observe their impact and compare the concordance of selection of the Romanian young people. In what regards the number of views in September, 2018, the classification was as follows (from the most to fewer views):
1. *Despacito* – Luis Fonsi ft. Daddy Yankee
2. *Shape of You* – Ed Sheeran
3. *See You Again* – Wiz Khalifa ft. Charlie Puth
4. *UpTown Funk* – Mark Ronson ft. Bruno Mars
5. *Gangnam Style* - Psy

The young Romanian respondents made the following ranking of the songs (on the first position is the song with the most votes):
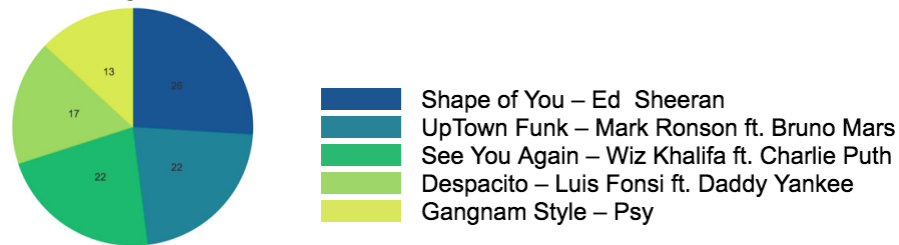
Fig. 3. Ranking of given songs

The following two questions are included in the applied questionnaire aim to verify the premise of the research: *How often do you listen to the song you gave a 1?*
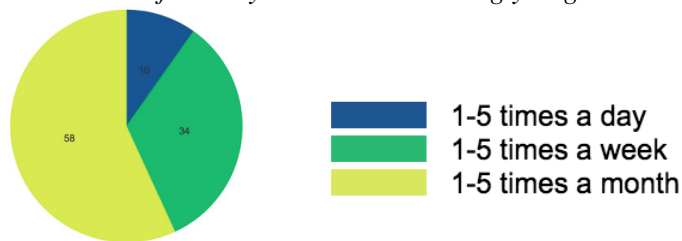
Fig. 4. Frequency of listening given songs

Thus, it can be noticed that the song placed on the first position reached 56.9% at audition, 1 to 5 times a month. The graph below shows that when a respondent has a preference for a certain song, they play it from 1 to 5 times a day (68.6%).
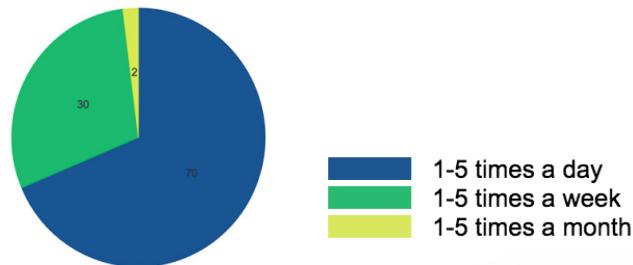
Fig. 5. Frequency of listening preferred songs

It can be inferred that the songs included in the survey (five of the most viewed songs on YouTube) are not included in the daily songs of the respondents, do that they do not reflect the musical taste of the young Romanian segment of population.

Another aim of the research is to reveal what are the constitutive aspects of the recent songs that attract the attention of the respondents at a first glance and in what percent. It can be seen that the songs the respondents place in the first two positions are characterized by dancing rhythm and recitative vocal line.

The results can be seen in the chart below:

343
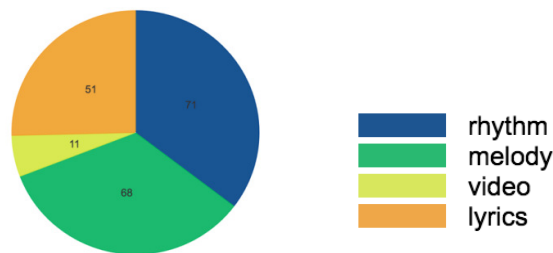
Fig. 6. Importance of constitutive aspects of music

The fact that the hypothesis of the research, regarding the correlation between the number of views on the YouTube and the musical preferences of the Romanian young people, did not prove to be valid does not automatically lead to the annulment of the thesis that the media and the online guides the musical options of the young. This fact is reflected by the chart below, extracted from the results to the question "*What are the main media you visit to listen to music?*", included in the survey.
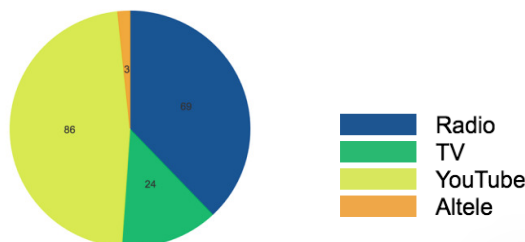
Fig. 7. Ranking of media for music listening

47.3% of the respondents put YouTube on top of the media they use, followed by the radio (37.9%). This demonstrates that the taste of the Romanian young population is, in fact, influenced by the informal online education.

8. Conclusions

Although the hypothesis of the research, about the influence the number of views of the songs on the online YouTube channel has over the musical taste of the Romanian young people, did not verify, the influence of the online on the formation of the musical taste is undeniable. The fact that the songs cannot stay in the charts longer than two years, due to the creative phenomenon that brings forth to the public year many new songs in a short span of time, must be taken into account. The new songs reach the top and captivate the young years fast.

The main media means used for musical auditions is, according to the respondents of the survey, the YouTube channel. This aspect supports the main hypothesis of the research: the young people's taste in music is influenced by the online media.

As the previous research demonstrated that the consumption of modern, commercial music is a means of individualization and distinction among the young people in the contemporary society, and the online guides their life options, the involvement in the online education of the adults specialized in music education has to be encouraged. As Heidi Westerlund states, "*the profession of education needs to engage more actively in reflecting on how our societies are changing and how these changes challenge*" our world. This survey pursues to raise the awareness about the formation of the musical taste under the influence of the virtual reality, so that the musical education should not ignore it.

If the Romanian respondents declared that YouTube is the main media they use to listen to music, the problem of selection ability is crucial. On the second place is the radio, a media which does not provide the user with the ability to select the audio content, but influence the preference of the listener by repeated exposure to pre-selected musical pieces. In both of these instances, there is serious need of a formal musical education to address to the problem of selecting the quality of today's music in a world of diversity and inflation of audio-visual products.

The findings of the questionnaire above, regarding the elements of musical construction which appeal to the respondents at a first contact and the favoured musical genres lead to future subjects for research, taking into account repertoire proposals for the young people and other musical activities able to fulfil the needs of the contemporary youth.

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DRAWING IN OPTIMIZING PRE-SCHOOLERS' SOCIALIZATION

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Abstract: *The present paper's topic is the children's socialization, searching for ways to improve children's relationships in formal environments. The investigation started from the premise that the optimization of children's socialization in the kindergarten environment could be achieved through the use of the artistic and plastic language, the free drawing being the basis for the transmission and reception of messages. Our sample consisted of 50 pre-schoolers coming from different kindergartens. This ascertaining research was based on, among other methods, the sociometric test and the analysis of activity products (26 items with multiple indicators). The obtained results confirmed the hypothesis, concluding that the use of artistic and plastic language in encoding and decoding messages optimizes the socialization among children in the kindergarten environment.*

Keywords:*drawing; socializing; preschool;*

1. Introduction

Theoretically, the artistic and plastic language is composed of only three elements (Davido, 1998; Crotti, 2010; Davido, 2017): the plastic point, the plastic line and the spot of colour. Practically, however, the possibility of artistic expression of ideas and feelings, through this language, knows no limits.

The fascination for drawing, for the "traces" left by the pencil on a sheet of paper, begins early (Baldy, 2017; Crotti, 2010), and the motric pleasure of scratching gradually turns into the motivation to encode messages and translate them into artistic images (Wallon et al., 2012), up to the shaping of the cultural environment (Poon, 2017). The steps taken by children in drawing go from scratches (Wallon et al., 2012) to the desire to find meaning in graphic signs (Baldy, 2017) and to complex ways of graphic rendering with the purpose of transmitting a message, which reflects cognitive acquisition (Papalia et al., 2010).

The studies on the evolution of drawing in children (Luquet, 1913; Malrieu, 1950; Davido, 1998; Quentel, 1992; Picard, 2005; Machon, 2009) and on deciphering the messages transmitted through drawing are numerous (Davido, 2017; Picard, 2007). Also, the specialty literature abounds in studies that address the psychological analysis of drawings (Malrieu, 1950; Crotti, 2016; Wallon et al., 2012; Farokhi & Hashemi, 2011). All of these sources determined us to focus on investigations that take into account the impact of artistic imagery on changing behaviours. For the topic of the current research, socialization has been at the heart of our research.

Cognitive and developmental approaches help us see the changes in children's behaviour as well as their abilities. Behavioural changes, as well as artistic abilities, come from changes in the level of knowledge and intellectual skills (Harwood et al., 2010). This qualitative identity (Piaget & Inhelder, 2005) grafted on the pleasure of drawing (Wallon et al., 2012) turns into the motivation to communicate through drawing. Knowing the role of social interaction in learning (Vigotki, 1971), acquiring knowledge and cognitive abilities can be accomplished when the kindergarten environment favours the development of socialization. It is possible to identify the level of a pre-schooler's maturation (Wallon et al., 2012) through their desire to make a drawing (Quentel, 1992), which can be manifested in the

347

zone of proximal development (Papalia et al., 2010). But, can the drawing contribute to optimizing socialization?

2. Purpose of the study

Starting from the premise that the level of socialization is higher for the children who draw, the ascertaining study aimed at: identifying the relation between the artistic and plastic language and the children's socialization in the kindergarten environment; detecting differences in socialization between children who have a developed artistic and plastic language and those who do not have it; establishing relations of attraction - rejection among the members of the groups; analysing free choice drawings in order to establish the complexity of the use of the artistic and plastic language. The working hypothesis was: the use of artistic and plastic language in encoding and decoding messages optimizes the children's socialization in the kindergarten environment.

3. Method

3.1. Sample and procedure

The investigation was carried out on a group of pre-schoolers (N = 50), from three "big" groups (the oldest children in Romanian kindergartens), coming from two kindergartens in Braşov. The group composition in terms of gender was of 13 females and 33 males. The sample was homogeneous in terms of age, socio-economic environment and educational conditions.

3.2. Material and Methods

In order to collect the data, we used: the sociometric test and the product analysis grid.

The sociometric test (Iluţ, 1997) was used for constructing the sociogram of the formal groups to which the respondents belonged. The sociograms of the two groups were based on two questions addressed to each preschool: "Who do you want the most to play with?", with a range between +1 and +3, where +3 is the preferred person for the game, and "Who do you want the least to play with?", with a range between -3 and -1, where -3 is the least preferred person for the game.

The product analysis grid comprised 26 items: I1: The scratch lines of the drawing (1 - very fine, ..., 5 - very intense); I2: Frequency of curved lines; I3: Intensity of lines; I4: Disproportion of the represented objects; I5: Complexity of graphical forms (1 - very small, ..., 5 - very large); I6: Types of lines used (1 - one type of line, ..., 5 - five types of lines); I7: Dimension of the drawing; I8: The diversity of the forms represented in the drawing (1 - very small, ..., 5 - very large); I9: The point where the drawing begins (1 – on the very left, ... 5 – on the very right); I10: Frequency of spots of colour in the drawing: (1 - very small, ..., 5 - very large); I11: Phenomena encountered in drawing; I12: Eye-to-hand coordination; I13: Drawing geometry (1 - very little, ..., 5 - very much); I14: The attitude shown in the creation of a free drawing (1 - very inappropriate, ..., 5 - very appropriate); I15: Locating the drawing in the first drawing phase; I16: Positioning of the drawing (1 – on the very left, ..., 5 – on the very right); I17: Use of colours (1 - very few colours: 1-3, 2 - few colours: 4-6, 3 - medium number of colours: 7-9, 4 - many colours: 10-12, 5 – very many colours: more than 12 colours); I18: Nature of the colouring instruments used; I19: The presence of archetypes; I20: Use of the sheet of paper in drawing. I21: Colour diversity; I22: The manner in which they express themselves in the drawing; I23: Artistic expressivity (1 - very little emphasized, ..., 5 -

very emphasized); I24: Omissions in drawing characters (1 - very few omissions, ..., 5 - many omissions); I25: Encoding of the plastic message (1 - very little, ..., 5 - very much); I26: Naming the plastic message (1 - very vague, ..., 5 - very detailed).

4. Findings and results

The scores obtained on the basis of the *Product Analysis Grid* constituted a starting point for both the quantitative analysis (total score for the drawing, as an indicator of the level of operation with artistic and plastic language) as well as for the qualitative analysis.

Fig. 1 – Examples of drawings and their scores (92; 98; 74)

The point where the drawing begins (the focal point of the plastic image) - tabel 1, the use of colours (example for brown - Table 2), the vertical movements made in a limited space (Table 3) and the tendency to occupy all the drawing space (Table 4) are a series of indicators reflecting the dimension of socialization.

From the analysis of the data on the starting point of the drawing we can say that 18 respondents tend to feel a high degree of fear (the focus of the plastic image at the edge of the sheet, to the left, the first register), 21 which tend to feel fear (18 focusing the plastic image on the left of the sheet, the second register, and the 3 to the right, the fifth register), 11 show age-specific egocentric tendencies (central focus of the image, the third register of the sheet).

Tab. 1 - The point where the drawing begins

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percentage
Valid	very left	18	36.0	36.0	36.0
	left	18	36.0	36.0	72.0
	centre	11	22.0	22.0	94.0
	right	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
	very right	0	0	0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The socialization of children through drawing can also be illustrated by the colours used. Each colour has a symbol, but the colour brown highlights the precarious social adaptation of the pre-schooler. There is a moderate tendency to use this colour, but - as can be seen in table 2 - a significant percentage (22%) show difficulties in social adaptation (fact also revealed by the sociogram for the respective respondents).

Tab. 2 - Using the colour brown

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percentage
Valid	very little	4	8.0	8.0	8.0
	little	12	24.0	24.0	32.0
	moderate	23	46.0	46.0	78.0
	much	11	22.0	22.0	100.0
	very much	0	0	0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Depending on the use of the sheet of paper - movements and space occupation, two types of respondents are distinguished: the sensitive ones (with social isolation tendencies), who occupy the sheet with few vertical movements and the enthusiastic ones (with social expansion tendencies) who strive to fill in all space of the sheet with vertical movements, often even superposed (Table 3).

Tab. 3 - Vertical movements made in a limited space

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percentage
Valid	very few	7	14.0	14.0	14.0
	few	12	24.0	24.0	38.0
	moderate	6	12.0	12.0	50.0
	many	5	10.0	10.0	60.0
	very many	20	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Regarding the occupation of space of drawing, the social expansive ones are those that occupy the whole space (Table 4).

Tab. 4 - The tendency to occupy all space of drawing

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percentage
Valid	very little	1	2.0	2.0	2.0
	little	8	16.0	16.0	18.0
	moderate	15	30.0	30.0	48.0
	much	15	30.0	30.0	78.0
	very much	11	22.0	22.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

The results obtained at the socialization dimension and at the use of the artistic and plastic language dimension were similar for the respondents.

The correlation coefficient of .46 is statistically strongly significant at a .001 threshold, which demonstrates a close link between the complexity of using the artistic and plastic language in rendering the plastic image and the level of socialization of children in the kindergarten.

Tab. 5 – Correlations between socialization and drawing

		Sociometric points	Drawing points
Sociometric points	Pearson Correlation	1	,462[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,001
	N	50	50
Drawing points	Pearson Correlation	,462[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,001	
	N	50	50

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

5. Conclusionsand Discussion

Drawing, a very often present activity in the kindergarten and also one of the children's preferred pass time activities, can illustrate how they feel, how they relate to others, and even conflicts that may arise among children. The investigation started from the premise that the level of socialization is higher for the children who draw, which was confirmed by the confirmation of the hypothesis.

Achieving the research goals opens up new investigative opportunities concerning the development of the pre-school children's abilities to communicate through free-form drawings and makes it possible to design an experimental-ameliorative design intervention regarding the level of socialization.

The results can contribute to a better understanding of the preschools' behaviour by teachers, to the ailment of the difficulties associated with adaptation to the kindergarten environment, but also to the design of activities through which to develop the aptitude for drawing.

However, because of the low number of respondents, the results cannot be extrapolated to all pre-school population. Research is under way by expanding the number of participants, also taking into account other areas.

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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON THE STRUCTURING OF THE FACTORS IMPLIED IN TEACHERS 'CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: *Professionalism and expertise in the professional domain represent conditions of a successful professional career. The initial professional formation and development are not sufficient anymore, they are included in a lifelong learning process. The specialty literature affirms that teachers' professional expertise is reflected not only at the student's level (student learning and achievement of students), but also at the level of education quality. The present study proposes to identify the relation between the internal factors such as personal characteristics and teacher attitudes toward professional development activities and external factors and teachers' participation to continuous formation programs. The implications of the study can be found at a methodological level, through the identification of the important factors which influence the teachers' professional development and also at a practical-operational level, through the development of teachers' continuous formation policies which would lead to a rise in the level of the participation rate in the continuous formation programs.*

Keywords: *professional development; initial and continuous teacher educations; competences; predictors; life long learning;*

1. Introduction

In a society of permanent changes, professional development becomes a necessity with a view to adapt to the social life demands. Teachers play a crucial role in suppporting the learning experience of young and adult learners, being the promoters of lifelong learning and also the providers of quality in education. Teachers have to adapt continuously to the knowledge-based society – to form and train human resource appropriately in order to develop the capacities to create new technologies. Within this context, teachers have to acquire abilities and knowledge which have to be developed continuously. Also, they are responsible „*to extend the boundaries of professional knowledge through a commitment to reflective practice, through research, and through systematic engagement in continuous professional development from the beginning to the end of their careers*". (Scheerens, 2010).

Policies assumed by the states of European Union on the issue of teachers' education became coherent and structured in thematic areas such as: *a continuum of teacher education, professional values, qualifications for teaching, supporting teachers* and *school leadership,* for the purpose ofdeveloping professional competencies necessary in the new knowledge-based society(Scheerens, 2010). It has thus been necessary that teachers' professional formation should meet superior standards in quality, based on a performant integrated initial formation and continuous professional development which would offer them the possibility of a high professional qualification; this will develop a wide range of professional competencies leading to autonomy and professional judgment leading to the possibility to adapt to new requirements of the knowledge-based society.

In Romania, the teachers' professional development activity includes the initial formation stage organized at university level (for all categories of teachers), with the aim of

forming the main competencies necessary to professional insertion. The stage of continuous formation targets the development of those professional competencies which ensures a better adaptation of educational services to the current challenges of schooling. Continuous formation ensures the updating and development of teachers' competencies, including the acquisition of new competencies according to the educational needs and to the national curriculum plan, as well as according to the exigencies regarding the adaptation of staff competencies to the changes of educational structures/ processes (Şerbănescu, 2011). Self-formation represents a consequence of the formation system (initial-continuous), being a result of the innovative changes promoted within the educational process, of pedagogical research finalized at the level of didactic practice. (Cara, 2006).

Teachers' continuous formation became one of the main preoccupations of the educational and research policies of many countries. In the European Union, teachers' continuous formation became obligatory in 11 states. Romania legalized through LEN 1/2011 the compulsoriness of refresher courses for the teaching staff in the pre-university system every 5 years by cumulating a number of 90 transferrable credits. The offer of professional formation service suppliers for teachers (universities, Teachers' Association, NGO, private companies) became very diverse, with multiple options in the choice of continuous formation programs they wish to attend according to their own formation needs. UE and OCDE studies confirm the fact that, in Romania whereas there is a fund allotted through the state budget to continuous formation, owing to a lack of substitute teachers and the costs of providing for substitute teachers, teachers are often unable to participate in professional development activities during working hours (Euridyce, 2008).

2. Teachers' continuous professional development

Most studies in the specialty literature confirm the idea that quality in the teacher's educational act has a lot of implications in the learning and achievement process of the learner. Thus, teachers are responsible in the achievement of a quality education, carried out at highest professional standards.

Professional development is approached in the specialty literature as the body of systematic activities to prepare teachers for their job, including initial training, induction courses, in-service training, and continuous professional development within school settings.

The conceptual approach of teachers' professional development will refer in the present study only at continuous professional formation, being defined as "activities that develop an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher" (OECD, 2009, p.49). Continuous professional formation focuses on the development of individual professional competencies in order to increase the efficiency of the educational act, thus facilitating dynamic changes in education (Blandford, 2000).

Being aware of the need for quality education, teachers engage in refresher courses and development programs with the view to obtain new professional skills in the specialization domain as well as in the pedagogical or methodology field; in professional conversion programs for new specializations, in programs which help them to reskill and acquire complementary competencies in order to help them extend the current activities (computer-assisted teaching, teaching in a foreign language); in programs of development and broadening transversal competencies on the subject of interaction and communication with the social and pedagogical environment (organization, management and improvement of strategic performances of professional groups, self-control and reflexive analysis of own activity) (Şerbănescu, 2011). Therefore, continuous formation programs teachers can attend are oriented in order to help them along the whole length of the professional pathway.

Also, teachers' continuous professional formation does not imply only their personal development (individualized learning) but also staff development (peer learning or cooperative learning in groups) leading to school development (Bell, 1991).

3. Predictors of teachers' participation to continuous formation programs

The problem under debate in this study refers to an analysis of the low level of teachers' participation to continuous formation programs in Romania. For an abstract foundation of the study, we tried to find theoretical explanation concerning teachers' participative behaviour at their own professional formation.

Research in the professional formation domain identify a variety of factors which can have hindering or encouraging effects as regards teachers' participation to continuous formation activities: time, finances, job and family responsibilities, heavy work load, school culture and principal school and colleague.

To that effect, specialty literature refers to two large categories of factors: internal factors (*teachers' attitudes toward professional development and teachers' self-efficacy*) and external factors (*time, funding, principal influence, colleagues influence and school culture*). Villegas- Reimers (2003) stated that conceptual, contextual and methodological factors that contribute to a successful professional development programme. Kwakman (2003) identify in an empirical study carried out in Netherlands three categories of factors which affect teachers' level of participation to continuous formation activities: *personal factors* (professional attitudes, appraisals of feasibility, appraisals of meaningfulness, emotion exhaustion, loss of personal accomplishment), *task factors* (pressure of work, emotional demands, job variety, autonomy, participation), and *work environment* factors (management support, collegial support, intentional learning support). It seems that the factor which represents the most significant effect is the personal factor. Without identifying a certain category, Wilson & Cobette (2001) found the most important hindering factors including time constraints, financial constraints, distance, information gaps, and lack of face to face interaction and mismatch of goals.

Desimone (2009) identified the teacher characteristics as prior experience, content knowledge, beliefs and attitudes. Amos & Benton (1988) found that teachers' negative attitude can be a bareer in participating to own professional formation.

Banks & Smith (2010) identified some teacher characteristics such as gender, age and experience of teaching as the determinants of teacher participation in continuous professional development. Lohman (2006) considers that an important predictor of the level of professional formation is represented by the variable time and its implications in the life of every individual. Also, he refers to another external factor in his studies – *funding,* which can have a hindering or encouraging effect. If the participation to the professional formation program brings a financial incentive to the salary, this can be considered an encouraging factor. The analysis cost-benefit of the involved variables (time, funding) can represent a cumulative effect in participating to professional formation activities. At the same time, in his study, Lohamn (2006) has found that self-efficacy is one of the most important factors affecting teachers' participation in learning activities. School culture, colleague influence and principal leadership can also affect teacher learning.

Lohman and Woolf (2001) found that the work environment of teachers influences their participation in learning activities. Having a learning culture, common understandings, visions, and shared values among teachers in schools is important both for building a supportive school culture and for ongoing teacher professional development (Bayar, 2013). Another category of factors – factors of personal characteristics, which specialty literature

underlines as being age, gender, teaching experience (Torff & Session, 2008; Ozer & Beycioglu, 2010) can influence teachers' attitudes towards continuous formation programs.

3. Methodology

3.1. Aims

The main purpose is to identify the contribution of internal and external factors in teachers' participation to continuous formation programs. At the same time, we wish to establish the psychometric characteristics of the questionnaire on the issue of teachers' attitude towards continuous professional development.

3.2. Sample

The sample of the research is made up of 73 teachers from primary and preschool education units in the Arges, Olt, Teleorman and Valcea districts, 128 females and 12 males, having a didactic experience between 3 and 40 years. The questionnaires were administered in a paper-pencil format, the participation being voluntary.

3.3. Instruments

The present exploratory study represents a pilot study which aims at identifying the weight of certain variables which facilitate or hinder teachers' participation to professional development programs. The data of the research had been collected through questionnaires built by us, administered to subjects during a time span of 2 months.
1. The initial questionnaire measures teachers' attitude towards continuous professional development – CA-DPC. The questionnaire had been built according to some theoretical models from the specialty literature. The targeted dimensions are: internal factors (*teachers' attitudes toward professional development,teachers' self efficacy*) and external factors (*time, funding, principal influence, colleague influence, school culture*).
The strategy of item construction was a rational one. In item construction we tried to keep the demands of surface and semantic characteristics of the items and we studied item differentiation in different categories: action, evaluation, observation. We tried to achieve a balance in the number of items of each dimension. The quotation of answers is achieved on a four-point Likert scale (strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree) because this preserves the uniformity of answer variance and does not allow a convenient, avoidable medium variant for participants. Answers are scored with 1, 2, 3, 4 points according to the rank ascribed for the chosen answer variant. In its initial form, the questionnaire included a number of 60 items. This form had been applied to a number of 50 participants, who met the sampling conditions. After calculating the internal consistency, the number of items was reduced to 40, which led to a rise in internal consistency and to an easier filling of the questionnaire.
2. In order to measure the level in the participation of professional development activities, participants were asked to to select the professional development activities they had been involved during the last year, with the exception of obligatory activities.

4. Results
4.1. Reliability of the CA-DPC
We used the statistical procedure by calculating the internal consistency index (the degree to which the results obtained by subjects at each item correlate with total results on

each factor) and the Alpha Cronbach coefficient (the degree to which items correlate with each other at a sufficiently high level in order to affirm that they measure the same concept).

Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the *CA-DPC*

Subscales	No of items	α for *
I. **Internal factors**		
1. *teachers' attitudes toward professional development*	7	.88
2. *teachers' self efficacy*	6	.85
II. **External factors**		
3. *time*	6	.69
4. *funding*	6	.54
5. *principal influence*	5	.87
6. *collegue influence*	5	.77
7. *school culture*	5	.62
TOTAL	30	

Note: *N=50

4.2. *Relation between the study variables*

The exploratory analisys was realised separately on each type of factor. In order to identify the influence of the internal factors, also of the external ones to explain the degree of participation to the continuous professional development activities. We have proposed to use the Multiple regression model through the Enter Method. In the preliminary phase of this step there have been checked the normality of distribution, linearity and orthogonality between the predictor variables.

The analisys was made separately, on each level – relation between internal and external factors and participation to continuous professional development activities.
The exploratory statistical analyses led to the following results:

Table 2. The exploratory analysis of internal and external factors involved in the participation to continuous professional development activities.

Factors	R	Δ R2	F	β	B	SE b	t	sig.
I								
I. Internal factors								
teachers' attitudes toward professional development	.786	.618	14.569	.475	1.094	.426	2.566	.019
teachers' self efficacy				.398	1.368	.398	2.148	.032
I.a. Personal factors								
gender			16.099	-234	-21.651	12.977	-.234	0.099
age	.611	.374		.702	3.019	.477	6.332	.000
teaching experience				-265	-2.410	1.082	-2.227	.029
II. External factors								
time				.751	4.573	1.176	3.891	.005
funding			16.278	.176	2.030	1.719	1.181	.086
principal influence	.625	.390		.054	.422	1.480	.285	.783
collegue influence				.452	3.785	1.007	2.128	.024
school culture				.167	2.171	2.178	.997	.348

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, $N = 85$

5. Discussion and conclusions

The present pilot study analyzed teachers' attitude towards continuous professional development, through the identification of the weight of internal and external factors which facilitate participation to continuous professional development activities.

The category of internal factors includes factors such as *teachers' attitudes toward professional development* and *teachers' self efficacy,* and the external factors mention factors such as *time, funding, principal influence, colleague influence, school culture.*

The statistical analysis of collected data showed the following:

- Significant relations had been identified between teaching experience and participation to continuous professional development activities, namely the more considerable experience the higher attitude towards his/her own continuous professional development. This relation can be explained through the fact that the teacher can achieve the self-evaluation of his educational act more easily so that he becomes aware of the necessity to develop and improve his professional competency system; also, significant relations had been identified between biological age and participation to continuous professional development activities

- Unsignificant relations had been identified between gender and the level of participation in continuous formation activities;

- As regards the internal factors, positive relations had been identified at both *teachers' attitudes toward professional development,* and *teachers' self efficacy.* We observed that teachers' positive attitudes towards personal continuous development determine their implication in personal development activities. Concurrently, results confirmed the findings of Lohman's study (2006) who has found that self-efficacy is one of the most important factors affecting teachers' participation in learning activities. Participation in the continuous formation programs are determined by teachers' beliefs in their own learning skills;

- As regards the external factors, we identified positive relations concerning *time* and *colleagues influence.* Any significant relations had been identified as regards *funding, school culture* and *school manager influence.* The results of our study conform partially with specialty literature. Concerning the variable *time*, this is associated with positive values in the participation level to continuus professional formation activities. Teachers who can manage their professional time efficiently are open to participate to professional formation activities. It would be interesting to identify in a future study if the variable self-eficacity influences this relation. Colleagues' participation in professional development programes influence positively participation in continuous formation activity. Even if school organization in Romania is still tributary to autocratic management, it seems that the wish to participate to professional development activities is not influenced by the school manager or by school culture but especially by colleagues. The identified results can be explained at the level of two aspects: school managers in Romania are rather engaged by bureaucratic activities instead of enforcing respect as leaders with persuasive qualities and influencing subordinate staff opinion.

- Concerning the variable *school culture,* this suffered a lot of inconveniences during the last period in Romania, as it has been transformed into an individualistic type of culture or it has been unstable due to a considerable staff fluctuation. Perhaps the most surprising resultidentified in this study is the unsignificant relation established between the variable *funding* and teachers' participation to professional development programs. Foreground directions in Romania in the latest years have been the increase in the quality of human resource and the educational sector was a part of it. Important funds had been accessed which

had been invested in teachers' formation activity. By participating to these programs, teachers accumulated the obligatory transferrable credits.

Even if the results of the study cannot be generalized due to the sample size on one hand and to the insufficient testing of the psychometric quality of the instruments used on the other hand, the idea of the present study can represent a reference point in developing awareness campaigns for continuous professional development programs, seen not only as a compulsory activity but also as necessity rooted in the concrete reality of phenomena identified in school.

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ROMANIAN MODELS ON DEFINING THE TEACHERS' COMPETENCES

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Abstract: *Literature proposes several models of defining the teachers' professional standards. Each model has its strengths and weaknesses. Thus, the purpose of this paper is to identify them and to discuss which model is more accurate. To solve this research question, a critical analysis of existing literature has been done. The paper reviews some published teachers' standards on a widely recommended approach called competence-based teachers' training. It involves placing teachers' training and teachers' personal and professional development within a real-schools-life context. The key concepts utilized by all of them are standard and competence, but they are used with a lot of meanings as are demonstrated by relating 8 indentified Romanian models to some continuity - discontinuity elements of the process of developing standards for the teaching career. Because of the many theoretical and methodological problems with the existing models, recommendations are made describing the need for more and better designed research.*

Keywords:*teacher; competence; occupational standard; professional standard;*

1. Introduction

In today's digital era, teachers have a completely different journey than they used to. Significant changes have undergone professional activity of the school teachers as requirements of society for the teachers have increased substantially in recent years. As a result, a lot of recent educational debates have provided a wider rationale for teacher's competencies standards. It is recognised that throughout the world, the levels at which key decisions are taken about the competences required to be employed as a teacher vary [6]: those countries where the decision is taken at national level tend to have more explicit and detailed descriptions of the competences that teachers are required to possess; in those countries where teacher education institutions have the autonomy to decide, the definitions of teachers' competences tend to be more diverse.

What about the Romanian experience? In Romania, the notions of *competence* and *standard* were and still are interpreted differently and analysed in different plans. As example, there were elaborated different types of standards: *institutional standards* (education quality assurance, institutional structures, managerial system), *curriculum standards* (standards of finality, content, time, school performance), *standards of training objectives and content*, *methodological standards*, *evaluation standards,instructional standards* (methods, strategies, forms of organizing training), *school managers' standards, teachers' standards* and so on.
This study refers only to the teachers' standards.

2. Research

The **research object** are the teachers' standards which were elaborated and applied in Romania in the last 20 years (1999 -2018) in order to find answers to the following **research questions:**

- Are there any models of standards which represent the Romanian experience on defining the teachers' competences?
- Can be identified some continuity/discontinuity and theoretically/methodologically elements of the process of developing professional standards for the teaching career?
    In order to respond at these questions, we have done the following activities:
- analyse the published Romanian teachers' standards trying to identify some models;
- analyse the Romanian laws on education trying to find some relationships between their stipulations and the conception and structure of the models identified;
- examine model by model conception and structure and cross-referenced to the accepted types.

There were used analysis of literary sources, of normative legal documents and of official sites and the modelling, comparison, generalization, abstraction and classification of the data obtained; besides, the author have experienced, in over 30 years of university teaching - researching activities, all situations arising from legislative changes that have occurred in connection with teachers' training; as well, was deeply involved in the process of development of many of the teachers' standards at which this study refers [3, 11, 14, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22].

3. Findings: Romanian models on defining the teachers' standards

3.1 Identification of 8 models on defining the teachers' standards in Romania

In the last 20 years (1999-2018), in Romania there were elaborated and published many standards for teachers. Analysing their structure, their content and their impact, we have identified the following 8 models of defining teachers' standards: **Model COSA (**Council for Occupational Standards and Attestation)-1999; **Model MER** (Ministry of Education and Research)-2002; **Model NCST** (National Council for pre-university Staff Training)-2004; **Model NCAQVT** (National Council for Adult Qualifications and Vocational Training)-2007; **Model NCST-PHARE**-2007; **Model NAQ-1** (National Authority for Qualification)-2011; **Model NQFHE** (National Qualification Framework for Higher Education-2012(elaborated)-2017(published); **Model NAQ-2** (National Authority for Qualification) - 2018.
Before their description, it is necessary to understand the relation between the process of defining these standards with the Romanian legislation on education.

3.2 Romanian education legislation on teachers' standards

There are two legislation documents that highlight the need to define the teachers' standards:
   - **Education Law no. 84/1995**, who stipulates ''*the obligation of the Ministry of Education and Research to establish, by the specialized bodies, the national standards for the attestation of the quality of teaching staff*'' [9, art.155], and
   - **National Education Law no.1/2011**, that outlines that "*The professional development of teaching staff, management, guidance and control and professional retraining are based on professional standards for the teaching profession*" [10, art. 244].
    Both refer to the standards for teachers but we observe that each of them has its own approach: as the first one [9] requires ''*the national standards for **the attestation** of the quality of teaching staff*'', that means the minimum requirements to obtain a teaching position,the second one refers ''to **professional standards** for **the teaching profession**'', a quite enlarged perspective as it relates to the teaching profession and to the professional development of the teaching staff and, as well, of the management, guidance and control staff.

This finding leads us to organise the 8 identified models in two types (Table 1):

Table 1: Teachers' standards categories

Year	1. Occupational teachers' standards	2. Professional teachers' standards	
		Professional teaching role	Professional teaching career
1999	COSA Model		
2002		MER Model	
2004		NCST Model	
2005	NCAQVT Model		
2007			NCST-PHARE Model
2011	NAQ-1 Model		
2012- 2017			NQFHE Model
2018	NAQ -2 Model		

3.3.1. Occupational teachers' standards: They are used "*for **the attestation** of the quality of teaching staff*" [9],for the recruitment of the teachers. They express the minimum level at which the competencies of the teacher have to be placed, providing clear, unified national benchmarks for the quality of the teaching staff and, implicitly, for the educational processes they make possible. They are named **occupational standards**, the teaching activity being understood as a simple occupation, something like: driver, plumber, watchmaker, etc.

3.3.2. Professional teachers' standards, between which we have identified:
  a) Standards centred only on the professional teaching role;
  b) Professional standards of the teaching career.

3.3 Structure of the teachers' standards

3.3.1. Occupational teachers' standards

  Models COSA (1999), NCAQVT (2007) and NAQ-1 (2011) have a very similar structure as they were developed by the same specialized body of the Ministry of Education, but with a name which changed in time, by reorganization [7, art.340], COSA, Council for Occupational Standards and Attestation, being the first specialized body empowered by Government Decision No. 779/1999 to elaborate and approve occupational standards.
Their theoretical and methodological approach were inspired especially by the Australian model, which defined the standard as a *"fixed/influenced performance specification of the industry that establishes the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for an efficient job at the job. The standards are composed of competence units, which in turn are composed of elements of competence, along with performance criteria, a range of variables and a sample guide*" [1].
  Thus, **the COSA Model** [3] contains the *Occupation description* and *Units of Competence*. Each unit of competence is described by: - the title of the competence unit (major activities leading to a measurable result); - elements of proficiency; - criteria for realization; - range of variables: - contexts and conditions; - assessment guide (evidence required to demonstrate competence); - qualification level.
The NCAQVT Model.

National Council for Adult Qualifications and Vocational Training requests, in 2007, the use of the format: *Occupation description, Areas of competence, Competence units,* each competence being described as in the Table 2:

Table 2: NCAQVT model of describing a competence

The title of the unit of competence	
Elements of competence The range of variables: Evaluation: Knowledge:	Criteria for realization

In 2009, National Authority for Qualifications, in its *Guidelines: M1, M2, M3, M1 + M2 + M3*,recommended [13] the competence description as in Table 3.

Table 3: The unit of competence description - according to NAQ Guide M2 [13]

Unit of competence title and type			Occupation reference code (completed by NAQ)
Unit of competence description			Level of the unit
Elements of competence 1. **2.** **3.** Range of variables Assessment	Criteria for realization of the practical skills	Criteria for realization of the needed knowledge	Criteria for realization of the needed attitudes

In spite of the fact that this competence description reflects the EQF-2008 approach [7, 16], two years later, in 2011, NAQ uses the same structure as in 2007, see NCAQVT Model: *Occupation description, Areas of competence, Competence units,* but requests the organization of competences in *key*, *general* and *specific* competence and the following format for the description of a unit of competence (Table 4,**the NAQ-1 Model**):

Table 4: NAQ -1 Model of describing a competence

	Unit of competence	Level of autonomy and responsibility
Elements of competence	Criteria for realization of the activity described by element of competence	Criteria for realization of how was accomplished the activity described by element of competence
... - Contexts - The range of variables: - Knowledge	...	...

That description have *The Occupational standards: Instructor, Master Instructor* (14), *The occupational Standard: Gymnasium and high-school teacher (15)* and more than a hundred occupational standards published on the National Authority for Qualifications site, since June, 2018. [18].

364

As a partial conclusions, the structure of these 3 models is based only on the following approach: ”*The Occupational Standard (SO) is the document that specifies the competencies and the qualitative level associated with the results of an occupation-specific activity"* [18].

The Model NAQ-2 (2018)

To respect the recent 3712/2018 Order [18], NAQ **has changed the name of the standards**: from *Occupational Standards* to *Occupational Standards for Education and Vocational Training.* (site.anc.edu.ro soefp). This reflects a different theoretical an methodological conception on occupational standard which, in 2018 is defined as "*a national reference tool that also includes elements related to the learning activities and conditions set in a VET program, on the basis of which a person acquires the knowledge and skills necessary to successfully complete the tasks of an occupation required by the market work*" [18].

Accordingly to it, the last one, **Model NAQ-2 (2018) has a different structure**. It contains two sections: Section A - Labour Market Requirements and Section B - Requirements for education and training.(18, p.3).

The first one, named *Occupational standard*, presents technical information on: - the name of the occupation (in Romanian and English); - occupation membership of the Classification of Occupation in Romania (COR) and its identification code; - level of qualification according to the provisions of the National Qualifications Framework, respectively the European Qualifications Framework; - activities specific to the occupation; - competencies and skills necessary to carry out activities specific to the occupation (including the ESCO competencies, if any); occupational profile/education and training requirements and access to other occupations.

Section B, named Standard *for the quality assurance in education and vocational training associated to occupation,* details the learning process: theoretical and practical training time, content, forms of organization, human and material resources, assessment criteria; also, information on actors involved in the process of development, verification, endorsement, validation and approval of respective occupational standard.

3.3.2. Professional teachers' standards

Professional teachers' standards are based on a quite different approach: the teaching is considered no more as a simple occupation, but as a complex **profession**. Analysing this category of teachers' standards, we observed that the process of defining teachers' standards was firstly, by 2001, oriented only to the principal role of the teacher - to teach a certain subject, and, by 2007, to the professional development of the teachers. So, professional teachers' standards can be differentiated (see Table 1) as:

a) Standards centred only on the professional teaching role.

b) Professional standards of the teaching career; they are statements regarding the qualitatively expected level of the professional benefits of the teachers, differentiated by levels of education and degrees of expertise: full-time teacher, second degree teacher, first degree teacher, professor emeritus.

a) Standards regarding only professional teaching role: MER Model (2002) and NCST Model (2004)

At the heart of the process of defining the standards, which we refer at as *MER Model (2002) and NCST Model (2004),* was the conception that *"the standards of the teaching profession should specify the requirements of education **for the work done by a teacher in the chair"*** [11, p. 64].

The MER Model (2002*): "Professional Standards for the Teaching Profession"* [11]

As a structure, these standards contain 5 elements: - activities expected to be performed by the teacher; - description (characteristics) of these activities in terms of knowledge, skills and mentalities; - motivation of the need to carry out these actions; - evaluation criteria, and forms of assessment.

They were published in the volume "Professional Standards for the Teaching Profession" [11]. To be observed that, for the first time, these standards are named *"professional"*, not *"occupational"* and they refer not to the teachers but to the *teaching profession.*

Also, this model operates with the concept of *"pedagogical competence"*, defined as *"the level of performance in the exercise of the didactic profession in which various methodical, pre-existing algorithms for the accomplishment of some work tasks are selected, combined and implemented depending on the changes of the situational context in which they perform their instructive-educational activity with students"* [11, p. 34].

However, the notion *standard of the teaching profession* has been used with a narrow meaning**;** the MER model abstains from the other roles of the teacher: school manager, student counsellor, curriculum designer, etc.

Model NCST (2004)

At the end of 2004 came into force, through an Order [12], *National Standard for Teaching*, elaborated by NCST for didactic functions of teacher, leadership, mentoring and control functions [12].

As a structure, the formula: *general competences* (didactic, psycho-educational, psychosocial, managerial and socio-educational skills, professional development) and *specific competencies* (refer to the candidate's specialization) were adopted for the elaboration of the standards regarding the **didactic** functions of teacher. For each general competence, were stated: categories of activities; ways to achieve; assessment tools.

The professional standards system developed by NCST in 2004 has been and still is a clear benchmark for providers of in-service training. It is, however, insufficiently used in the design and evaluation of initial and continuing teacher training programs.

b) Professional standards for the teaching career

NCST-PHARE Model (2007)

The Competences of Teachers and High School Leaders in Rural Areas in Romania and Other States of the European Union, Comparative Analysis [17, p.34-61]*,* is a Romanian model based on the analysis of teacher competency standards in Romania and other countries, and discussions with teachers from several counties.

Taking into consideration teaching as *"a qualified profession"* [4, p.11], the development of these standards is based on the analysis of teachers' roles and responsibilities, as well as on assumptions about how these roles and responsibilities are to be met. *"This means that standards are conditioned by certain values"*.[17, p.19].

The competences description is quite different. It starts from the establishment of 5 basic competences, which describe the major responsibilities and actions that teachers do **during their professional careers.** For each basic competence, 3 levels are established, levels of competence not representing levels of experience but rather a framework for general and identifiable aspects of professional skills and outcomes (Table 5).

Table 5: The format of NCST-PHARE Model (2007)

The basic competences	Level I	Level II	Level III
The basic competence 1 Facilitate learning and pupils centred teaching innovative processes	Involve students in meaningful and appropriate learning experiences	Pay attention to the different learning styles and needs of students by consistently employing a diverse range of teaching strategies	Use appropriate strategies and techniques that meet the needs of students, groups and / or student classes in an inclusive way
The basic competence 2 ... *The basic competence 5*			

The competence *standards, competence descriptors, competence elements, performance criteria* are formulated for each basic competence and for each level; they *"outline the range of professional activities in which teachers are involved as they apply the professional knowledge, skills and qualities in the context of teaching activity"* [17, p.36].

NQFHE Model - (2012-2017)
It is related to the document *Professional Standards for the evolution in the teaching career* [21].

The structure and content of the model capitalizes the descriptors of the *European Framework of Qualification*, 2008, (7), as well as elements of models that were developed in*A Reference Framework for Designing teaching career professional Standards* [19], in*Methodology on the development of the NQFHE, 2009* [22], whose main provisions were included in the National Education Law no. 1/2011, [10, art. 341].

Teoretically, his model uses a broad concept of *"professional development"*at which an EU document refers as*: "the body of systematic activities to prepare teachers for their job, including initial training, induction courses, in-service training, and continuous professional development within school settings"* [5, p. 21], and, as well, an integrated model of the *"competence"* concept [20].

As it is internationally recognized that the teaching staff performs many professional roles, the key source of competency derivation here is the professional roles of teachers.

The NQFHE model [21] is based on the conception that the teacher roles and related activities are not stable, but integrated into a dynamic process that leads to content changes of classroom and schools roles and the emergence of new roles. So, professional standards regarding the evolution in the teaching career contain references to plans: *a) Continuous training* - initial training; *b)Levels of schooling*: early education, primary education, lower secondary education, upper secondary education, continuous training and *c) The evolution in the teaching career*:debutant teacher, second grade teacher, grade I teacher. (Table 6). Belgium (Flemish Community), Croatia, Sweden and the United Kingdom (Scotland) are examples of countries that specify the competences that are appropriate at several different career stages, teaching areas or levels [6, p.24].

Table 6: Description of the professional teachers' competences in *Teachers' Professional Standards for Career Development*(NQFHE Model)

Unit of professional competence	Level of professional qualification: 6 - Licence/ 7- Master/ 8- Doctorate Level of the teaching expertise: definitive/ second degree/ first degree, continuing education

Description of the professional competence

Elements of competence	Knowledge		Skills		Attitudes
	Use of specific language; explanation and interpretation	Application, transfer and problem solving	Critical and constructive reflection	Creativity and innovation	Autonomy and responsibility

Transversal competences: **social and personal development** (expressed in terms of the descriptors: Social interaction; Communication; Life and career management)

Each type of learning outcome, knowledge, skills, and attitudes has its own autonomy, indicates distinct training objectives, specialized professional training processes, and specific evaluation processes.

Between these three types of learning outcomes there is a relationship of interdependence and, at the same time, a hierarchy in the process of achieving these results, namely: certain types of knowledge base the skills, and a certain set of knowledge and abilities leads to the development competence.

At the same time, the NQFHE model has its own identity; it integrates categories and types of competences, qualification levels and specific descriptors, consistently respecting the conceptual delimitations adopted and complying with the definitions of the EU Parliament [7]. Level descriptors entered into the matrix indicate the expected activities, results, and performances for each level of qualification and career development. They allow the description of the qualifications and, at the same time, formulate the necessary benchmarks for assessing the level of achievement or learning outcomes.

The document [21] offers a progressive framework of standards, reflecting the progression expected of teachers as their professional attributes, knowledge, understanding, abilities and attitudes develop and they demonstrate increasing effectiveness in their roles, clarifying the professional characteristics that a teacher should be expected to maintain and to build on at their current career stage. After the induction year, therefore, teachers would be expected to continue to meet the core standards and to broaden and deepen their professional attributes, knowledge-understanding, abilities/ skills, autonomy and responsibility attitudes within that context. This principle applies at all subsequent career stages.

The model is based on the conception that the relevant standards should be looked at **as a whole** in order to help teachers identify areas of strength and areas for further professional development. The standards clarify what teaching career progression looks like and, as now, the request that to access each career stage a teacher will need to demonstrate that he/she has met the relevant standards.

4. Discussion

4.1.The research indicates that all teachers' standards taken into consideration:

- were carried out in projects coordinated by specialized body of Ministry of Education (COSA, NCAQVT, NCST, NAQ), by teams of teachers from pre - university and university education, and executives school inspectors, researchers, trade union or the Sectorial Education Committee representatives;
- were discussed in various workshops, have been verified, validated and published;
- use the concepts "standard" and "competence", most often in syntax or with different meanings;
- the definition of professional competencies has been achieved not only for teachers (educator, teacher, master instructor), but, as well, for school managers and didactic auxiliary staff.

4.2. The analyse leads us to observe that, as a matter of fact, Romanian teaching' standards can be classified in two types: occupational and professional. These perspectives appeared in time, as a result not only of the evolution of the education theory and legislation but, as well, as a result of a larger international, European and Romanian experience accumulated in defining teachers' competences, and in writing and working with teachers' professional standards.

As was noticed, each of these category has its evolution in time, and we have to relate that to the evolution of the concept of *competence-based education* itself.

The concept of competence-based education was originally based on a behavioral model of learning and learning. Both in the practice of curriculum design and teaching-learning, the influence (and thus the weaknesses) of the behavioral model is still strong. As well, in the development of occupational teachers' standards, especially of those we included in so named COSA, NCAQVT and NAQ-1 models. The model NAQ-2 seems to prouve the effort Romanian legislation are trying to overcome the risks and shortcomings of a behavioral approach to competence-based education definition of occupational standards.

Currently, competence-based education focuses on a holistic approach presented as the norm. Countries applying a holistic approach are: Germany, the Netherlands, Scandinavian countries where competence is regarded as *"integrated skills needed to deal with complex tasks"* [2, p. 225-237]. This integrated or holistic approach is reflected by the second type of teachers' standards identified in the study, especially by those we refer at as "Professional standards for the teaching career", NCST-Phare and NFQHE models.

5. Conclusions

Results of present study allows us to conclude that:

- There are two strands of teachers' standards in Romania: one through National Authority for Qualifications, and a second one through universities which are much more familiarized with NQFHE Methodology [22]. Tradition has had these two areas separated for a long time and it looks as if this binary system is going to stay. Interestingly enough, this situation is mirrored in the way they are used, having implications for two types of teacher policies: hiring, recruitment and selection, on the one hand, and education process and teachers professional development, on the other. How long the two systems of defining teachers' standards will remain separated, we are facing the challenge of designing and realizing initial and in-service teacher training programmes on different theoretically approach, in spite of the fact that both are offered by the same university, the same university trainers working in both areas.
- According to TALIS, 2010, "during the last three decades two basic teaching and learning paradigms have dominated professional discourse: constructivist-inspired

teaching versus more structured (also often qualified as traditional) teaching. The two paradigms are the basis of divergent beliefs about teaching and learning" [5, p.27]. This can be seen as having implications for the development of two types of teachers' standard: occupational and professional; how to select good teachers, on the one hand, and how to assure the quality of the teaching profession on the other. In designing the occupational standards, more attention was focused on the behavioural repertoire of teachers than on deeply rooted aspects of their personality.Constructivist ideas have gradually been incorporated in professional teachers' standards and teaching practices along with more traditional approaches.

- A professional standard is a benchmark not only for the analysis, recognition and evaluation of teachers' professionalism, but also for: young people who intend to opt for the teaching career, institutions offering initial and in-service training programs for teaching staff, institutions evaluating or accrediting training programs; school managers who develop policies for the recruitment and development of human resources in school; institutions / researchers conducting comparative benchmarking on the professional training of teachers from different countries; each teacher to develop their own training and professional development projects and self-evaluation of their own performance.

- The substance of a professional teacher standard, what *is* and how it is constituted – *remains under-examined* in the Romanian research field, and particularly in the context of education. As Evans suggests, *"To be real, standards /competences have to be something that people – professionals – actually 'do', not simply something that the government or any other agency wants them to do, or mistakenly imagines they are doing"* [8, p.8].

- The changes in the teaching profession necessitate up-to-date and constantly developing teachers' standards, or, as it was called, *reinventing the wheel at regular intervals*. Over the years, building standards and defining the competencies of teachers and management staff have made clear progress in Romania, both conceptually and methodologically. Developing and periodically updating professional standards of teachers career development has been and must be subordinated to the idea that professional standards are not just a technical issue but must be associated with a value education table. Teachers' value options are those that orientate one way or another on their professional life.

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DIDACTIC METHODS FOR CORRECT GRAMMAR EXPRESSION IN PRESCHOOLS

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Abstract: *Language can be likened to a tool that has given man the opportunity to accumulate and store theoretical knowledge and practical experience in a form that is easily transmissible and used to the maximum. This determination highlights the functions: communicative, cognitive and regulatory action of language. Responsibility for language education in children should be a permanent concern for parents and especially educators. Proper grammatical expression takes place in kindergarten and it improves throughout life. The study included 50 children - two groups of high group preschool (experimental and control group) and specific teaching methods were used to improve correct grammatical expression. The results obtained demonstrate that appropriate methods can lead to significant improvement of correct grammar expression in preschools*

Keywords: *preschool; correct grammar expression; specific teaching methods;*

Theoretical framework

Not only in the historical development of man, but also in the ontogenetic development of the psyche, the role of language is considerable. Currently, language is defined as "the inter-human communication activity achieved through the language and all its resources." (Moldovan, 2013, p.81)

Language is constantly developing and progressing to the child, and the educator only has the task of organizing and planning the language experiences of each person, depending on their own developmental pace. During the four years of preschool age, under the influence of increasing demands of activity and communication, rapid assimilation of different aspects of the language takes place, new functions of language develop and develop, which becomes more coherent and coherent. In communicating with other people, the child transmits what he has seen and heard, what he lived, did, and thought.

It is important to emphasize that the "self-talk" which often accompanies the child's practical activity plays an important role in the planning and regulation of this activity (Cretu, 2004).

The language of children preserves dialectical aspects in the family, which highlights its very important role in the development of speech. Preschool develops authentic logos, always speaks, often using inappropriate expressions and funny replies. Towards the end of the stage the sentences are getting longer and the rhythm accelerated (according to Munteanu A., 1998, p.68).

The education of pre-school children's language in the kindergarten takes into consideration the requirements of the Early Education Curriculum and the curriculum proposes that the objectives be achieved throughout the pre-school language and communication field, namely: developing the possibilities of verbal expression, perception and correct use of the meanings of oral verbal structures; the cultivation of a fair verbal exposure from a phonetic point of view; development of creativity and plasticity of oral language; developing the potential to sensitize and communicate thoughts, intentions, meanings developed by written language.

Depending on the didactic task, the experiential field includes the following types of activities, namely: teaching-learning, knowledge and skills consolidation, knowledge recapitulation and systematization, evaluation, mixed (combined), skill training and skills (according to Kelemen, 2015, p. 9).

All free activities of preschoolers favor an affective climate of free and civilized communication between children, reinforce the act of communication in the most varied forms, generated by the variety of games, songs and rhythmic exercises. In the process of educating and educating children an important role is played by the teaching material, educational means in their capacity as "instruments of action or information carrier" (Cerghit, 2008).

Several objectives of language education in the kindergarten primarily pursue the expressiveness of communication, which means stimulating the child to speak, preserving his charm of speech, that is, through intonation, accent, rhythm. "Curiosity specific to pre-school age is a basis for educating the child to get informed through questions. In all kindergarten activity the child has to express emotions, affective feelings, feelings, attitudes towards people, plants, animals, positive or negative situations, concrete circumstances or encountered in stories. "(Surdu, Dănila, p.11).

The educator can intervene in such a way as to contribute to the enrichment of the children's language and to stimulate correct speech from all points of view. Regarding the correctness of the language, Tudor Vianu stated: "A language mistake is not only a violation of any of the precise rules of logical thinking, of literary sense, of civilization in social relations. An incorrect, confusing, improper or trivial formulation constitutes a deviation from the norm of the literary language as well, if not more than a misunderstanding or a corrupted form of language" (apud Mitu, Antonovici, 2005). That is why the cultivation of the language in all aspects (phonetic, lexical and grammatical) are objectives that any teacher has to achieve, and when he notes deviations from the literary language, it is necessary to intervene firmly but delicately for their correction. Imperfect speech can be an impediment to communicating with others as well as building interpersonal relationships.

Pre-school child does not learn grammatical rules, does not know definitions, does not know what is noun, verb, declination, but respects these grammatical rules by speaking about speech patterns, is trained to know them through games and exercises, is corrected when wrong. The storytelling activities are very useful because of their ethical and aesthetic value as well as the influence exerted on the personality of the preschool. Initially, those methods that support the conscious acquisition of stories, ease the ability to observe the episodes with their logical succession and use them with a correct, coherent, expressive expression, using literary expressions specific to stories (Panisoara, 2004)

An important way through which the correct reading skills for the first-grade writing are formed is the conversation, as a form of activity, through which progressive speech from short sentences to independent expression or long sentences or phrases, framed in texts. In the language education activities, in the 3-4 years of the kindergarten, there is a development and improvement of the phonetic, lexical and grammatical language. . Under the conditions of correct education, the child acquires all the fundamental sounds of the mother tongue at the age of 3 (Kelemen, 2013).

In developing the language of the child, learning the grammatical structure of the mother tongue is a matter of the highest value. In proper living and education, at the end of the pre-school period the child possesses the basic grammatical forms of the mother tongue and generally uses them correctly in his or her expression. This aspect greatly influences contextual language. It is distinct that both the grammar structure and the vocabulary are effectively taught by the children in the vivid communication process, imitating naturally the speech of the others and correcting themselves as adults when they make mistakes in their

expression. Because of this, the speech pattern around it must be correct, the adult must have a proper expression, respect the grammar rules that structure the speech. The preschool does not assimilate the grammatical rules as they are, does not know their explanation, does not know what the noun is, the verb, the conjunctiva, the preposition, the genre, the declination, the conjugation, etc., but he respects in his speech the rules of combining words into sentences.

Educators have a special role to play in the grammatical structure of the language, in terms of the activities they perform. The so-called "sense of the tongue" appears naturally, gradually through the formation of empirical language formulas. Sensitivity to the linguistic side, including grammatical structures, is a key feature of a pre-school child, although "language" is not a "study object" (as it will be at school). By means of this, , sense of tongue, "children use the grammatical forms as best as possible, and even verbally highlight mistakes in other children's speech (Stoica, 2010).

With pre-school time, they must use grammatically correct constructions by following the following guidelines:

- use correctly the terminations of the nouns cases, especially the genitive and the dative, the articulated and near-articulated forms of the nouns in the singular and plural;
- to change the verbal forms by person, time, number and especially to use correctly the past and the future of the known verbs;
- to achieve the agreement of the nouns with the accompanying words, to render some degree of comparison in speech;
- to correctly use various forms of personal pronouns and politeness;
- to use correctly the usual connecting words (conjunctions and prepositions);
- to make simple and developed sentences, even some phrases (Andreica, 2010).

Disagreements between the subject and the predicate abound in the expression of preschoolers. The main cause must be sought in the reduced analysis of the correspondence between the action and the subject of the action. The reception of the shape that the forefather used, without adapting it to a correct answer, is another reason for disagreement. The adult's own example of expression is also a model for the child. In the absence of a correct pattern of expression, the child will continue to make the same mistakes as the speakers around.

An effective means of achieving grammatical correct speech is the conversation. In the conversation, the questions asked by the educator ask the child to recall and select the knowledge, to use the most appropriate operations of thinking and to apply them according to the context of the discussion. In some conversations, intuitive material can create an atmosphere favorable to discussing aspects known to children (Lucescu, 2010).

Hypotheses and Objectives

Pedagogical research was based on the following hypothesis: "If the development of language in pre-school age is mainly achieved through the use of age-specific didactic games then an enrichment of the level of language will be achieved."

The experiment was carried out at kindergarten no. 9 in January-March 2018, in two pre-school high groups, children coming from both united and single-parent families.

Studied sample

The sample consisted of two groups of preschoolers of 50 children, 24 children of high group B and 26 of children of high group C from kindergarten nr 9 Arad. Major group B represented the control group and the large group C represented the experimental group.

The age of children is between 5 and 6 years of age, and in terms of composition it is the following: 22 girls and 28 boys from different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds and with special medical conditions: 3 children come from single-parent families; 9 children have unemployed parents; 1 child is born from the orphanage; 2 children with autism. As far as the level of education of the parents is concerned, 25 children have higher education; 10 children have middle-education parents.

Methodology

In order to achieve the objectives, we have called for the use of several research methods, both classical and modern, some aimed at activities with preschoolers, others being processed for this activity. These methods are: the observation method; survey method; the method of conversation; story; the didactic game; the method of analyzing the products of children's activities; test method; didactic pedagogical experiment.

An initial assessment of the level of correct grammatical expression of the children at the beginning of the research was made, after which the formative experimental part was used when using didactic games specific to this purpose (correct grammatical expression) and adapted to the age of the children. The formative phase lasted a month and a half, after which a new assessment of the grammatical correctness of the expression was made.

Results and discussions

In the initial stage, an initial test was conducted to identify the level, volume of vocabulary and correct expression in the sentences, and a questionnaire to determine the degree of involvement of parents in language development in preschools through various contexts.

The initial test (pretest) and questionnaire were administered to two groups of preschoolers. large group B and large group C.

The step consisted of applying a varied, initial theme test centered on the following contents:

- the degree of termination of the language level;
- correct grammatical expression;
- vocabulary level

The test aimed at determining the level of the sample, allowing the comparison of the results after a period of application of the interactive methods and the didactic game in the activities of stimulating communication, of knowing the progress made by the children. In drawing up the content of the initial assessment, account was taken of what children are going to teach in order to anticipate the best way to continue training by analyzing the results. All samples were selected according to the specifics of the group of preschoolers, taking into account their age and intellectual peculiarities.

The results of the initial test for the experimental and control groups can be seen in Table 1 and Figure 1.

Table 1. Results in the initial test to the
experimental and control group test

	Very good	Good	Sufficient
Experimental group	11	10	4
Cotrol group	12	9	4
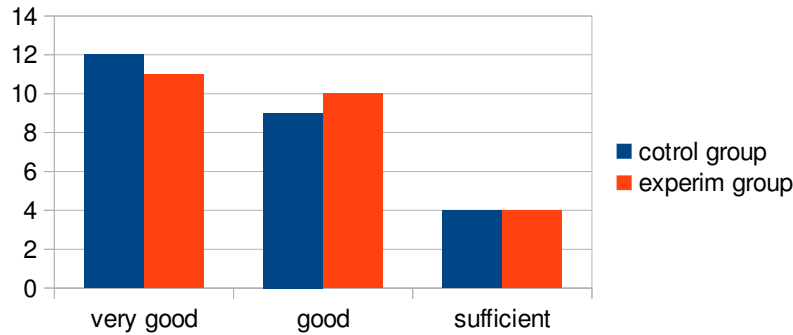
Figure 1. Results in the initiatial test to the experimental and control group test

At the same time, a questionnaire was put to parents and children to track the time parents give to children playing with them and doing the right speech exercises. The results obtained by pre-school children at the initial test are of medium level and they can find that there is only a slight difference between the two groups.

Interpreting the questionnaire: From the perspective of research, we have noticed that the two groups have a relatively low level of language development, which is viewed both in terms of parents' and children's responses.

The findings made in the questionnaire are as follows:

- Of the parents of the children in the two lots (50%) spend time playing with the child, (30%) do not spend time playing with children, the rest (20%) play a little longer, and;

- Most parents (70%) give very little time for dialogue, clarification, these take place during the way to and to the kindergarten, the others (30%) consider that they have a satisfactory dialogue with the children.

- The focus on parent-child dialogue is (60%) are quite interested in dialogue with children, and the rest (40%) consider these dialogues to be of little importance (the factor being the lack of time)

- A relatively small percentage (10 parents representing 20%) requires children to report what they did during the day.

- More than three-quarters of parents think that educators are the ones who need to deal with language development, and (20%) think that they, as parents, are also responsible for this language-stimulating action.

-For lexicon development, most (60%) let children ask for explanations about new words, (30%) find their meaning with the dictionary and 20% did not respond.

For children, correct grammatical expression is essential in establishing harmonious relationships with other colleagues in the group. An erroneous and incorrect expression can make it a target of mockery and isolation from others, increasing as much emotional stress and ducad to forms of emotional abuse (Breaz, 2017).

The experimental stage was a formative-ameliorative one. At this stage, a pleasant and attractive work was used under the sign of the game, combining intuitive and verbal methods, active-participatory strategies, integrating didactic games into inter and transdisciplinary activities, selecting interesting, attractive games.

Throughout this stage the results were measured and the children's activity appreciated. Did we use specific didactic games focused on the imbution of language and the acquisition of the correct grammatical forms in the everyday expression: Al (a, ai, who) who is (are)?, "I say one, you say more" .

The final evaluation stage consisted of applying a questionnaire and a final test on both groups of children - large group B and large group C, starting from the observation stage, but adding the new items of content transmitted as well as an increased degree of difficulty.

By carefully analyzing the results obtained by the children in the experimental group and the children in the control group in the final evaluations, one can notice a significant difference between the results of the two groups, in favor of the experimental group, to which the independent variable was introduced.

The comparison of the groups of children involved in the final evaluation can be seen in Table 2 and Figure 2.

Table 2. Results at final test to the experiment and control group

	Very good	Good	Sufficient
Experimetal group	**15**	**7**	**3**
Control group	11	11	3
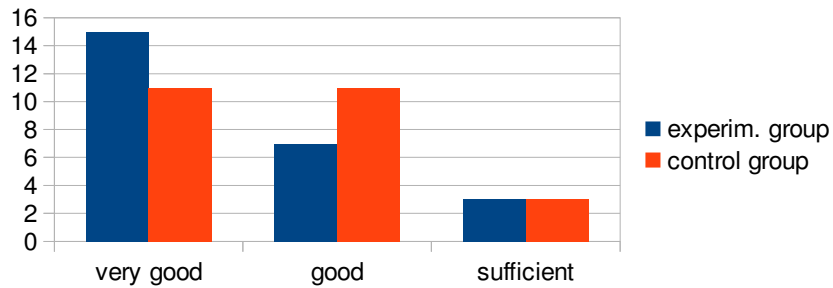
Figure 2. Results at final test to the experiment and control group

If a comparison is made between the effects obtained by the experimental group and the control group in the pretest and posttest stage, there is a slight increase of the results in the posttest stage. This increase is due to the application and effectiveness of the didactic games used in the research activities (see table 3 and figure 3).

Table 3. Comparison of research lots in initial and final testing

ratings	Experimental group		Control group	
	Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
Very good	11	15	12	11
good	10	7	9	11
sufficient	4	3	4	4
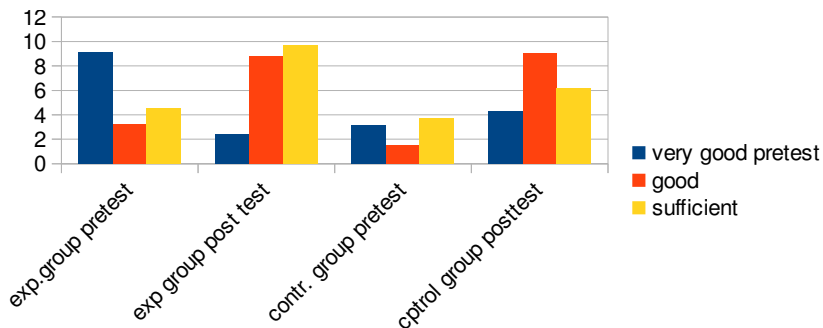
Figure 3. Comparison of research lots in initial and final testing

If we compare the effects obtained by the experimental group and the control group in the pretest and posttest stage, there is a slight increase of the results in the posttest stage. This increase is due to the application and effectiveness of the didactic games used in the research activities.

Following this experiment, it was observed that preschoolers in the control group had lower grades than those in the experimental group, and the time to solve the evaluation was also different.

At this stage, the questionnaire applied to pre-school children will be resumed in the observation stage.

Interpretation of the questionnaire as a result of the application of the didactic games to the experimental group showed an improvement regarding the way of involvement of the parents regarding the time for playing with the children, the time for dialogue with the children, the ways of enriching the language at preschoolers

The explicit role of this step is to strengthen and stabilize the new behaviors learned and to observe any changes in the child's progress (as the case may be) to the activity. The assessment stage makes it easier to highlight the evolutionary aspects, or, on the contrary, some involutions, stagnation, which, by accumulation, draw attention to the urgency to intervene ameliorative and optimizing.

The tasks of the sample define qualitatively and quantitatively learning behaviors and thus the didactic framework benefits from information which, correctly interpreted and valued, gives the measure of the stage reached by the child in his training on a precisely defined training sequence. Final estimates can be a diagnostic tool and can provide relevant information for improving the learning strategy.

Conclusions

In pedagogical research we performed initial assessments in the form of an initial test (pretest stage), formative assessments and final evaluations in the form of a final test (posttest test).

Measuring the results achieved in the three evaluations resulted in the following conclusions:

-Professors from the experimental group had very good results and those from the control group achieved the final test in a smaller proportion;

- As for the start-up phase of the experiment, pre-school children had a relatively lower level in terms of language;

- There is an increase in the degree of communication capacity development;

-The hypothesis that "if language development in preschools will be achieved mainly by using age-specific didactic games, then an enrichment of the level of language will be achieved" has been confirmed and communication capacities of older preschoolers grow in a faster pace with increased motivation, improving the performance of preschoolers,

-The children's language has been changed in both phonetic, lexical and grammatical terms;

-Exercises play educational games and fun games are enthusiastically awaited by children, because besides the instructive-educational side, it creates a climate of affection and proximity between preschoolers, the child having the chance to express himself freely, naturally.

-The effects achieved in the research indicate good organization in the educational-educational process, paying special attention to the game's side, development and stimulation of the communication skills of preschoolers.

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LOCAL CONTEXT AS SYSTEMIC INNER FORMATION THROUGHOUT ACADEMIC DISCOURSE

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Abstract: *In contemporary linguistics two contextual structures have been singled out: horizontal context (supplying the necessary semantic environment for a word in its word distribution) and vertical context (supplying the necessary semantic environment for a text in its discourse distribution). Both the contexts are automatically realized and distinguished through the sentence or text analysis independent on any particular type of text. However, the constant spreading of the investigatory base of the present linguistic research involves the spheres and communicative registers where the context itself becomes a functional category and might be regarded as dependent on the author of the text. This dependence realizes through particular textual structures quite consciously inserted into the text by its author in the function of presuppositional elements necessary for the adequate understanding of the text as a whole. This way of explicit context actualization is rather productive and common in academic writing. These structures are borrowed from convergent disciplinary texts and designed as integrated intertextual elements of various semantic and syntactic completeness. We think it proper to identify these stereotypical structures as "Local Context" (LC) and define it as a part of disciplinary dialogue (or vertical context) consciously chosen by the author in order to be used in the text as a complex of particular preliminary information necessary for understanding the text effectively.*

Keywords: *academic text; reader's competence; vertical context; local context;*

1. Introduction

Academic text is considered to be systemically and cognitively monosemantic, i.e. written to be understood completely close to its author's original message. In other words, the academic text pragmatics implies the necessity that the text while being read should generate in the mind of the reader the same (or maximally close) semantic structures that should correspond to the author' cogninve or academic aim, which allows us to speculate on a dual (author-reader) monosemantic structure. Therefore, every academic text is organized (both in formal and cognitive meaning) so as to be relevant to the academic communicative situation itself as well as to the academic thesaurus of the communicants.

The understanding of the academic text totally depends on the reader's competence within the cognitive situation of the disciplinary dialogue which can be associated with the vertical disciplinary context either common or particular for each text. As far as this preliminary knowledge is quite individual for each participant of the disciplinary dialogue, none of the communicants can completely guarantee absolute sufficiency of the partner's academic o disciplinary background. This statement is valid for both the communicants (the author and the reader), that is why one of the writer's text pragmatics is considered to support the goal reader with the necessary preliminary (in this meaning local for the text in particular) context which would provide the effectiveness to which the text is expected to be understood. This requires an explicit set of particular elements taken from the disciplinary corpora which could contextually provide complete (or desired) understanding. These sets are possible to be

discussed further in the terms of Local Contexts, quite conventional and evidently exposed in academic communication

The reader consequently decides on the LC elements whether they do or do not correlate with his/her own ideas of the disciplinary discourse. When both the author and the reader deal with distant (temporarily or geographically) communicative acts, the only completeness and commonness of the LC might minimize the misunderstanding and maximize the adequacy of understanding. In this connection we can state that supporting the text with the necessary LC refers not only to the author's motivation, but also to the strict systemic demands associated with the stereotypes in academic communication. When met these demands provide the adequacy of the academic dialogue in every particular case of production and perception of the text.

2. LC as a factor of the academic text adequate understanding

As far as every academic text is aimed at maximal explication of the relevant disciplinary notions one can positively predict the LC elements explicit, i.e. they might be actualized in the text by means of the language and therefore can be identified and analyzed. Actually, the texts of the above-mentioned communicative sphere contain the evidence that particular text fragments are targeted at providing the reader with the necessary (on the writer's opinion) preliminary knowledge or information:

> **(1)** Integrationism is a product of the structuralist legacy in modern linguistics. That legacy in turn has influenced current perceptions of integrationism, and is itself complex. ***Structuralism in what is sometimes called the "broad" sense (Crystal 1992, p. 370) is usually seen as a European phenomenon developing from the work of Saussure***. *Structuralism in the "narrow" sense is seen as an American phenomenon associated particularly with the work of Bloomfield and his followers: it is said to be "characterized by a general behaviouristic attitude and a rather restrictive conception of scientific method, inherited from neopositivism and based on the notion of verifiability" (Lepschy 1970, p.110).*
> (R. Harris)

Roy Harris (in his article: **Integrational linguistics and the structuralist legacy**) offers a kind of comparative analysis of two different approaches towards the understanding of 'integrationism' as a branch of the contemporary linguistics. While doing this the author employs quite a range of dialogical instruments of interrelating the convergent elements of the disciplinary knowledge: nominal definition (*Integrationism is a product of the structuralist legacy in modern linguistics*), plain allusion (*Structuralism in … "broad" sense (Crystal 1992, p. 370))*, quotation (*is said to be "characterized by a general behaviouristic attitude and a rather restrictive conception of scientific method, inherited from neopositivism and based on the notion of verifiability" (Lepschy 1970, p.110))*. As a result the author comes to a certain conclusion: ***Structuralism in the "broad" sense /Structuralism in the "narrow" sense.*** Such a thorough attention might evidently support the understanding of some definite statements which we see as the further text is unfolding:

> **(2)** These two structuralisms ***are about as close to each other as Chicago is to Geneva***. ***In spite of superficial resemblances*** (in, for example, some areas of terminology or the analysis of particular examples) ***they have little but the name in common***. As is evident from his review of Saussure**'**s Cours (Bloomfield 1923), Bloomfield ***never grasped either the theoretical basis or the originality of Saussure's position***. Bloomfield**'**s conversion to behaviourism served only to widen the gulf separating his own from Saussure**'**s view of language.
> (ib.)

Obviously, the author's view of the state of this branch in Linguistics (expressed in such a critical and modal manner) would have been at least unclear without the previous clarifications of a kind. The reader, in his turn, receiving the text has got an opportunity to consult the primary source in order to approve or disapprove the Harris's statements; as far as there are the references to the above-mentioned sources in the text[viii].

In this connection we can state that the author of the text (while referring to some particular elements of the disciplinary context) involves the reader into a dialogue above the borders of the text itself and provides not only the context for comprehending and understanding, but also a certain contextual verification of that understanding. On the other hand, interpretation of the chosen explicit context, provided by the author, is also individual and can only be applied to this particular local textual situation. The reader has a choice whether to agree or disagree with this viewpoint and the disagreement will turn into a problem of anther kind and will be analyzed as a discursive rather than contextual phenomenon. We shall proceed along with the text as it goes on:

> **(3)** There could be no clearer testimony to this than that provided by Bloomfield's semantics, which appeals to laboratories and chemical science to establish the meaning of the word **salt** (Bloomfield 1935, p. 139). This is not structuralism in the European sense. At the very least, a Saussurean would say, *it confuses faits de langue with faits de parole*.
> (ib.)

Further critical detalization results in blaming Bloomfield on the invalid definition of the sign origin (arbitrary/non-arbitrary) (*appeals to laboratories and chemical science to establish the meaning of the word salt*). Finally, R. Harris comes to the conclusion that Bloomfield's linguistic position totally differs from the Saussurean[ix] one, and therefore defints the disciplinary branch of his (Bloomfield's) work:

> **(4)** Each structuralism left its own kind of legacy in the history of linguistics. Integrationism (Wolf and Love 1993; Harris 1998; Harris and Wolf 1998) is often seen as being an essentially neo-Saussurean enterprise. More surprisingly, however, it has also been seen as a reversion to Bloomfieldian behaviourism. **This paper comments on some aspects of those perceptions.**
> (ib.)

Then, in this previously formed local context, Harris puts the principal question of the work (*"Is integrational linguistics neo-Saussurean?"*), defining the main problem of the article:

> **(5)** Integrationism and the history of linguistics Since integrationists treat the importance of context as an article of faith, let us first try to contextualize the question "*Is integrational linguistics neo-Saussurean?*" It is a question most likely to arise, no doubt, in discussing the history of modern linguistics; and here straight away **a problem arises**.
> (ib.)

It should be pointed out that this way of criticism appears to be quite a seldom event in the academic (usually rather stylistically neutral) text. The works that contain such a number of elements "imported" from the other communicative registers (textual modality, colored

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[viii] It might be pointed out that this address to the primary source mentioned in the text is optional as well as the agreement or disagreement with the authors' (both the writer him/herself and the cited ones) statements.

[ix] Coming to this conclusion Harris declares the inadequacy of the local context which Bloomfield had formed in his work, therefore arguing that one cannot understand the Saussurean ideas if that one follows that Bloomfield's logics.

lexemes, metaphorical comparisons, aggressive rhetoric, subjective judgments) are not typical of the disciplinary discourse. The LC is not usually associated with "hot" dispute. The LC more commonly guides the reader in the disciplinary corps of texts. In this regard we shall observe how the LC is formed in the article by Michael Toolan which is also exploring the problem of the integrational linguistics: «*Integrationist linguistics in the context of 20th century theories of language: some connections and projections*» (Toolan 1999).

> (**6**) It is implausible to imagine that out there in the literature, in the true history of western linguistics, there is some notional '**dream team**' of covert integrational-linguistic thinkers, a team which might include the later **Wittgenstein, parts of Dewey, Sextus Empiricus, Alan Gardiner and J.R. Firth. Rather**, the commentaries in this present volume draw our attention to ways in which aspects of the thinking of major philosophers and linguists, although not their main projects, suggest that they might have been sympathetic to an integrationist resistance to the segregationisim that predominates.
> (Toolan)

While defining the aim of the investigation Toolan mentions a number of names associated with the idea of Integrationalism. The texts that have these evaluating of critical or compilative character evidently give a very important role to the LC and therefore these texts possess a good deal of intertextual elements and have certain dialogical features.

> (**7**) With those qualifications in mind we can suggest, for example, that **Firth**, on occasion, approximated an integrational position. In '**Personality and Language in Society**' (**Firth 1957; p. 182**) Firth characterized his central *notion of 'context of situation' as a schematic interrelating of the following aspects of a language event: (a) the relevant features of participants, including their verbal and non-verbal action, (b) the relevant objects, and (c) the effect of the verbal action*.
> (ib.)

Here and in the following extract Toolan focuses the reader's attention on the contribution of some particular authors into the development of the Integrationalism as a philological and philosophical branch and therefore provides the potential reader with the particular context. Doing this he quotes works of some authors (Firth) and only mentions the others (Wittgenstein, Dewey, Sextus Empiricus, Alan Gardiner) even without including them into the reference list:

> (**8**) Having mentioned *Firth*, let me draw a connection to a recent article by **Paul Hopper (1997)** – an article which begins, in effect, with a *Firthian* example. Although not writing or riding in integrationist colours, *Hopper is interested in the unravelling, even in such standardly segregationalist activities as dictionaryand grammarbook-writing, of such foundational segregational units as the Verb*.
> (ib.)

He also widens the base of the LC referring to both latest and fundamental investigations. These genetic ties are intensively explicit (*Having mentioned Firth, let me draw a connection to*…, *with a Firthian example*…) which shows its importance for the author and therefore (through his textual pragmatics) for the reader.

> (**9**) Recent systemicist contributions (**Matthiessen 1996; Martin 1992**) have commented extensively on the scope of elements such as the verb, the process, and so on. And a not dissimilar revision is emerging in some of the linguistic description of English emerging from the co-build, corpus-based, studies, where emphasis is placed on the diversity of varying patterns of collocation into which, in actual usage, words enter (**e.g., Sinclair 1991**). *Thus at the robustly empirical end of language studies, I would like to suggest, in the work of linguists who may not identify themselves as*

integrationist, new developments are emerging which are consonant with the integrational stance and which support its theses.
(ib.)

Further particularization and rethinking the contextual elements allows Toolan to presuppose that some modern investigations are still dialogically convergent and parallel to the ideas of integrationalism**(Matthiessen 1996; Martin 1992; Sinclair 1991).**

At the same time Toolan refers in his LC to the above mentioned work of R. Harris. He also touches upon those elements of the disciplinary LC in which the critical attitude to some particular statements of the Integrationalism proclaimed, and therefore he offers the reader to form the complete[x] viewpoint of the phenomenon itself:

> (**10**) I turn now, briefly, to some of the specific points made by the other contributors to this special issue. **Professor Harris***observes that integrationists can hardly be described as neo-Saussurean*, since all the key Saussurean principles and dichotomies are disavowed. Are we, instead, 'Saussure-transcending'? *Perhaps nearer the mark*, analogous to the ways in which postmodernism respects but differs from modernism, *would be to say that Integrational Linguistics is 'post-Saussurean'*.
> (ib.)

The LC fragments presented above (R. Harris vs M. Toolan) are illustrative as far as they are comparable. One can mention that these LCs, while reflecting one phenomenon (integrationism), are dialogically convergent and relevant for they are actualized in one dialogical field and form one dialogical situation. On the other side a certain authors' polarity is evident in their attitude towards the idea of the Integrationalism. For example this disagreement and other relations among the LCs can be observed through the analysis of the References (relevant fragments provided) that support every academic text:

R. 1	**R. 2**
….	…
Harris, R. 1981. **The Language Myth.**	**Harris, R**. 1995. Signs of Writing.
Harris, R. 1983. de Saussure, F., Course in General Linguistics.	**Harris, R**. 1996. Signs, Language and Communication.
Harris, R. 1987. Reading Saussure.	**Harris, R.** 1997. *From an integrational point of view.*
Harris, R. 1990. On redefining linguistics.	…
Harris, R. 1993. Saussure, Wittgenstein and la regle du jeu.	Toolan, M. 1996. *Total Speech: An Integrational Linguistic Approach to Language.*
Harris, R. 1995. *Saussure, generative grammer and integrational linguistics.*	**Wolf, G., & Love, N.** eds. 1997. Linguistics Inside Out. Roy Harris and his critics.
Harris, R. 1998. *Introduction to Integrational Linguistics.*	
Harris, R., Taylor, T.J. 1997. Landmarks in Linguistic Thought. The Western Tradition from Socrates to Saussure,	
Harris, R., Wolf, G. 1998. *Integrational Linguistics: a First Reader.*	
…	
Saussure, F. de 1922. Cours de Linguistique Generale.	

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[x]This completeness is not a plain and one meaning phenomenon, but a unique and local notion as far as this completeness is defined by the author, and as far as the elements of the LC are chosen, formed and designed according the pragmatics of each particular text.

…
 Wolf, G., Love, N. 1993. *Integrational linguistics: an introductory survey.*

Even the first glance upon these References shows that they are rather different than similar. In fact there is no complete identity there are common authors (marked **bold**) and thematic or title similarity (marked ***italic bold***). This fact proves the idea of locality of every particular explicit context and shows that the choice of every LC element rather follows the individual (for each author) interpretation of the disciplinary text corps than any text-producing rule or tradition.

Meanwhile, the further investigation shows that the more texts on Integrationalism are observed the more similarities and identities appear in their LCs:

R. 3	**R. 4**	**R. 5**
Harris, R. 1980. The Language-Makers. …	… **Harris, R. 1981. The Language Myth.** … **Toolan, M. 1996. Total Speech: An Integrational Linguistic Approach to Language.***	… **Harris, R. 1980. The Language Makers.** **Harris, R. 1981. The Language Myth**. … **Saussure, F. 1972. Cours de linguistique generale.*** … **Toolan, M. 1996. Total Speech: An Integrational Linguistic Approach to Language.** … **Wittgenstein, L. 1953 Philosophical Investigations.***

The References of the following articles: "***Quine and the segregational sign***» by Woolf, "***Searle on language***" by Love, "***Wittgenstein, integrational linguistics, and the myth of normativity***" Daniel.R. Davis contain the sources which are common not only within these three works (**R. 3-5**), but also with the articles by Harris s and Toolan (**R. 1**-**2**). This fact focuses upon the convergence of the LCs which is coming from the commonness of the disciplinary text corps. If we combine these five References we can result in a kind of textual dialogical base for these five articles – a portion of the disciplinary text corps which would limit the combined explicit LC. The other question is to decide which portion of this combined LC forms the context necessary for exact or adequate understanding.

We shall analyze from this angle the article "***Searle on language***" by Nigel Love. The article may be structurally viewed as containing three parts. The first part is mainly providing the LC of the article. It contains the majority of the intertextual elements (76% of the authorized references in 30% of the volume of the article in whole) and therefore might be called referential. It seems reasonable that among the 29 references of this first part 28 refer to the works of Searle. The other authors mentioned in the References are quoted only 4 times (of 39 authorized references in the whole). The locality (or particularity) of the LC is quite evident: even a plain statistical view shows the unique choice of the elements of the disciplinary text corps involved into the LC building. And, which is more, of all the works by J. Searle (that are numerous) N. Love chose for his investigation only three which is proclaimed in the beginning of the article:

(**11**) The following discussion of J.R. Searle's theorising about language draws **mainly on three works:** Speech Acts (1969), Expression and Meaning (1979) and The Construction of Social Reality (1995).
(N. Love)

385

LC elements are introduced into the text in quite various ways. Some conceptual moments are presented in the form of **paraphrase** or "**close-to-the-text-retelling**" as well as in form of *quotation* mainly *authorized*:

> (**12**) *According to Searle, speaking a language is a matter of performing speech acts according to systems of constitutive rules.* **Constitutive rules are distinguished from regulative rules, as follows**: *. . .we might say that regulative rules regulate antecedently or independently existing forms of behavior; for example, many rules of etiquette regulate interpersonal relationships which exist independently of the rules. But constitutive rules do not merely regulate, they create or define new forms of behavior. The rules of football or chess, for example, do not merely regulate playing football or chess, but as it were they create the very possibility of playing such games.(Searle 1969, pp. 33-34).*
> (ib.)

In addition, the author reflectively applies the chosen LC element to **himself** providing a kind of experiment which would show the efficiency of Sealre's models:

> (**13**) He offers by way of analogy the fact that **I know that in baseball after hitting the ball fair, the batter runs in the direction of first base, and not in the direction, say, of third base or the left field grand stand**. Now what sort of knowledge is this? On what is it based? How is it possible? Notice that it is a general claim and not confined to this or that instance of baserunning behavior. I have never done or even seen a study of baserunner behavior, and I have never looked the matter up in a book. Furthermore I know that if the book, even if it were a rule book, said anything to the contrary it would be mistaken or describing a different game or some such.
> (ib.)

N. Love provides the reader with both the LC and the ways of its most effective reflexive application which he (N. Love) considers important for the adequate understanding of his work. One might find such an approach targeted at least at two aims: to have the LC element completely transparent and to make this LC element focused upon.
This LC elements focus turns explicit *(One point worth emphasising is that…; It might be thought that…)*in the article:

> (**14**)**One point worth emphasising is that** the semantic rules of a language specify a *'literal meaning'* for sentences. An extended discussion of this notion (**Searle 1979, pp. 117-136**) is concerned to dispel a possible misconception. **It might be thought that** the *literal meaning of a sentence* can be construed as the meaning it has independently of any context whatever, but Searle denies this: *'the application of the notion of . . . literal meaning . . . is always relative to a set of contextual assumptions'* (**Searle 1979, p. 120**).
> (ib.)

The use of linguistic reptition enforced by a kind of gradation: *literal meaning - literal meaning of a sentence - the application of the notion of…literal meaning…is always relative to a set of contextual assumptions,* with gradual authorization (Searle 1979, pp. 117-136 - Searle 1979, p. 120), positively concentrates the reader's attention upon the explicit context .

Searle's works under analysis are also supplied with some LC:

> (**15**) Searle analyses speech acts in terms of at least four general kinds of act: utterance acts, propositional acts, illocutionary acts and perlocutionary acts. The utterance act (**cf. Austin's 'locutionary act'**) is the act of uttering certain words, etc.
> (ib.)

Further Love comes to the conclusion that the main statements of Searle's works and those by Austin are dialogically convergent:

(16) In **Searle's view**, as **in Austin's,** the core of any speech act is the illocutionary act. (ib.)

We can follow the development of one LC element through the whole article. For instance, while quoting the following:

(17) …As a native speaker of English I know that … *"The* **cat** *is on the mat" is a sentence*, etc. (Searle 1969, p. 11).
(ib.)

N. Love launches a particular textual exploratory chain starting with the claim that *"The cat is on the mat" is a sentence*. Statistically there are 24 references to this statement and the form of the references fluctuate from exact authorized citation to a nominative implication like:

(18) We lack a metalanguage with which to distinguish the case where **the cat** in question is a blue-point Siamese from the case where it is a leopard, for instance.
(ib.)

The number of the references itself shows the degree of the author's concentration upon the Searle's idea. This concentration so far appears to be both the tool and the result of some textual pragmatic. It turns evident when we see that this statement (*"The* **cat** *is on the mat" is a sentence.*) becomes the main focus of the criticism in the article:

(19) Perhaps Searle means that knowing such facts is an automatic concomitant of being a native speaker. But that is unlikely: **there must be many native speakers of English who are either altogether unacquainted with words like 'sentence', or whose classification of certain expressions as 'sentences' would radically fail to match Searle's.** So maybe the claim is that native speakers of English know whatever it is about the *cat is on the mat* that leads those whose use of the metalinguistic term 'sentence' conforms to Searle's to call *thecat is on the mat* a sentence. **If so, it would appear to be important to know what Searle's criteria of sentencehood are. But Searle makes no bones about refusing to provide any.**
(ib.)

N. Love uses this contextual starting point to blame Searle for calling the structure *'thecat is on the mat'* a sentence without making much effort to provide any criteria of the Sentence. Here Love straightforwardly shows the conceptual gap which he detects (according to his viewpoint and the explicit LC) in Searles works. Then using this start-point Love builds his own tentative textual exploratory chain "for Searle":

(20) …why **he does not say when discussing** *the cat is on the mat* **that whenever a linguistic expression consists of a subject and a predicate, he will call it a sentence**. On the face of it, **there seems to be** no more reason for Searle's choices here than the fact **that the sentence is a concept belonging to linguisticsand as such is to be treated** in the way deemed appropriate by proponents of those doctrines **within linguisticsthat for Searle's purposes are to be taken on trust**.
(ib.)

Here the author appeals to the wider categories that refer to functional linguistics and refers the notion of the sentence to the ideas of **utterance** and **speech act**:

(21)It is trivially true that *the cat is on the mat* **cannot become a sentence of English unless at least one speech act (one utterance act) is performed.** But there is no institutional context that makes that speech act an utterance of the sentence *the cat is on the mat*. The relevant speech act just is, in and of itself, an utterance of that sentence. If you say *'the cat is on the mat'*, then you have uttered the sentence *the cat is on the mat*.
(ib.)

All these explications on the whole result into a definition which can be considered a conclusion (or the conclusion):

> **(22)'*The cat is on the mat*'is already a formula that classifies indefinitely many unique utterances in a particular way.**
> (ib.)

So far having read these fragments (17-22) as they are sequenced here we can observe a kind of intratext (a text inside the text) which possesses all the distinguishing textual parameters (completeness, coherence, cohesion, modality, unique pragmatic, informativity, etc.). The LC elements (here playing an important role for the main critical point) are designed into this intra-text and therefore this LC element might be considered as constituent for this article. The other question is whether this LC meets the readers' demand and how efficient its explanatory potency is. This question is to be addressed to each reader and no final answer might be expected until we have known all the responses (past, present and future) which is extremely difficult either theoretically or practically. This comprises the uniqueness of each particular LC both from the author's (who is forming this LC in his text) point of view and from the reader's (who is applying this LC to the text) point of view.

Of cause not every contextual element is the same completely explicit. There are some LC elements that are considered so well-known that are not supplied with any explication:

> **(23)** Searle**'**s marriage of **an early-Chomskyan linguistics** to his own version of an Austinian philosophy of language causes various problems and mystifications, … But what it is to utter a **Chomskyan 'sentence'** is a tricky question.
> (ib.)

Comparing the positions of Searle and N. Chomsky, Love does not bother to particularize the source of the above mentioned positions. Chomsky's works are not even mentioned in the References of the article (see **R.4** above). This fact seems quite surprising as far as N. Chomsky and the disciplinary notions related to him have been 10 times referred to (in comparison with Toolan – quoted 2 times, Austin – 6 times, Harris – 2 times, etc.). It is possible that some references do not have any highly contextual character, but those to Chomsky are supported by no explanation at all. The question of the reason of this textual situation is to be addressed to the author, yet we can suppose that it must be connected with the fundamentality and popularity of the works by Chomsky that do not need any additional explanation or explication. Although I evidently lack at least one in the following case:

> **(24)** The whole discussion of rules, for instance, is confused by the attempt to put a philosophical gloss on the ***early-Chomskyan notion of 'rules of grammar'***, in the form of the distinction between **'constitutive'** and **'regulative'** rules.
> (ib.) 89261111829

N. Love has certainly made a decision on the certain readers' awareness of the Chomskyan linguistic inheritance. And this decision matters not only to Love himself, but to the potential reader as well.

It must be pointed out that the authors position at forming the LC is not limited or distinguished by any "unified standard or rule" and therefore the LCs are variously formed. N. Chomsky for instance does not use authorized references or quotations in his «Language and Thought». He prefers to paraphrase or just mention the author leaving it to the readers whether they would accept the LC as it is or refer to the original (including the search for the latter). The LC is supported with Chomsky's comments that provide its cohesion and adaptation in the text.

A similar situation can be observed in «An Introduction to Discourse Analysis» by M. Coulthard:

> **(25)** Although ***Firth urged linguists to study the total verbal process in its context of situation*** he did not do so himself, choosing rather to concentrate on phonology. ***In the period up to the late 60s there were only two isolated attempts to study suprasentential structure, one by Harris (1952), the other by Mitchell (1957).***

> ***Harris's article***, although it has the promising tide **'**Discourse Analysis**'**, ***is in fact disappointing***. ***Working within the Bloomfieldian tradition he sets out to produce a formal method 'for the analysis of connected speech or writing' which 'does not depend on the analyst's knowledge of the particular meaning of each morpheme'***.
> (M. Coulthard)

The LC is textually enriched by additional evaluating factor (***Harris's article… is in fact disappointing***) that plays a double role as far as it reflects the author's attitude towards the LC elements and divides the LC into two segments: the segment of adequate and complete knowledge (relevant to the authors position), and the segment of the disciplinary gap (irrelevant to the authors position, or not yet existing at all) – according to which the new text might contain the new knowledge. These "gap segments" are intensively marked and focused in dissertation papers:

> **(26)***A second criticism of the social perspective is that it isolated discourse from the world. Its guiding metaphors of community and conversation treat social systems as single, cohesive communities* (***Harris; Kent; Spellmeyer***). Yet within the military, one cannot consider the struggles for meaning as phenomena that occur within a single cohesive community, especially when power relations are concerned.
> (B. Orbell)

The disciplinary LC shows these gaps (from the author's viewpoint) segments or proves the author's position on the adequacy or inadequacy of this or that theoretical model (see: M. Northcut):

> **(27)***Current theories for analyzing images in technical communication are inadequate* to handle the complex and rhetorically powerful images with which technical communicators work. Illustrations are "**diverse and situationally specific**" **(Brasseur, 2003, p. 49**), and the same applies to sites for empirical research into illustrations.
> (M. Northcut)

The authors' pragmatics of the LC completely determines both formal and cognitive characteristics of the LC appearance in the text. On the one hand the LC is considered unique for each text, on the other hand it possesses features common with the majority of the academic texts.

3. Conclusion

As the analysis shows the English academic communication has a number of these stereotypical characteristics:

- The author, while forming particular LC for a particular text, chooses those elements of the convergent disciplinary text corpora that can fulfil this particular unique textual pragmatics.
- The author follows standard dialogical procedures of operating with the disciplinary text corps that are conventional for this particular communicative register.
- The reader has a right to decide whether he or she will or will not take this particular LC into consideration and follow the author in his argumentations and evaluations.
- The LC possesses its particular pragmatics and depends on it. This pragmatics belongs to the main textual pragmatics and systemically depends on it.
- The forms of the LC vary in the borders of the whole paradigm of intertextual and dialogical stereotypes of the English communicative register.

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DO WE TEACH THE WAY WE LEARN? A CASE-STUDY REGARDING THE TEACHING STYLES IN PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATION

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Abstract: *The most important reason for studying styles is to collect information on the extent to which teachers' styles affect students' performance, and their overall development. In the teacher's, stylistic profile various aspects can be retained. The mode of information processing and, consequently, the learning style determined by this mode occupies an important place. If we study styles in order to produce qualitative learning to our students, then becomes legitimate to investigate whether the learning style influences the teaching style or not. Our research conducted on primary-school teachers shows there are no influences between the learning styles and the teaching styles of the participants.*

Keywords: *teaching style; learning style; primary education;*

1. Introduction

According to the Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language, online version, by style could be meant: *"A specific way of expressing in a certain field of human activity, for certain purposes of communication; one's own way of expressing "," the talent, the art of expressing ideas and feelings in a chosen, personal form "; "The totality of manifestations specific to a people, a community, or an individual", "a way, to be, to act, to behave"* (www.dexonline.ro). The concept of style acquires new expressive valences in postmodernism that reconsiders the individual's position in the community, emphasizing the promotion of uniqueness and diversified means of increasing efficiency. Some Romanian authors consider the educational style imprints teaching (Cerghit, 2008), the personal equation gives the uniqueness of style (Potolea, 1983), the educational style empowers and energizes the operational variant of the whole system of the crystallized personality (Iucu & Manolescu, 2004), and style is a consequence of personality dynamics (Iucu, 2008). Other authors consider experiential learning is very important for personal efficacy (Argyris & Schön, cited in Cocoradă, 2010) and learning is integrated and it involves all learning styles (Kolb &Kolb, 2017). Therefore, the investigation of teaching styles from the perspective of previous learning situations becomes relevant.

Regarding the learning styles, the divergent learning style is characteristic for individuals competent in concrete research situations, preferring to work in a team and receive personalized feedback. The assimilative learning style is characteristic to people who are capable of understanding information and putting it into a logical form, focusing on abstract ideas and concepts. People with a convergent learning style are pragmatic, finding practical use to all ideas and theories. People with accommodating learning style have the ability to learn, first, from experience, relying more on people and testing different approaches to finalizing a project. The fundamental prerequisite for learning by experience is the educated, seen as an active and responsible person who effectively manages the learning situation and the interpersonal relationships within it (Cocoradă, 2010). Regarding the teaching styles, the analyse starts from teaching aims and teaching methods. The aim of teaching is interpreted in terms of students' produced learning, namely mechanical learning versus applied learning, as

well as in terms of presentation of concepts, cognitive particularity that differentiates teaching in comprehensive teaching, which emphasizes the transfer in concrete situations of life and routine based teaching, which presents scientific knowledge (routine teaching). Teaching methods are divided from the perspective of the cognitive processing of concepts and from the perspective of the organizational form of students (individual study, independent work or cooperative, interactive. Thus, the learning offer developed by teachers could be a consequence of their previous learning experiences

2. Research question and objectives

The researchquestion investigates the relation between learning styles and teaching styles of individuals: *Do the learning styles of primary-school teachers influence their teaching styles?* In order to answer to our research question, we set the following objectives:
1. To identify the learning styles of primary-school teachers;
2. To identify the teaching styles of primary-school teachers;
3. To investigate the relation between the learning styles and the teaching styles.

3. Methods

3.1. Procedure

During the first semester of the school year 2015 – 2016, we conducted the quantitative phase of our research among the primary-school teachers of a school of Brașov. All the participants wereinformed about the purpose of the study and they were aware it was a part of doctoral research project. The research instruments were presented to the participants. The instructions for completing the questionnaires were also introduces. We obtained the written agreement to process the data and to disseminate the results.

3.2. Participants

The target population of our study consists in 30 primary school teachers of Secondary School no. 2 *Diaconu Coresi* of Brașov. One subject has gone into study leave and has been carried out of our research. All primary-school teachers are women. The structure of the group of subjects regarding their age is homogeneous, starting from 18 to 60, the majority being of middle age (M=43,83: SD=16.17). Regarding their studies, 73,3% graduated, in addition to their initial teacher training, undergraduate studies and 30,0% of those postgraduate studies. The statistical analysis identified a direct correlation between the didactic degree and age (r=0,62; p<0,01).

3.3. Measures

The research method was the investigation based on a questionnaire. We used only validated research instruments, namely the *Learning style inventory* developed by Kolb in 1971 and perfected until its last version from 2005, and the *Teaching style inventory* CORD 2005 developed by the Centre for Research and Occupational Development.

4. Results and discussions

4.1. Results regarding the learning styles of primary-school teachers

All four learning styles were identified in the investigated population: *convergent* - practical and rational, *divergent* - observative and emotional, assimilative - observative and rational, accommodating - practical and emotional (M = 2,73, SD = 1,11). The learning styles of teachers and their frequencies are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. The learning styles of primary-school teachers

	Frequencies	Percentages
Convergent	14	46,7
Divergent	1	3,3
Assimilative	12	40,0
Accommodating	3	10,0

We note that the majority of subjects predominantly have experience-based learning styles, namely convergent in a proportion of 46,7% and accommodating in a proportion of 10,0%. Of the target population, 13.3% process information emotionally, teachers with divergent and accommodating learning styles, and 86.7% information process rationally, teachers with convergent and assimilative learning styles.

4.2. Results regarding the teaching styles of primary-school teachers

The teaching styles identified in the investigated educational community are synthesized in Table 2.

Table 2. The teaching styles of primary-school teachers

	Teaching style	Frequencies	Percentages	Percentages per category
Category A	AA	0	0	0
	AB	0	0	
	AC	0	0	
	AD	0	0	
Category B	BA	5	16,7	40,0
	BB	3	10,0	
	BC	1	3,3	
	BD	3	10,0	
Category C	CA	1	3,3	13,3
	CB	0	0	
	CC	0	0	
	CD	3	10,0	
Category D	DA	1	3,3	46,7
	DB	1	3,3	
	DC	2	6,7	
	DD	10	33,3	

Statistical analysis identified teaching styles from Category B, C, and D (M = 11.20, SD = 4.54). We emphasize that these teaching styles are based on intuitive process of acquiring knowledge (40,0%), on comprehensive learning (13,3%), and on interactive learning and emotional dimension of knowledge construction (46,7%). According to the recorded results, none of the subjects included in the research adopts a teaching style

characterized by the transmission of knowledge and the mechanical memorization of the data communicated by the teacher (Category A). More than half of the respondent practice a teaching style that emphasizes the importance of active and conscious participation of students in the teaching process and supports intrinsic learning motivation (Categories C and D, CA, CD, DA, DB, DC, DD).

Regarding the relationship between learning styles and teaching styles of primary school teachers, we found it useful to investigate it from the perspective of reporting on the theory of learning by experience. Given that there are teachers with the same learning style that have different teaching styles and teachers with the same teaching style that have different learning styles, we can state that for the investigated population there was no relation between the learning styles and teaching styles of teachers. Thus, the learning styles of teachers for primary education do not influence their teaching styles.

6. Conclusions and implications

There are opinions that learning styles are but a "modern caprice", which implies that different students have different preferences for certain ways of learning (Pashler, McDaniel, Rohrer & Bjork, 2009; Riener & Willingham, 2010) (Hattie, 2014). The preference for the mode of learning according to the predominant auditory, tactile, visual or kinesthetic style appears to be commercial, because students are assigned different styles by different teachers (Holt, Denny, Capps & De Vore, 2005) there are few studies that meet the minimum acceptability criteria (Coffield, Moseley Ecclestone & Hall, 2004) (Hattie, 2014). However, the cyclic model of experiential learning substantiates the classification of the learning styles according to Kolb's theory. The lack of a relationship between the learning styles and the teaching styles of the teachers participating in the study reveals that there are other variables that determine how teachers manage their teaching activity.

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THE HYPERBOLIZATION OF 'ME'. A LINGUISTIC APPROACH TO SELF-PORTRAYAL IN THE VIRTUAL SPACE

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Abstract: *With the advent of social media, a recurrent theme in literature and psychology has turned into a major concern for psychologists and social scientists due to its blatant mismatch between a person's real way of being and the one served as real in the social media. 'Grandiose narcissism', because this is the topic taken into consideration, has been defined as 'a means of online self-promotion' or 'a way to showcase ourselves in our best light' (McCain & Campbell, 2016) and it has been researched upon in complex studies carried out by researchers in universities (e.g. 'Narcissism on Facebook: Self-promotional and Anti-social Behavior,' Carpenter, 2012). The efforts of psychologists and social scientists can be sustained by investigations in other connected fields that might help better understand the phenomenon and maybe find explanations for it. That is why this paper aim at analyzing the linguistic aspects which help build the grandiose portrayal to be composed in the social media. Vocabulary choices, preferred grammatical structures, pragmatic aspects related to media interaction, face-saving or face-threatening acts, etc.*

Key words: *self-portrayal; online; narcissism; communication; social media;*

I. Introduction and goal

Besides their informative contents which is an undeniable contribution to the spread of news and beyond their being defined as 'a form of collective wisdom' (Sitaram, Palo, 2010), social media have swiftly transformed into a place where people openly manifested or, better, displayed their features of personality in a more or less aware manner. Among these, narcissism has been identified by researchers (Gentile, Twenge, Freeman, Campbell, 2012) as a personality feature that becomes an intrinsic feature of social media (Trzesniewski, Donnellan, Robins, 2015). Similarly, research claims that people with narcissist features 'overestimate their intelligence and attractiveness', 'fantasize about power, (Horvath, Morf, 2010), or they are believed to have 'an insatiable and bottomless need for self-aggrandizement.' Thus, the existence of social media has led to an explosion of exhibitionism seen as an exacerbated self-disclosure and self-promotion. Consequently, this paper aims at referring to narcissism from a linguistic perspective, less exploited than the other approaches to it, which presupposes to identify the discursive strategies that people with narcissistic features retort to when promoting themselves in the social media (Dewall & Buffardi & Bonser & Campbell, 2011). In fact, it's not so much about what linguistic means these persons use in order to promote themselves, but rather how they use them in order to reach their purpose.

II. Terminology clarifications

The first clarification that needs to be made is the term of narcissism. Narcissism, officially considered a mental disability (Raskin & Hall, 1979), cannot be established in the absence of a medical diagnosis. That is why, ethically, I cannot claim that the person participating in my study is a narcissist and, anyway, that is not the purpose of this paper.

That is why in this paper I will use the term 'person with narcissist features' which correspond to the definitions offered by clinicians. Thus, I analyze the public Facebook messages of the person participating in my study with a view to identifying the existence or non-existence of discursive and/ or pragmatic elements that might illustrate one's narcissist vision of oneself. Secondly, I need to clarify upon the provenance of the data I analyze. Thus, it is taken from the public profile of the person whose social media I analyze. By using data from the public profile I do not disclose any personal data that the subject would like to keep undisclosed. By making some data public, each social media user exposes his/ her discourse and images to public access. Thirdly, all measures have been taken to anonymize the names of the participants in the social media interaction in order to preserve the intimacy of the subjects.

III. Social media, features, trends

Though recent creations (Facebook was founded in 2004, Twitter in 2006, Instagram in 2010), these media have made a fortunate takeoff and an important breakthrough in instant online communication. Social media have been construed as 'a category of online discourse where people create content, share it, bookmark it and network in a prodigious way' (Sitaram & Huberman, 2010). Furthermore, Correa et. all (2009) postulates the idea that social media is 'participatory media', some media where all participants can become contributors, and content creators. Their fast spreading and the obvious appetite of users for this kind of communication stands proof for the change in expectations of users who disavow the traditional, long-lasting, time-consuming and pricey correspondence. Furthermore, it enhances aspects that were unconceivable in traditional correspondence and that are highly valued in the new media: images and sounds. It may yet be claimed that photos endorsed to a letter may have the same value as the images posted on modern social media, but there are certain differences that aren't negligible: the quality and the quantity of images. If quality is indisputable, given the technologic advancements, but that does not mean that older photos were not expressive, quantity does make a difference in the sense that uploading images is uncostly, effective (it immediately transmits the message that is meant by the sender) and manipulator (it suggests to the viewer a reality which might be far away from what actually happens).

Researchers have shown their interest in the new communication media and they have analyzed them and their use from various perspectives ranging from psychological approaches to social approaches and even linguistic ones. The psychological approaches focused mostly on the excessive 'hyperbolization of me' seen as exaggerated status changes, image uploading, and self-promotion. Social approaches have aimed mostly at aspects related to age groups, social strata and sometimes gender with a view to identifying the categories that are attracted to using these media more than other categories. The researchers are equally interested in identifying the reasons that lie at the back of excessive media use. Last, but not least, linguistics has tried, though timidly, to identify and spot out the common, largely pervasive linguistic structures and means that are preferred by the social media users.

With the exception of the situations when social media is used as a source of news and besides the situations when they are used by the propaganda of whatever origin in order to influence people's choices, social media have also become a world show where the stage is taken by people who are mostly interested in promoting their actions, their house, their belongings in general, in order to demonstrate their achievements, their success, their making a difference in their working field or simply in their family environment. By way of consequence, the intrinsic nature of social media transformed an easy and cheap way of

communication into a stage where such elements as: likes, adores, number of visualizations gained excessive importance.

III. New media, old problems

The traditional by now discussion that mass-media has tried to sort out, but they have rather failed in the attempt of defining what reality is, or when faced to the challenge of discriminating something real from something fake, has been transferred to social media that have been hitherto struggling for a balance. If in the traditional mass-media an editorialist could easily add certain elements that would transform an event s/he accounts of into his/ her version of what had really happened there, social media have transformed all users into editorialists that serve their audience, the more, the better, romanticized versions of a reality that could easily be put behind. The border between reality that can be accounted for and imagination has been blurred; the information has gained the unique sidedness, the un-confrontational account of whatever story that turns reality into a personal fiction that goes unchallenged in the virtual space.

In this way, each holder of a social media page, confronted with his/ her consistency with truthfulness, will adopt a stricter or laxer version of it. In social media, reality is not what happens, but what is shown or told. Unlike before the advent of new social media when the self, constructed by the owner, was challenged by the co-participants in the social direct interaction, in this new type of social media, the task of building the self is entirely on the owner who is rarely challenged for what s/he claims s/he actually is.

IV. The fictionalization of reality

The fictionalization of reality, its transformation into a directed scenario is but a new challenge for all of us. Discussions which problematize 'the true-to-reality news have emphasized their worked-on and constructed character.' (Vâlcea, 2016: 55) This distinction is vital for this piece of research because it demonstrates that the audience, in our case the other owners of social media pages, is given the perspective of the one who publicly shares a particular story. That is why, I deem, we need to differentiate between 'reality as facts' (Searle, 1995, 15) and 'reality as someone's perspective on facts' (Vâlcea, 2016: 56) and at the same time we need to be aware that the difference between the two types of reality is given by ideology and language. In fact, the reality has brought about heated debates about its slippery character, just as it results from the following quote: 'The concept of 'reality' has attracted much attention on the part of sociologists, sociolinguists and linguists who have come to the conclusion that 'reality' is a construct which lasts as long as the news is viable (attracting interest, responses, reactions) on the part of the audience. Reality begins and ends with the report and stays within the limits imposed by the news. Previous or consecutive events are either ignored or considered irrelevant to audiences that should permanently be attracted to current affairs.' (Vâlcea, 2016: 55)

V. Case study

Of the many analyzable aspects of social media, I have decided to focus on the hyperbolization of 'me' understood as an exaggerated importance that some social media users give to themselves. Some studies have been written on 'grandiose narcissists' (Horvath & Morf, 2010; DeWall & Buffardi& Bonser& Campbell, 2011; Panek & Nardis& Konrath, 2013; Brailovskaia & Bierhoff, 2016) where attempts have been made firstly at describing the

social media behavior of such persons, but also at offering psychological explanations for their acting in such a way.

Yet, I embark on a different type of study where I try to find patterns that are used when creating a hyperbolized vision of 'me', but not by means of photos or others statuses. It is language that I will take into consideration, either as repeating patterns or as unique elements that someone uses in order to create an alternating reality.

5.1. Approaches

In my analysis and for the purpose of my research I consider appropriate the use of the following two approaches: Discourse Analysis and Pragmatics. Discourse Analysis is the analysis of the linguistic structure beyond the level of words within a context and depending on the opinions and beliefs of the emitter (Schrøder, 1998; Simpson, 1994). This approach is appropriate for my type of text because it isn't meant to analyze the linguistic structure of the social media messages, but it is meant to reveal the portrayal of one social media user by analyzing her messages. At the same time, I chose some pragmatics concepts to demonstrate that one's message is not meant to be read by everyone. There are at least two direct communicators and hundreds, at times, thousands of silent watchers, the followers/ friends, and the message needs to be negotiated, concern needs to be paid to save your own face (Goffman, 1974) and your interlocutor's.

5.2. Case study analysis

- Ellipsis/ suspension points

Traditional grammar deals with suspension points as a marker that indicates the omission of words: 'one of a group of dots, usually three, used in written material to indicate the omission of a word or words' (Collins). Yet, pragmatics, which is interested in the function of linguistic structures, refers to suspension points in terms of the reasons they were used for and the purpose they were aimed at and all this in virtue of the consideration that suspension points are meaning without form. As for the reasons of using suspension points, there are basically two reasons for that:

1. There is more to say, but the speaker doesn't say it, s/he lets the reader think about it
2. The speaker creates/ increases expectation/ curiosity before s/he says something important

> **D.L.** Hahaha ... viața te răzbuna singura, eu nu trebuie decât să pășesc hotărât mai departe! Mereu mi-ai fost arături ... iar eu asta nu uit, A! 😘😮 Oamenii puternici și inteligenți nu invidiază, asta apreciez la tine!!
>
> **D. L.** Hahaha ... life itself avenges you, I only have to step forward! You have always been there for me ... and I do not forget that, A! 😘😮 Strong and intelligent people do not envy, that's what I appreciate in you! (my translation)

In this particular case, the speaker does not say as much as she implies there is to be said. She only creates the expectation, the ideas that should be inferred by the reader, but the ideas are not there.

- Flouting the maxims of relation and of manner

Grice (1975) developed the theory of the cooperative principle. On the basis that a speaker and listener are cooperating, and aiming to be relevant, a speaker can imply a meaning implicitly, confident that the listener will understand.

Grice's maxims of relation (try to be relevant) and manner (avoid obscurity of expression and avoid ambiguity) are flouted at least in the second part of the answer. At the beginning she addresses the issue raised by her interlocutor, but then she changes the topic due maybe to the fact that she feels threatened by the fact that one of her weaknesses is vengefulness.

A. Pupicei !Zi minunata iti doresc 🙂:) Cand am vazut textul ... fix la tine m-a dus gândul 😄 😄😄😄

'Dacă o femeie este plină de viaţă, are success, este irezistibilă şi fericită, înseamnă că se răzbună pe cineva.'

A. Kisses! I wish you a lovely day 🙂:) When I saw the text … I thought about you 😄😄😄 😄

'If a woman is lively, successful, irresistible and happy, it means that she takes revenge on someone.'(my translation)

Causes for flouting the maxim of relation is that A. was too direct, which is interpreted as a face-threatening act by D.L. In order to change focus, D.L. attributes authority to the destiny, thus escaping the accusation of vengeance and saving one's face. Strategically, she uses flattery in order to diminish the impact of self-exposure as a vengeful person. The implicature is that there is something to be envious about.

- Leveling-off strategy

D. L. Mulţumesc mult !🤗⬜.forţa e in fiecare dintre noi … tot ce fac este sa reaprind flacăra din fiecare fiinţă ce îmi iese în cale, nu pentru a recapătă ceva ce a pierdut ... ci pentru a ii arata cat de strălucitoare este de fapt flacăra sa interioară ... doar că de durere, suferinţa nu o mai vede ... dar eu o vad!

D. L. Thank you so much! 🤗⬜ the force is in each of us… all I do is to rekindle the fire in every being that comes my way, not to regain something that s/he has lost ... but to show how bright his/her inner fire is … it's just that due to pain, sufferance s/he does not see it … but I see it! (my translation)

She uses a leveling off strategy between herself and her interlocutor. Considering herself situated higher in terms of professional success/ knowledge she shows her generosity in lifting her interlocutor and others to the same level as hers, practicing inclusion which is an empowering strategy for the one that uses it. She explicitly shows awareness of her advantages 'she has got the fire' and moreover she sees the fire in the others. She also plays the role of the 'good Samaritan' who willingly helps the others as she rekindles the fire in the others. Her discourse is highly metaphorical 'inner fire' is someone's call for a particular job

To rekindle the fire in each of those I come across – that demonstrates that she has a very high opinion of herself and she disregards the opinion of the others (do they want to be rekindled?).Moreover, she enacts the role of the savior (with all the positive connotations that issue from here) for the others that do not see their fire anymore. It takes her being here and

helping them in order for them to regain their lost fire. She also claims having some super powers that allow her to see the fire in the others when they themselves cannot see it any more. She actually creates herself a self-portrayal with a two-fold purpose: to convince herself of the qualities she thinks she has and secondly, to let/ help the others see how good she is.

She uses the same strategy in the example below:

D.L. Acesta e unul din visele mele … sa continuam impreuna … toate sucursalele din tara ... doar impreuna construim durabil si de calitate!!

D.L. This is one of my dreams ... to continue together ... all the branches in the country ... it's only together that we build durably and qualitatively!! (my translation)

The sequence 'This is one of my dreams' is used to indicate the ideals the subject of the research. The grandiosity of the plan results from the involvement of all the branches in the country. The same inclusive approach, everybody is welcome, she does not claim to do everything alone, but she is an important pawn in the architecture of the new approach.

- Compensatory strategies

When there is nothing to post about, when there are no photos to upload, you can take one of the quizzes that will certainly say something positive about you. She does the quizzes posted by Facebook in which presumably certain character or moral features will be revealed about her. By posting then, it is a facile way of offering a portrayal to all your friends which is flattering for the one posting. Though they may be similar for the people belonging to the same sign, the post may help one's perception by the others.

Ce creatura mitica esti?
Zana – esti o persoana foarte buna. Luminezi viata celor din jurul tau cu dragostea ta. Esti mereu acolo cand oamenii au nevoie de tine si reusesti sa creezi cu adevarat minuni.

What a mythical creature are you?
Fairy - you are a very good person. You enlighten the lives of those around you with your love. You are always there when people need you and you can really create miracles. (my translation)

This kind of portrayal is taken over and the persons want so much to believe that what is there is true that they actually come to believe that about themselves. The same image of a savior for the others is reiterated here and it is in line with the image of the person about herself. As for the vocabulary in these quizzes, though they do not contain the words of my subject, my subject identified with the message and with her views about herself. 'fairy' and 'miracles' belong to the realm of the surreal and they are largely accepted and treasured by people (it's as if she transcends this world into a superior world). On the other hand, 'enlighten the lives' and 'you are always there' is a confirmation of the opinions she holds about herself.

One of the elements that have been investigated in relation to 'grandiose narcissism' has been the extended use of 'I' and 'me', claiming that the more 'I' and 'me' are used, the more it is likely that that person is a narcissist. Thus, Horvath and Morf (2010) have discovered that these persons use some compensatory strategies which consist of an exaggerated use of photos, images and quotes.

D.L. Voi face mereu cu drag ... multumesc mult ... e pasiunea sufletului meu ... va iubesc si eu ... pe toti!!

D.L. I will always do it dearly ... thank you very much ... it's the passion of my soul ... I love you too ... all of you!! (my translation)

She shows gratitude, she openly acknowledges her passion for what she's doing, she is pro-active volunteering for more work in the future and she expresses her feelings. Apparently, it's not so much about what she does, whom she does it for, it's more about her and about the way in which she advertizes her skills, concerns, preoccupations.

- An exaggerated sense of self-importance

D.L. Excelenta la nivel inalt!!Prietenie şi profesionalism!!M. M. şi D. L. Servicii Sociale – la Ateneul Român.

D.L. High level excellence!! Friendship and professionalism!! M. M. and D. L. Social Services – at the Romanian Athenaeum. (my translation)

Speaking of herself and of a friend, the subject of my research claims that she has reached excellence in her domain and that her work is characterized by professionalism. She is equally fond of associating her name to personalities, brands or buildings as it is possible that the celebrity of either persons or buildings extends over her in the minds of her social media friends and followers.

- The chance of controlling and influencing the way the others perceive them

R. G. B. S. Felicitări, sunteti un om deosebit!
D.L. R ... tu esti o persoana minunata pentru ca vezi si simti deosebitul din mine ... deci eu iti multumesc!!

R. G. B. S. Congratulations, you are a great person!
D.L. R … you are a wonderful person because you see and feel the special in me ... so I thank you!! (my translation)

This short dialogue is revelatory for how my subject understands to relate to other people. Thus, the interlocutor states that D.L. is a special person. D.L. claims that R.G.B.S. is herself a special person for she sees the special in my subject. The implicature of this statement is that the interlocutor wouldn't be a special person if she didn't see the special in my subject. The conditionality that is placed on the interlocutor's being deemed as special consists of the interlocutor's ability of seeing the special in my subject. Secondly, my subject is aware that she is special and she claims that publicly.

VI. Conclusions

My subject uses a variety of means (linguistic and non-linguistic) to create a positive self-referential representation. Linguistically, she builds a discourse based on self-appraisal where all the other participants are used as means to an end, that of self-promotion. Furthermore, she builds on the appreciations of her virtual friends and followers that she needs in order to confirm the image she has built for herself. In terms of discourse, she uses an inclusive approach (everybody's contribution), but she stands out of the group as an initiator, leader, manager (thus, superior). When challenged, she reacts by denying self-authority and autonomy and then she strengthens position by claiming social and/ or professional superiority. In the end, I could claim that the subject in my research has got some narcissist features as she is the center of all her concerns though she claims she works for the others. She hyperbolizes herself as there is no other person doing so much for her profession as if the domain had been inexistent or doomed before her joining it.

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EDUCATING TOGETHER IN THE DIGITAL AGE: AN ALLIANCE BETWEEN PARENTS AND TEACHERS

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Abstract: *We find ourselves in a real cultural revolution. The digital revolution that occurred in recent decades has led to the spread of new instruments that have rapidly spread at the global level. These rapidly accelerated changes have influenced lifestyles, communication, socialization, study, posing new educative and scholastic challenges and in particular reference to the relationship between parents and children and between teachers and students.The new media are regarded as a great invention. They are valuable instruments that offer many opportunities to learn, retrieve information, discover games, contact friends, make purchases and dialogue with people. But educators (parents, teachers) find themselves in a situation of having to step up and educate their children/students (digital natives) who often use tools unknown to them and use them in the most natural, fast and spontaneous way. Very often it happens that the children discover these programmes and instruments without anyone explaining to them the dangers and potentials or without anyone regulating their exploration and use of them. On the contrary, it happens that the children explain to their parents how to use them. We retain that parents and teachers in the first place must not necessarily provide the technical or computer skills, but rather give the psycho-pedagogical indications to support their daily action in raising children/students: being an agile guide that helps particularly in having a careful look not only on risks but also on the potentials that digital media offer. This idea is to encourage a critical and informed use. So the first educational challenge becomes knowing how to educate to the rules, to affectivity, to being critical and to being responsible.*

Keywords: *educating; parent; teacher; relationship;*

1. Introduction

The art of educating has never been easy. It seems that in our time because of the hasty type of life, the significant increase in virtual relationships, the "premature maturation" in many aspects of our children, the task required of the parent and the teacher increases greatly. In the face of these inevitable personal and social changes at their different levels, collaboration becomes increasingly necessary among adults for the healthy growth of the new generations. This shared responsibility is particularly important between the two basic education agencies, namely the family and the school.

2. Cultural changes and cultural "revolution" in the family and school field

Visible contemporary cultural changes command our attention and whether we want them or not, we are part of them in a more or less conscious way, they also involve the world of the family and the school (Piccone Fiori, 2016; Tanzi, 2012). In this sense, one can also talk of a certain type of cultural revolution (Cazzullo, Cazzullo Maletto, 2018; Scquizzato,

2018). In the Eastern part of Europe and that of the Balkan countries the word "revolution" is not so well recognised in the social field because it inevitably brings ugly memories of the past, and in some cases these memories refuse to fade and to heal. However, for our approach on this matter, in presenting the concept of "revolution", we would emphasise the fact of its rapid change and equally state the fact that it is not always predictable in its directions and consequences. In a particular way, this concept seems very valid in relation to virtual reality, now present in everyday life. This becomes more interesting for the study of the correlations between the real and virtual world, which concern not only the individual person, but also his environments. Our interest is particularly in the psycho-educational world especially as it concerns the changes that are taking place in the psycho-social-relational dimension in the family, in the school and in the person, who falls within the developmental age (Ricci, Formella, 2018; Burley Hofmann, 2015).

According to our own perspective, we could group these changes which happen in our times into three main dimensions. In doing this we always pay particular attention to the factors mentioned above (person, family, school and developmental age):
- The concept of the family and the way of living in it,
- The perception and operation of relating with others,
- The concept of studying, learning and making use of the information.

It seems that these three dimensions are the remarkable factors in the educational and formative discourse that moves both the family and the school.

The Cultural Revolution is experimenting in a special way on the possibilities of the virtual world. True digital revolution (Cucci, 2015) in the last decades that has changed life on a global level. Consequently, life in the family and school has also changed significantly.

From the simple daily observation and also from the scientific studies it is proven that the changes caused by the virtual world influence the modalities of communication between the members of the same family, with the relatives present in the different parts of the world, and with other people not well known. The statements are equally valid in the field of socialization, which increasingly takes place through the virtual dimension and not the traditional type face-to-face which demands the physical presence for a meeting.

Shifting the argument into the school field we validate the same statements. As a result, the adults who work in the school: the principal, the teachers, the auxiliary staffs, must adapt more and more both to communication and to the administration of their service that takes place today mainly through digital tools (Troia, 2018; Averame, 2018). In a particular way, this development, introduces new challenge in the field of learning (Baldascino, 2018). In the past, one of the key sources of learning in the educational relationship is between teacher and his students. The teacher was seen as a teacher who guided the research of both the contents, the values and the methods of learning. The teacher, having social authority, professional skills and often being a model in behavior was seen as an authoritative source of both information and value suggestions for his student. The question that could be asked today is: *can virtual learning satisfy the relational need?*

There is no doubt that new media is a great invention and even a great opportunity that should be put at the service of humanity. This great shift is valid both in the family and in the school sector. We are increasingly provided by valuable tools and instruments that offer us many opportunities: finding information, contacting friends, shopping, dialoging and talking to people, finding games, listening to music and many more possibilities. It seems that these tools facilitate everyday life and often saves both time and energy. This it does by abbreviating the distances especially in communication and facilitating the management of things at the administrative, economic and relational level. But as promising as this is, it is not exhaustive. One still needs to deal with another challenge in education which is the method of

accompanying the new generations called "digital natives" (Deriu, Filomia, 2015; Di Stefano, 2018).

3. A necessary alliance in education: between family and school

A child narrates an experience: *at school they asked me what I want to be when I grow up. I wrote: "to be happy". They told me that I did not understand the assignment, and I told them that they did not understand life.*

From this short story we can perceive how difficult it is to face the challenges of education and teaching for the future of this child. We can also pose a question to the two protagonists of this story: *what future are we talking about*?

Increasingly, the concept of learning, education, self-realization, socialization arises as fundamental questions not only within the school environment but equally in the existential area that relate to the future of the child and together with the educational institution (Castoldi, Chiosso, 2017).

At this point we want to reiterate the importance of collaboration between family and school which we consider as inevitable and necessary (Dusi, Pati, 2014; Cardinali, Migliori, 2013). In the last decades these two educational communities have moved too far from each other. Consequently, the price paid for this detachment primarily concerns the child who often finds himself in difficulty in striking a balance between the demands of growth and hardly-compatible training. It is important that the educational proposals from the family and school converge and focus on the good of the child, but unfortunately it is not always the case. This problem does not concern the contents of the subjects studied, but rather the system of values, of the educational style, of the moral, ethical, relational, spiritual and social dimension. In different parts of Europe (and not only for example) one often observes "an abyss" between the family and the school (Ronci, 2010; Cadei, Deluigi, Pourtis, 2016).

This chasm makes it increasingly difficult for the contemporary child to be well-equipped for the future. One wonders how then a child should face the future and the challenge inherent in it. The problem presented in this way concerns the invitation addressed both to the scholastic institution and to the family that programs towards their child/student. For some time now we have witnessed an in-depth reflection on how school planning (at the level of teaching, teaching methodology, content of subjects and the involvement of new technological possibilities) should address the cultural changes and thus respond to new training challenges on personal and social level with a view of the future.

On the one hand we observe more and more a "dangerous" dynamic of both physical and conceptual abandonment regarding the collaboration between the family from which the child comes from (where parents often delegate the education of their child to the school and not desiring to participate actively in it) and the school institution (where the organizational, bureaucratic, formal and control dimension increases "dangerously" and consequently decreases the relational and community dimension). Often one gets the impression that the school, seen in the past as "the second home", is becoming an institution today, compared with "an office" where one has to perform his or her duty.

What would be the main reason for collaboration between a parent and the teacher? A collaboration between *teacher and parent must take place* because both are educators of *the same child*. It becomes necessary between these adults to listen to and accept the needs of the child. To do this, we believe that the following characteristics/skills are important: personal presence, involvement, empathic listening, mutual sharing, collaboration skills, good will, patience, interior freedom in making choices, responsibility and creativity.

4. Compatibility between learning - relationship - emotion

In the past it was often said in common language: "I am going to study in the school". The statement emphasised the principal assignment of the school which was teaching and it is understood in the "traditional" vision as the task of transmitting information and some notions. A classic model consisted in seeing that the school is composed of the teacher that transmits, together with the student who learns and the reference manual that acts as a link between them.

The current changes, mentioned before, require an almost total vision of the tradition school. The different ways of learning (De Toni, De Marchi, 2018; Cavalluzzi, Degli Esposti, 2018) today present in schools, the possibility of widening the "physical" relationship with the "virtual" (Betti, Benelli, 2012; Lancini, Turuani, 2018) and the enormous extension of the "emotional problems" (Goleman, 2014) experienced by both the children and adults (teachers and parents) lead us to affirm the fundamental importance of the dynamics linked to the triangle: *learning-relationship-affectivity*.

This triple dynamic can be confronted in three dimensions. The first concerns the point of view in the learning perspective. It tries not only to review the concept related to what the student should learn (which in itself seems very static, linked to the transmission of information, which in itself today can be found elsewhere, not necessarily just in the school) but also address the fundamental question: *why should I learn these things and not others?* Furthermore, this revision of the learning vision concerns the problem of the integral formation of the person (which is proposed in the world that is increasingly segmented and detailed) and, in the perspective of the changes that happen quickly in the social, working world and generally relational. From our point of view, this vision in no way can be detached from the value speeches, ethics and spirituality, and in the wide sense of this latter dimension.

The second dimension refers to the optical relational. The same problem is faced by using interpersonal relationality as a principle. The teacher and parent is seen and viewed here particularly from their primary assignment as an educator. The relationship with one's child / educator is practiced daily in a "professional" way (Frabboni, Giovannini, 2009); it means that it is based on the motivations of wanting to participate in the process of the child's growth in an appropriate way. That is, knowing its development process and intervention strategies, the contents to be presented, being at the same time a model that is worth emulating (Formella, 2009).

The third dimension emphasizes the importance of affectivity both in the educational relationship and in the learning process. During the period of growth of children it is necessary to attach importance and value to dialogue because affectivity is "Socratic learning": the scholastic problems does not constitute that an overall difficulty of the student addresses the developmental task of the adolescent stage. Learning is born through a process which we consider to be affective and cognitive and therefore only an authoritative teacher, who possesses this quality, in addition to notions and values, an open mind and a critical capacity, allows his disciples, through active participation and co-responsibility and cooperation, to develop healthy and balanced interests and also psychic structures that can achieve this aim.

5. The axioms of the educational relationship

This point focuses on a proposal which is based on the concept of Paul Watzlawick[xi] and his axioms on human communication (Atzlawick, Beavin, Jackson, 1971). Inspired by the

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[xi] Paul Watzlawick (1921-2007) was an Austrian-American family therapist, psychologist, communication theorist, and philosopher. A theoretician in communication theory and radical constructivism, he commented in

classic manual on communication, we propose the axioms of the educational relationship. These statements are addressed to adults who play the educational role in society.

- *Be present, being personally involved in education ... not online.*

Being present, here and now with the other person is the first fundamental rule to active listening and it helps the other party. Virtual communication can be effective and useful, but it cannot replace a human face-to-face relationship. The child who is growing has a strong need for the physical presence and the significant figure of an adult (parent, teacher, and educator).

- *First the person, then teaching, the program, the homework etc.*

Putting the person at the heart of the educational activities and not the realization of the program, the concerns for order and things that necessarily must be done, that is treating intrapsychic growth and not just only the external environment. What remains in the person is not the information acquired, but the conviction that in dialoguing and communicating one can always find a resolution of things.

- *You do not always have to say what you know, but you always have to know what you are saying*.

Here we speak of the educational responsibility related in a very direct way with the maturity of the educator. Knowing how to "dose" the right information in the right moments is a true art of education. Being prone to welcome the person in difficulty with personal encouragement and adequate content in an effective educational communication becomes a real "sharp weapon" of those who "fights evil and multiply the good" in the person who is growing up next to him or her.

- *Better a live dog than a dead lion*[xii]

A living dog can act; a dead lion cannot do anything. That is to say, it is better have a weak person who acts than a strong person who does nothing. The Bible emphasizes through this expression the importance of hope. The true educator (parent, teacher) never gives up in his own "sowing" of the good. He is constant and in a certain sense tenacious his performing its educational action and equally being convinced that "the seed thrown before will then grow."

6. Conclusions

Sometimes between students and teachers exists some inadequate relational modes and defensive strategies which impede or make difficult the empathic relationship and dialogue. Students can implement three types of defensive strategies and they include the following; evasion, seduction and rebellion. Sometimes it is the teachers who tend to evade the relationship with a too technical and rational attitude or trying to seduce their students by demonstrating in the eyes of colleagues, parents, superiors, etc. that they are good (risks of narcissism). Often to guard against the hostility of the students, the teachers assumes a punitive and authoritarian rule.

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the fields of family therapy and general psychotherapy. Watzlawick believed that people create their own suffering in the very act of trying to fix their emotional problems. He was one of the most influential figures at the Mental Research Institute and lived and worked in Palo Alto, California. In 1967 Paul Watzlawick, Janet Helmick Beavin and Don D. Jackson, published "Pragmatics of Human Communication, A Study of Interactional Patterns, Pathologies, and Paradoxes", which reports the studies conducted on the pragmatic effects that human communication has on interactive models and on pathologies, with a review of the role of communication paradoxes.

[xii] Cfr. Qoelet 9, 4.

The teacher must set up an authentic relationship with the student and rich in emotional tensions: only his humanity can determine in the heart and mind of the student an unrepeatable creation of emotions to be transformed into meanings, notions and knowledge.

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PREDICTORS OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

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Abstract: *One phenomenon that generates significant losses in terms of productivity and cost in organizations is occupational stress. Stress is encountered in various occupational groups, but its levels are high when we speak about professions that are in contact with a large number of people as part of their responsibilities, such as teaching. Given the major implications of stress on the individual involved in the work, but also on the organization, the main concern of this research was to identify and understand the risk factors involved. Using the hierarchical regression, we tried to highlight the extent to which certain stress sources in the academic environment influence the level of stress experienced by the teachers, while controlling the influence of other situational factors such as demographics or personality factors.*

Keywords: *academic stress; sources of stress; predictors of stress;*

1. Introduction

Work activity can be an important source of stress with major consequences for both the individual and the organization he works in. Occupational stress is the employees' response when facing work demands and pressures that do not match to their resources, needs, abilities and knowledge, and overcome their ability to manage (Khudaniya & Kaji, 2014). Occupational stress affects employee's physical, emotional and social health, producing states of depression, irritability, substance ingestion, and somatisation (Necșoi, 2011), thus decreasing people's performance, work motivation and professional satisfaction.

Working in the university as a teacher is a mentally challenging occupation, as the university teachers face a lot of responsibilities in their work. Activities of university teachers are characterised with professional competences in various fields, their specialisation and research, teaching and management. All these competences reflect not only theoretical and empirically acquired knowledge, but also the skills, personality features, willingness and desire to pursue constant self-education and to contribute to training and personal development of students (Semradovaa & Hubackova, 2014). There are a lot of reasons why being a university professor is a stressful job. Conducting research, writing research papers to be published in high-quality journals, attracting research funds and grants, preparing activities to ensure student enhancement and excellence in job performance, administrative duties are time consuming activities for university teachers.

On the other hand, there are studies that link personality to the stress process. Individual's personality can affect his stress appraisal and stress-coping mechanisms, but it is also crucial with regard to the selection and shaping of stressful situations (Vollrath, 2001). Modelling the stress process, Conard and Matthews (2008) have suggested that the primary driver of perceived stress is neuroticism. In occupational studies, personality variables, such as neuroticism, extraversion, and conscientiousness, have been identified as predictors of stress in teachers (Grant, Langan, 2007). Kokkinos (2007) found that personality traits are significant predictors of the three burnout dimensions. Thus, high levels of neuroticism and low levels of agreeableness were predictive of emotional exhaustion, for depersonalization,

neuroticism was the most important predictor whereas personal accomplishment was predicted by low levels of neuroticism and high levels of extraversion and conscientiousness.

Social support is the physical and emotional comfort given to an individual by his/ her family, co-workers and others when the person is under pressure. It has been found that social support can buffer the negative effects of stress (Bonfiglio, 2005; Wong & Cheuk, 2005).

2. Research coordinates

2.1. Objectives:

The *objective* of this research is to identify the predictors of occupational stress of university teachers, using hierarchical linear multiple regression analysis. In other words, by hierarchical regression, we will answer the question "does the stress level experienced by the teachers is influenced by the academic environment as we control the influence of other situational factors such as demographics or personality factors?".

The *level of stress* (the criterion variable) has been operationalized in the *level of physiological stress* and *the depression level.* Therefore, we analysed the variation of these variables, according to various factors selected on the basis of the identified significant correlations. We took into consideration possible predictors such as: demographics, professional factors, personality traits, perceived sources of academic stress.

2.2. Participants

Of the total of 70 subjects, 37 come from technical faculties and 33 from humanities. The composition of the two groups is relatively balanced in number, but their distribution according to the gender criterion and age or didactic degrees is less balanced. Male representatives predominate in technical faculties, while women are dominant in the humanities, which corresponds to the natural skills of the two groups: the exact sciences for men as a group, and the areas of relationship and communication for women as a group. The women in the research group are younger, have less experience in university, and have lower positions than their male counterparts. Women are progressing much slower in their career; table 1 shows that women occupy lower positions at the age at which most men find themselves as associate professors or full professors. Women between ages of 36 and 50 are not professors, while 56% of men in this age group already have this title. In this age category, most women (71%) are lecturers and only 14% are associate professors, compared to men (11% lecturers and 33% associate professors). The situation is similar for the 51-64 age category, women teachers are associate professors (60%) or full professors (40%), while for men, the situation is exactly the opposite (31% associate professors and 69% full professors).

Table 1. Distribution of male and female subjects by age and professional position

Position	Teacher assistant %		Lecturer %		Associate professor %		Professor %	
Age	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Age 24-35	67	49	33	38	-	13	-	-
Age 36-50	14	-	71	11	14	33	-	56
Age 51-64	-	-	-	-	60	31	40	69

2.3. Instruments

Personal information form and six different data collection instruments were used in this study. The Personal Information Form is a questionnaire developed by the researcher to collect demographic data about the participants. Through this questionnaire, it was aimed to collect information on variables such as gender, age, professional experience, the faculty area, academic position, professional responsibilities, number of worked hours per week.

Perceived sources of academic stress questionnaire - is an instrument developed by the researcher, which measures the most important pressure sources perceived by teachers. The tool comprises nine categories of factors that contribute significantly to generating academic stress as follows:

a. Compatibility of personal values with the values of the university system;
b. Professional relationships;
c. Interaction with students;
d. Working conditions;
e. Role clarity;
f. Management and organizational structure;
g. Status / promotion;
h. Job security;
i. Change and managing change

The questionnaire contains 56 items labelled on a six-point Likert scale, ranging from total disagreement to total agreement on the presented affirmations.

The physiological reaction to stress inventory developed by Ebel et al. (1987) consisting of 39 symptoms labelled on a Likert scale from 1 to 5, representing levels caused by stressful agents. The interest in this questionnaire stems from the fact that it gives an internal, physiological image of the manifestations of the stress suffered. The frequency of the physiological reactions captured in this questionnaire determines the probability that the individual will become ill, due to stressful experiences.

The Burns Depression Inventory (David D. Burns, 1980, 1999) is a self-evaluation scale that contains a series of 15 symptoms on a 4-point scale, ranging from (not at all) to 3, depending on the intensity of the feeling. Inventory items are grouped in the following categories: sadness, discouragement, low self-esteem, inferiority, guilt, indecision, irritation, lack of interest in life, loss of motivation, low self-image, changes in appetite, changes in sleep rhythm, loss of sexual appetite, worries for health, suicidal impulses.

Type A Personality Questionnaire. Based on Friedman and Rosenman's *Type A Behaviour and Your Heart*, Greenberg (1995) comprised a scale of 21 items to highlight Type A behaviour. It consists of a complexity of personality traits, including competitive impulses, aggressiveness, impatience and an acute sense of time pressure, to which is added the most distinctive element of the scale and which correlates best with heart disease, namely hostility, accompanied by a deep sense of insecurity.

The Neuroticism scale from Eysenck Personality Inventory (1964). Neuroticism has also been called *emotional instability* and is defined by the interrelationship of traits: anxiety, depression, low self-esteem, and shyness.

Dwight Dean's social support questionnaire, which includes 24 items on a 5-point scale, from powerful agreement to strong disagreement, measuring not only the need for external support and assistance - a major reduction of stress, but also social insensitivity.

3. Results and disscussion

Regarding *physiological responses to stress*, we selected to introduce in hierarchical linear regression model, in the first step, three demographic variables related to the

profession: *gender*, *specialization* and *number of hours worked per week*. In the second step, in addition to these predictors, personality factors as *neuroticism* and *type A personality* were introduced to control their effect on stress levels. In the third step we introduced the variables of interest, *theperceived sources of academic stress - personal values vs. system values*, *professional relationships*, *role clarity*, *management and organizational structure*, *status and promotion*, *job security*, *change management*. Table 2 shows linear regression analyses. The results show that 25% of the evolution of scores dispersion of physiological stress can be explained by the demographic characteristics and professional factors. This percentage increases when we take into account the two factors related to the individual differences, so that 34.2% of the evolution of the physiological stress criterion can be attributed to the common action of the demographic factors, professional factors and the personality factors selected. When model variables are related to sources of academic stress, the proportion of physiological stress variation increases to 46.5%, but this increase is not statistically significant, which means that this third model does not contribute significantly to the explanatory power of the regression, aspect due to the fact that the new variables correlate with the independent variables in the previous models, without providing additional information.

On the other hand, variance analysis (ANOVA) for each regression model, materialized in the value and statistical significance of the F mark, shows that all three models are effective in prediction, meaning that they estimate significantly more variation in physiological stress than that due to other unforeseen or uncontrolled factors. Table 2 also provides information at the analytical level to identify variables that contribute significantly statistically either to explain the physiological stress level (standardized coefficients β) or to estimate the stress level (non-standardized coefficients, b). It is important to note that gender and specialization variables are dummy variables, these categorical variables being transformed into numerical variables (0 - male; 1 - female; / 0 - socio - human profile; 1 – exact sciences profile). In the first model, all three predictors: gender, specialization and number of hours worked per week have statistically significant values, which means that each of these factors contributes significantly to explaining the evolution of the dependent variable. It can be noticed that especially women of the socio-human profile who work many hours per week are most likely to experience high levels of physiological stress. Of the predictors, it seems that the number of hours worked weekly exerts the greatest influence (β = .273), while the gender affiliation contributes the least (β = .231) to the estimation of the physiological stress level. If we analyse the results of the second regression equation, we can see that the only variable that contributes significantly to the explanation of the physiological stress level (while the influences caused by the demographic and professional variables were eliminated), is the *neuroticism* dimension (b = 1.430). The other indicators do not significantly influence the evolution of the dependent variable. In other words, persons with a high level of neuroticism have the tendency to experience more physiological stress than those who do not have this characteristic, even if we remove (we keep constant) the influence of the demographic factors and those related to the profession on the level of stress. From the final estimation model, we can notice that demographic and personality variables do not influence the level of physiological stress, beta values not being significant. Instead, there is a direct relationship between *status and promotion* (as source of stress) and the stress level (β = .324). This means that those who perceive issues like promotion difficulties, devaluation of the teacher status or low salary compared to the workload as very stressful, are likely to experience higher levels of physiological stress.

<u>Table 2. Results of linear hierarchical regression: predictors of physiological stress</u>

Variables	R²	R² adjusted	Δ R²	F change	β	B	SE b
Step 1 **F (3,66) = 7.352; p<.001**	.250**	.216**	.250**	7.352**			
Gender					.231*	9.643	4.939
Specialization					-.239*	-9.956	5.004
No. of hours per week					.273**	.615	.245
Step 2 **F (5,64) = 6.639; p<.001**	.342**	.290**	.091**	4.424**			
Gender					.104	4.335	5.090
Specialization					-.187	-7.816	4.827
No. of hours per week					.229*	.515	.250
Type A Personality					.053	.283	.640
Neuroticism					.318**	1.430	.537
Step 3 **F (12,57) = 4.127; p<.001**	.465	.352	.123	1.878			
Gender					-.043	-1.790	5.534
Specialization					-.169	-7.028	5.534
No. of hours per week					.225	.507	.266
Type A Personality					.143	.757	.662
Neuroticism					.191	.858	.587
Personal values vs. system values					.069	.263	.485
Professional relationships					.027	5.762E-02	.297
Role clarity					-.109	-.618	.817
Management					.110	.398	.450
Status and promotion					.324**	2.076	.927
Job security					.047	.224	.704
Change management					.020	.179	1.293

* p < .05; ** p < .01

In order to explain the variation of the *depressive symptom*, we introduced in the regression model, in the first step, two demographic variables (gender and specialization); in the second step we introduced, besides these variables, the personality factors (personality type A, neuroticism and social support); in the last step we added the variables related to the academic environment (professional relationships, working conditions, job security, status and promotion, role clarity, change management). Table 3 shows linear regression analysis. Some essential information can be extracted from the table. 20% of the evolution of the dispersion results for the depressive symptom can be explained by the demographic characteristics (gender and faculty profile). This percentage increases if we take into account the three personality traits so that 66.9% of the dispersion of the depression criterion in

response to stress can be attributed to the joint action of the demographic factors and the three personality factors. Moreover, the difference between the two values of the multiplication factor Δ R² is 46.6%. All this increase in the explanatory power of the predictive model can only be attributed to the influence of the three dimensions of personality on depression. Similar results are also obtained by taking into account the adjusted values of multiple determinations. Also, this explanatory plus brought by the introduction of personality dimensions brings a statistically significant change, F (3,64) = 30,069; p <.000. The initial model based only on demographic factors was a significantly better predictive solution than the one based only on the average study, F (2, 67) = 8.556; p <.000.

Table 3. Results of linear hierarchical regression: predictors of the depressive symptom

Variables	R²	R² adjust.	Δ R²	F change	β	B	SE b
Step 1 F (2,67) = 8.55; p<.001	.203**	.180**	.203**	8.556**			
Gender					.422**	4.789	1.369
Specialization					-.061	-.689	1.369
Step 2 F (5,64) = 25.919; p<.001	.669**	.644**	.466**	30.069**			
Gender					.147	1.675	.965
Specialization					.073	.832	.921
Type A personality					.126	.183	.116
Neuroticism					.719**	.880	.116
Social support					.019	9.744E-03	.044
Step 3 F (11,58) = 12.809; p<.001	.708	.653	.039	1.293			
Gender					.066	.753	1.045
Specialization					.074	.836	1.060
Type A personality					.157	.227	.122
Neuroticism					.742**	.908	.126
Social support					.051	2.566E-0	.045
Professional relationships					.044	2.515E-0	.055
Working conditions					.208*	.120	.061
Role clarity					.024	3.688E-02	.173
Status and promotion					.202*	.352	.173
Job security					.013	1.752E-02	.138
Change management					-.003	-6.663E-03	.255

* p < .05; ** p < .01

Thus, although demographic factors contribute significantly to predicting the level of depression as a reaction to stress, controlling the influence of these factors, personality dimensions provide an explanatory addition to the level of depression. Although effective in estimating the variation in the level of depression (F (11,58) = 12,809; p <.001), the third model does not bring significant differences in the increase of the explanatory power of the model by introducing the dimensions related to perceived sources of academic stress, the growth being only of 3.9%.

Analytically, we can notice that, in the first phase, gender is a positive predictor of depression (β = .422, p <.001), but associated with personality factors, gender has no longer this characteristic, prevalent in relation to depression being neuroticism (β = .719, p <.001). From the final estimation model, it is observed that subjects with a high level of neuroticism get high scores for depression, the same thing being in the case of subjects who perceive the working conditions as stressful (β = .208, p <.05) or status and promotion (β = .202, p <.05) as very stressful. It seems that the demands of this profession and the difficulties related to promotion and retributions are directly associated with depression level.

Table 4. Correlation coefficients

Dependent variables Independent variables	Physiological stress	Depression
Gender	327**	448**
Age	-	-
Specialization	-382**	-241**
No. of hours worked per week	306**	-
Type A personality	331**	445**
Neuroticism	466**	797**
Social support	-	-428**
Personal values vs. system values	262*	-
Professional relationships	348**	399**
Interaction with students	-	-
Working conditions	457**	302*
Role clarity	335**	363**
Management	300*	-
Status and promotion conditions	512**	444**
Job security	277*	353**
Change management	308**	255*

Table 4 shows the correlation coefficients of the variables included in the study that entered the regression models, either as predictor variables or as criterion variables.

4. Conclusions

Based on the analysis of the results, the study concluded that the teacher's demographics and personality traits, like neuroticism and Type A personality were the variables that had the most influence on stress response, compared to the perceived sources of academic stress.

The various "work situations" and different "sources of stress" are not equivalent. The first element is only a potential source of stress; it becomes a stressor as a result of how it will be perceived, interpreted and recognized as such by the person. The same situation can be assessed differently, the assessment depending on the person's optics, life conception, or experience. If the emphasis is on danger, risk and inability to defeat it, the emotion will be fear; if the focus is on ways and means of coping with difficulties, looking for the possibilities to overcome them, the feeling will be trust, courage and dare. Between the situation and the answers comes the meaning that the individual gives to the pressures exerted on him, the way he perceives, interprets, evaluates and lives the situation. The subjective factors of personality are those that give the measure of the correct or disproportionate appreciation of the threat of a situation.

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THE I.S.P.E.F.'S MODEL OF TEACHING/ LEARNING FOR APTITUDES AND COMPETENCES

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Abstract: *Since 2009 the I.S.P.E.F. has developed models and implemented projects on teaching/learning for aptitudes and competences about: the I.S.P.E.F.'S Model of Teaching/Learning for Aptitudes and Competences; the training of the teaching profession through: the Training Model EMeS – Educational Methodological Strategies, the Certification Model TCS – TRAINING COMPETENCES and SKILLS; the training of university students through: the Training Model ISPEF Model of University Master, the Certification Model SCA – Student Certification Assessment.*

Keywords:*training/learning for aptitudes and for skills; teaching profession; skills certifications; university evaluation; psycho-pedagogical methodologies;*

1.The I.S.P.E.F.'s model of teaching/learning foraptidudes and competences

The teaching and the learning for the lifelong aptitudes and competencies is the element that characterizesthe propose of the European Commission, elaborated in the 90's to realize:
- the building of the European citizenship,
- the cooperation in the educational and training fields among the different European countries,
- the facing of the deep and fast social change in favor of the grown, of the competiveness and of the globalized work occupation of the XXI century.

In the proposed model of the European Commission, the teaching and the learning for aptitudes and competence shall be inserted inside of a development process that involve the cognitive, psychic, social and professional field of each person, by the acquisition and the utilization of 4 knowledge: know how to know, know how to do, know how to live together and know how to be.

This model is a basement to build an European Culture, without that the European Union project is destined to fail, because is exclusively centered by economic issues. For this reason, it is of vital importance realize the propose of the European Commission formalized in the European Council in Lisbon 2000.

Since 1993, with the white Book *"Growth, competitiveness, and employment"* the European Commission conducted by Jacques Delors institutionalized the concept of "teaching and Learning competence", making it assume a key role:
- tocreate the European citizenship;
- to cooperate in the educational and training fields among the different European countries;
- the facing of the deep and fast social change in favor of the grown, of the competiveness and of the globalized work occupation.

In the White Book it is proposed to organize the European Year of the lifelong education (it will be realized in the 1996), inside it is institutionalized the other important concept on which it is funded the European Union: the education and the training lifelong learning, characterized by the neediness to recognize both the didactic and educational quality and the validation and certification of educational credits among the different countries that composed the European Union.

The basement of the *"competence"* concept to teach and to learn (at permanent, formal and informal levels) has been defined in the 1995 in the publication of the white book "*Teaching and learning. Toward the learning society*" cured by the European Commissioner delegated for the education and the culture, Édith Cresson and published in the 1996 in a view to the European Year of Lifelong Learning.

In this white Book it is proposed a teaching model that develop efficacy strategies of learning characterized by "know how to do", which is the "learning for competences", useful to resolve problems.

Based on the proposed model for the teachers and the educational institution (school, universities, professional training) the mainly task it is to acquire aptitudes and competences to the people to realize in the day life, making concrete the knowledge and concepts learnt.

To completing this shall be considered the " *International Education Commission report to the UNESCO about the XXI century*"[xiii]chaired by Jacques Delors.In the Report, it is exposed that the school has the duty to promote the following fundamental "four pillars" to teach and to learn, interacted among them, based on these shall be based the educational action and its purposes:

1. Learn to know, in other words acquire the understanding's instruments;
2. Learn to do, to be able to act in a creative way in their own context;
3. Learn to live together, to participate and collaborate in an active way inside a context made up communitarian relationship,
4. Learn to be, a process derived by the other three pillars' evolution.

In the European Council of Lisbon, in March 2000, the concepts and the acting strategies aforementioned become the basement of the economic and social strategyadopted by the European Union.

To date, the fundamental thematic that European Union is pursuing are the recognition of the educational and professional competences, the evaluation of the educational and training quality, the certification of the educational credit and of the professional competences, the certification and the clearness of the professional qualification.

Indeed, at European level, on 20th of December 2012 it has been published the European Union Council Recommendation about the formal and informal learning validation by which the included countries have been requested to institute national systems to validate the formal and informal learning within the 2018."[xiv]

In Italy: "The competences certification national system is laid down in the art. 4 of the law 92 of the 2012 " that delegates the government to define the general standards and the essential level of the performance to identify and validate the acquire learning in formal and informal context. ..... while, the Legislative Decree n. 13 of the 16.1.2013 regulates it. The d.lgs. 13/2013 represents the fundamental "element" to enhance the people right of the continuous learning, in a personal, social and occupational views.The Decree is articulated by two lines of priority of intervention:

a) the establishment of the national registry of the educational and training titles and of the professional qualifications;

[xiii]Delors J. (1996), *Learning: the treasure within*, UNESCO, Paris; trad. it.: *Nell'Educazioneuntesoro*, Armando Editore, Roma, 1997.In the publication drawn up based on the report to the UNESCO, Jacques Delors hopes that the education for aptitudes and competences will be inserted inside a teaching-learning process that consider the person and not just the task to carry out and the goal to achieve.

[xiv]Source Isfol: http://www.isfol.it/temi/Formazione_apprendimento/certificazione-delle-competenze .In the sector of create the national system of certification, the Isfol carry out research and technique assistance to identify the procedures and the instruments to Validate the competences and in the sector of the national Repertoire of title.

b) the definition of the minimum national service standard to certify the competences (of process, of attestation, of system)".[xv]

In the training (Erasmus Plus) and research(Horizon 2020)European Programs "The strategy of Europe 2020 highlights the development of knowledge, of capacity and of competences as precondition to the economic and occupational growing with the intention to improve the entrance and the progression of the labor market, to facilitate the transitions of the working and learning phases and to promote the geographic and professional mobility.

In this prospective shall affirm the need to create a system to recognize, to validate and to certificate the competences. In this way the individual can enhance and spend the own acquired competences in a determinate geographic context, in the European work market and in the educational and training systems."[xvi]

Since the 90's I.S.P.E.F. (www.ispef.eu) has the intention to ideate, to realize, to validate and to promote educational models of the Society of Knowledge and Lifelong Learning realizing pilot projects, in the first time in several Italian regions and then in several European Countries and Latin America.

In over 20 year of activities the I.S.P.E.F.'s Models of aptitudes and competences training, validation and certification of formal and informal learning have sought to create cultural-scientific synergies and synthesis about the 3 big European culture: the Mediterranean, the Anglo-German and the Slav.

In this view the I.S.P.E.F. has elaborated the following innovative Models and Standards concerning the promotion, the development, the strengthen and the assessment of a new way to design and to realize the educational/formative activities:
- CEIF:2009, CEIS:2009 and CUI 2012 Standards concerning the educational/formative Institutions from the infancy to the University;
- the ISPEF Model of the University Masters and Higher Educational Courses concerning the way and the criteria to realize the efficacy educational processes long life;
- the TCS Certification concerning the evaluation/accreditation of the teaching professionalism;
- the SCA Certification concerning the acquired students' knowledge-abilities-competences in the School and the University;
- WoSCA Certification concerning the people's attitudes and competences in a view to enhance their work potential.

In this chapter have been briefly described the training for aptitudes and competences implementing models elaborated by I.S.P.E.F..They are resulted as good practices in Italy, Europe and Latin America, in a way that can be a basement to spread, to discuss and to deepen.

In particular shall focus on the good practice of the University Master realized in the European Project namely PERFORMER " Perspective of the training through Specialist Master in the Education field of the Infancy and of the Primary School at a superior qualitative level"[xvii]carried out on the period 1stFebruary 2011 – 30th June 2014.[xviii]

[xv] Source Isfol: http://www.isfol.it/temi/Formazione_apprendimento/certificazione-delle-competenze
[xvi]Source Isfol: http://www.isfol.it/temi/Formazione_apprendimento/certificazione-delle-competenze
[xvii]Contract POSDRU/86/1.2/S/62508

[xviii]The structure of the Masters and the results achieved in the PERFORMER Project can be consulted in the I.S.P.E.F.'s website, in the following pages:
- http://performer.ispef.biz/english;
- www.ispef.eu/nuovo/performer.htm,
- http://proiect-performer.ro/index.php/ro/deschidere-festiva,
- http://performer.ispef.biz/english/certification.

The innovative model of the Master realized in the PERFORMER Project is in according with it's already designed both in the white Books of the European Union and the Bologna Process of 1999 to create an European Higher Education Area(EHEA).

The PERFORMER Project is allowed to realize:

- the innovative model of Master, exposed in the publication of Presutti F. (2012), *ISPEF Model of University Master* (published by ISBN 978-88-6624-055-6 and exposed in the websites:http://university.ispef.eu/ispefmaster.htm ;http://university.ispef.eu/accreditation_master.htm ;

- the training for aptitudes and competences of students is developed by a Model of Presutti F. (2012), *SCA Certification – Student Certification Assessment* (published with ISBN 978-88-6624-065-5 exposed in the website: http://ispef.eu/SCA.

The innovative characteristics and the purposes of the I.S.P.E.F.'s University Master and SCA Certification Models are exposed in the next paragraph C.

In this way, I.S.P.E.F., utilizing scientific validated instruments, utilizes the Portfolio to identify and to certificate the owned knowledge – abilities – competences of each student attending the Master/Higher Education Course, by a independent system from the School and the University and a different way to assess from the teachers of the School/University.

Since2009 I.S.P.E.F. has elaborated models and realized projects about the teaching of the aptitudes and competences concerning the:

* the**TEACHERS' PROFESSIONALISM COMPETENCES**by:
   * the Training Model "EMeS - Educational Methodological Strategies",
   * the Certification Model "TCS – Training Competences and Skills" (http://ispef.eu/TCS).
* the**STUDENTS' COMPETENCES** by:
   * the Training Model "ISPEF Model of University Master" (http://university.ispef.eu/accreditation_master.htm; http://university.ispef.eu/ispefmaster.htm) ,
   * the Certification Model "SCA – Student Certification Assessment" (http://www.ispef.it/SCA ; http://universita.ispef.it/cert-sca.htm).

2.The I.S.P.E.F.'s evaluation of competences for the teacher's professionalism

I.S.P.E.F. promotes, develops, strengthens e assess the competences of the teacher's professionalism through the following process:

* the Training Model EMeS - Educational Methodological Strategies,
* the Certification Model TCS – TRAINING COMPETENCES and SKILLS(http://ispef.eu/TCS)**.**

These I.S.P.E.F. Process are characterized by training and certification activities exposed in the following table:

Table 1. I.S.P.E.F. training and certification Model of the Teacher's Professionalism

Level - Activities ⟶ Process	Basic Level TEACHING ACTIONS	Advanced Level PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL METHODOLOGIES
Training EMeS Educational MethodologicalStrategies	TEACHING FOR COMPETENCES	PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL TEACHING
TCS Certification Training Competences and Skills	CERTIFICATION OF THE TEACHING COMPETENCES	CERTIFICATION OF THE PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCES

In 2010 the EMeS and TCS Model have been presented in the National University of Salta - Argentina (http://www.ispef.org/salta/UniversidadSalta.htm).

2.1. Training ProcessEMeS - Educational Methodological Strategies

The acquisition of the **EMeS Model - Educational Methodological Strategies** is determined by the realization of training processes, that are structured on two progressive levels of professional difficult:

1) BASIC LEVEL (with basic professional Training) characterized by the understanding, the analysis and the usage of the **training for aptitudes and competences** during the TEACHING ACTIONS;

2) ADVANCED LEVEL (with specialized professional Training) characterized by the usage of PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL METHODOLOGIES during the teaching to acquire **the needed psycho-pedagogical aptitudes and competences n to promote, to develop, and to strengthen the autonomous, the significant, the creative and communicative learning of the students**.

The advanced educational process provides for the analysis and the verification of the psycho-pedagogical purposes and of the achieved results.

Training Process for the teacher's professionalism

BASIC LEVEL
Training EMeS - Educational Methodological Strategies
TEACHING ACTIONS

ADVANCED LEVEL
Training EMeS - Educational Methodological Strategies
PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL METHODOLOGIES
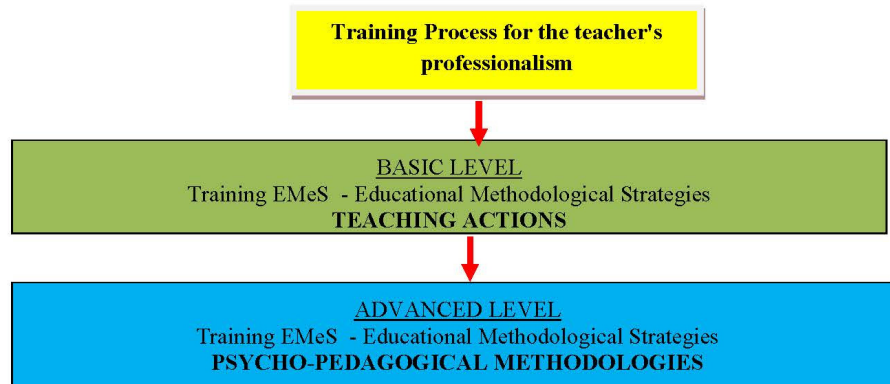
In the next Scheme 9 will be showed the needed process and activities to develop the educational process of the Basic Level "EMeS – TEACHING".

422

In the next Schemes10 and 11 will be showed the needed processes and activities to achieve the attestation of the Advanced Level "EMeS - PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL METHODOLOGIES".

2.1.1. The Basic Training Process EMeS "TEACHING ACTIONS"

The training process to realize a "Teaching for Aptitudes and Competences" is described in the following scheme:

Scheme 1
Training process**EMeS**
Basic Training: **TEACHING ACTIONS**
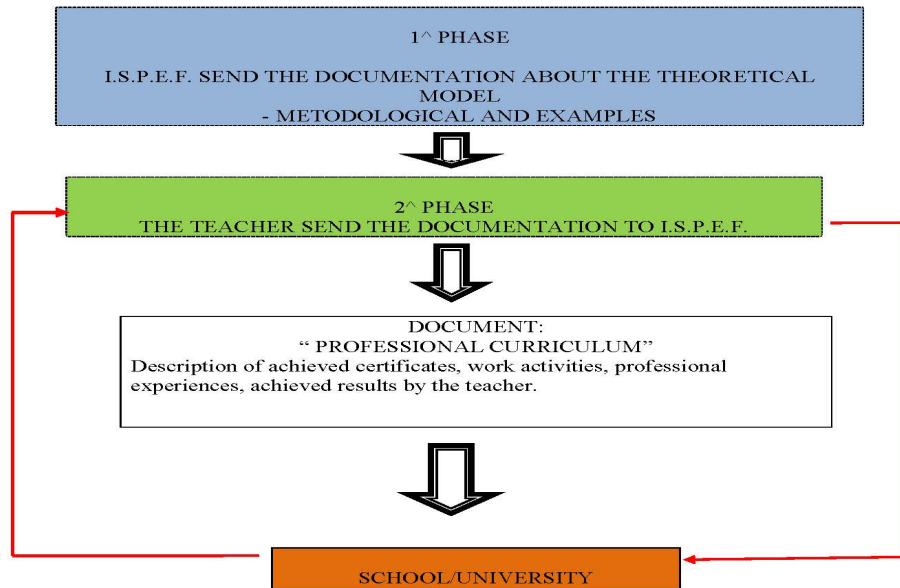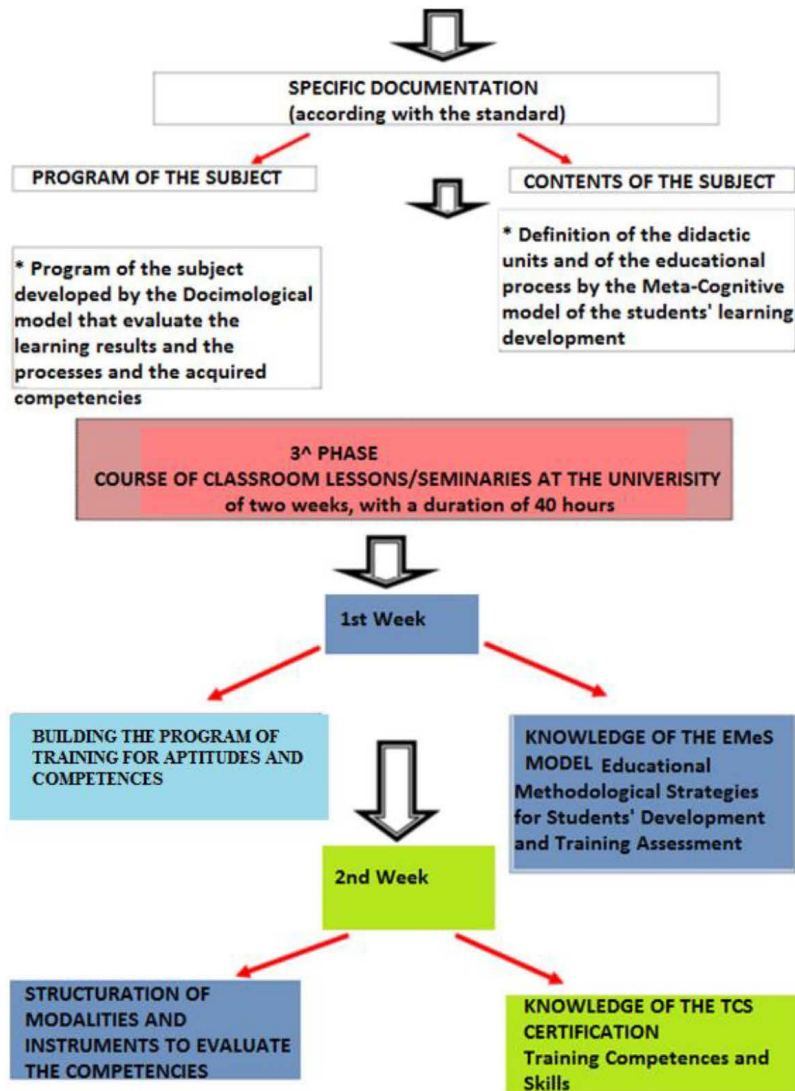
2.1.2. TheAdvanced Training Process EMeS "PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL METHODOLOGIES"

The Advanced training process EMeS "- PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL METHODOLOGIES" is useful to know how to realize an "Psycho-Pedagogical Teaching" characterized by:

- the promotion, the acquisition and the strengthen of the psycho-pedagogical aptitudes and competences of the teachers allowing them to realize a didactic process with the autonomous, significant, creative and communicative learning with the students;

- the acquisition of the intervention abilities during the "Training Model EMeS - EDUCATIONAL METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGIES".

The "Training Model EMeS" proposes a innovative training, following the principles of the Educational Sciences of the XXI century, is characterized by:

1) functions and roles of the teachers: stimulating the teachers - animator – guide – expertof the contents;

2) teachers as main characters of the own education- main actors of the decision and work;

3) teaching-learning: educational, significant, efficacy, useful (efficient) relationship.

The main characteristics to realize the Innovative Training of the "Training Model EMeS" are:

1. a design methodology based on the goals and the participation of more than one key actors;

2. a cooperative and collaborative learning also with extern actors of the University;

3. the development of didactic aptitudes and competences, that are acquired also by informal and formal itineraries;

4. the*Action Research* as mainly methodology of the training activity;

5. the learning of the knowledge based on the living context and on the *problem solving* strategies;

6. a flexibility of the didactic action characterized also by the *learning by doing*and by the*work based learning*;

7.the acquisitions of the aptitudes and competences in the design of didactic itineraries and of training evaluation;

8.the*bottom up* reconnaissance of the training's themes, directly among the teachers of the educational community;

9. the training intervention inserted in a logic of system and quality;

10. the promotion of the teachers' and students' motivations and the expectations.

The purposes of the "Training Model EMeS" have the goals to realize and verify in a constancy and continuous way:

- the efficacy and the efficiency of the teaching;

- the significant and the usefulness of the teachers' learning;

- the quality of the training process, in a view to a continuous improvement of the training.

The essential base to realize the Innovative Training of the "Training Model EMeS" is the scientific and contextual interactive Documentation. The "Training Model EMeS" is based on three pedagogical concepts:

1._Methodological strategies_ :

  a) the structured model with several and multiple methodological strategies both in the educational and in the didactic dimensions;

  b) the methodologies considerate how shall be realized a teaching-learning process;

  c) the strategies characterize the practice interventions in the teaching-learning relationship.each strategy has a own technique and instrumentation.

2._Development and Assessment_: are two essential processes for the teaching-learning process. So are the mainly dimensions of the teacher's professionalism.

For the DEVELOPMENT process has been utilized the course'sprogram, to verify it in a concrete way.

For the ASSESSMENT process has been utilized several instruments with defined indicators and criteria, in a way to be compared, repeated and efficacy.

The ASSESSMENT process is based on the scientific and contextual interactive rules of the documentation.

3._Training Process_: that identifies, develops and strengthens the following facets and knowledge:

Didactic-Operative aspect ——————▶ _know ho to do_

Logic-Cognitiveaspect ——————▶ _know how to know_

Psycho-Emotional aspect ——————▶ _know how to be_

Socio-Relational aspect ——————▶ _know how to communicate._

For this reason, the training project considers not only the Didactic aspect, but it considers, also, every forms and dimensions of development of cognitive-social aptitudes and competences and of the personality characteristics.

In the Innovative Training view, the "Training Model EMeS" is structured (how it is showed in the scheme on the next page):

-in a 5 sequential steps (from 0 to 4)

- in 3 hierarchic cycles of development and evaluation of the Training Process for the Learning course's contents and of the Training Evaluation correspondent.

The training process to know how to realize a "Psycho-pedagogical Teaching" is exposed in the following scheme:

Scheme 2
EDUCATIONAL PATH EMeS
EDUCATIONAL METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGIES
EDUCATIONAL PATH FOR THE AUTONOMOUS, SIGNIFICANT, CREATIVE AND COMMUNICATIVE LEARNING OF THE STUDENTS
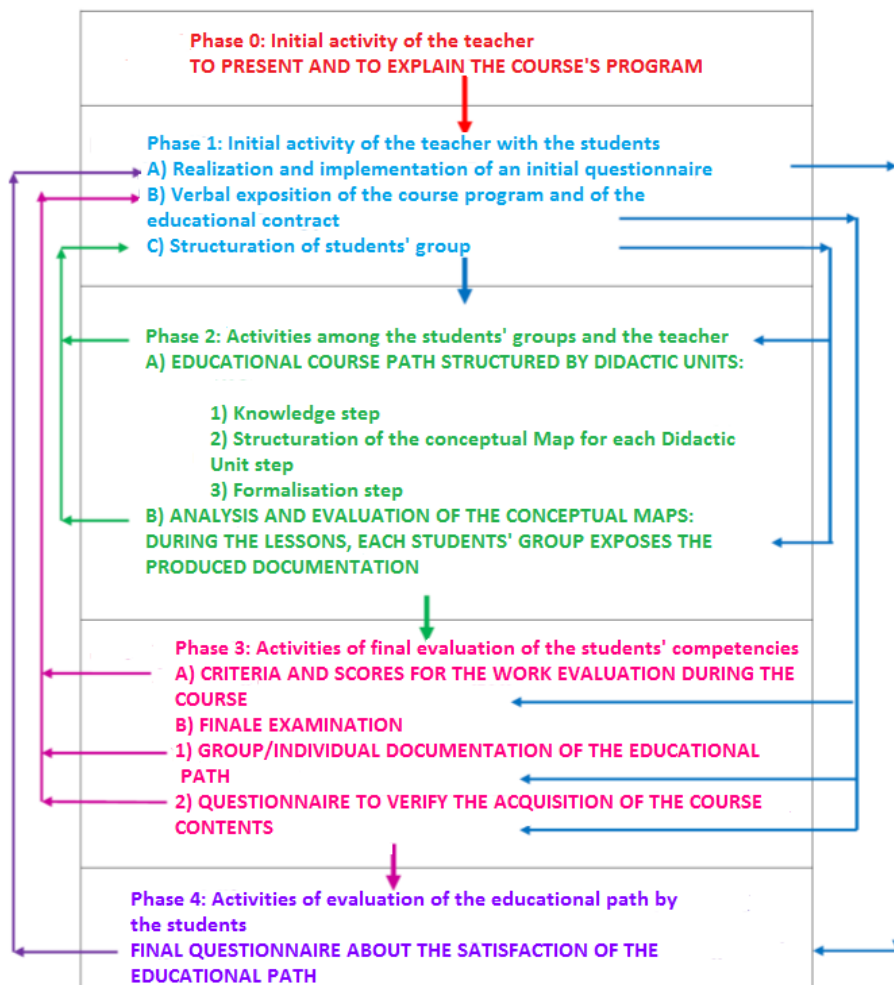
The 3 hierarchic cycles to realize the Training Process of the "Training Model EMeS", for the Autonomous, Significant, Creative and Communicative Learning, are:

* *Cycle 1 of the Step 1C with the Step 2*: the development of the processes and of the individual and group Training Process results, through the Educational Methologies of teaching-learning (Presutti, 2010b).

426

* *Cycle 2 of the Step 1B with the Step 3*: the evaluation of the results for the teachers' Didactic Competences, through the verbal exposition in a equipe and individual way and through a responses of a questionnaire.

* *Cycle 3 of the Step 1A with the Step 4*: tabulation, analysis and comparison for theTraining Quality, through the information of the initial and final questionnaires.

Scheme 3
Process for theEMeS Training
PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL METHODOLOGIES
DOCUMENTATION OF THE TEACHER'S COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS
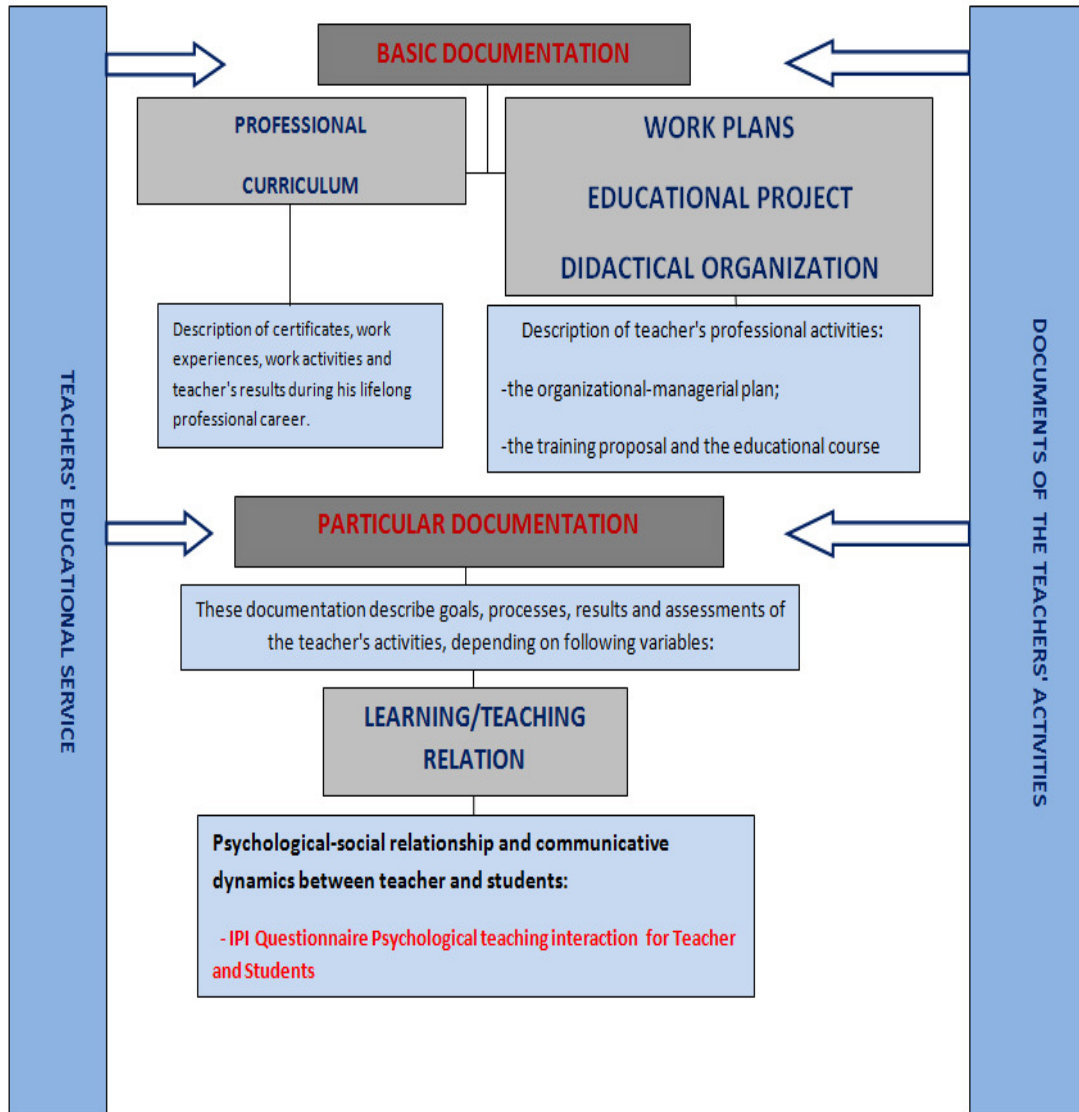
2.2. TheTCS Training Process – Training Competences and Skills

The TCS - TRAINING COMPETENCES and SKILLS is a training/certification system of Professionalism Teacher based on two graded levels:

1) **BASIC LEVEL**:
characterized by the identification, analysis, consideration and evaluation of competencies on **TEACHING ACTIONS**;

2) **ADVANCED LEVEL**:
characterized by the identification, analysis, consideration and evaluation of competencies on **METHODOLOGIES PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL** during the teaching.

Table 2. I.S.P.E.F.'s Process of TCS Certification of Teacher's Professionalism

Level- Activities → Process ↓	Basic Level **TEACHING ACTIONS**	Advanced Level **PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL METHODOLOGIES**
TCS Certification Training Competences and Skills	**CERTIFICATION OF THE TEACHING COMPETENCES**	**CERTIFICATION OF THE PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCES**

The thematic and the instruments of the process, that the teacher shall realize during the TCS Certification to achieve the Qualified Attestation, are briefly exposed:
- in the Scheme 4 regarding the Basic Level TEACHING ACTIONS,
- in the Scheme 5 regarding the Advanced Level PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL METHODOLOGIES.

Scheme 4

Table THEMES AND TOOLS OF THE COURSE "CERTIFICATION TCS TEACHING ACTIONS"

THE CERTIFICATION TCS - TEACHING ACTIONS
SYSTEM ABOUT TEACHER'S PROFESSIONALISM

Variable TEACHING	Variable DIDACTICAL ACTION	Variable TEACHING-LEARNING RELATIONSHIP
* Self-Analysis with the research-action methodology * Documental Report	* planning written by the Teacher; * realization with video; *students' assessment and teacher's self-evaluation * Self-analysis with Research-Action Method * Documental Report	* Self-analysis with Observation/Listening Methodology * Documental Report

FINAL REPORT about
- TEACHER'S SKILLS and ABILITIES, - CRITICAL ASPECTS and PROPOSALS fot the IMPROVEMENT of the TRAINING ACTION END PROFESSIONALISM written by the teacher and approved by the Responsible of the training course Certification TCS (nominated Qualified Certification Body)

CERTIFICATION TCS
By a Technical-Scientific Committee of the Qualified Certification Body

Scheme 5

Table THEMES AND TOOLS OF THE COURSE "CERTIFICATION TCS - METHODOLOGIES PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL

THE CERTIFICATION TCS
METHODOLOGIES PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL
SYSTEM ABOUT TEACHER'S PROFESSIONALISM

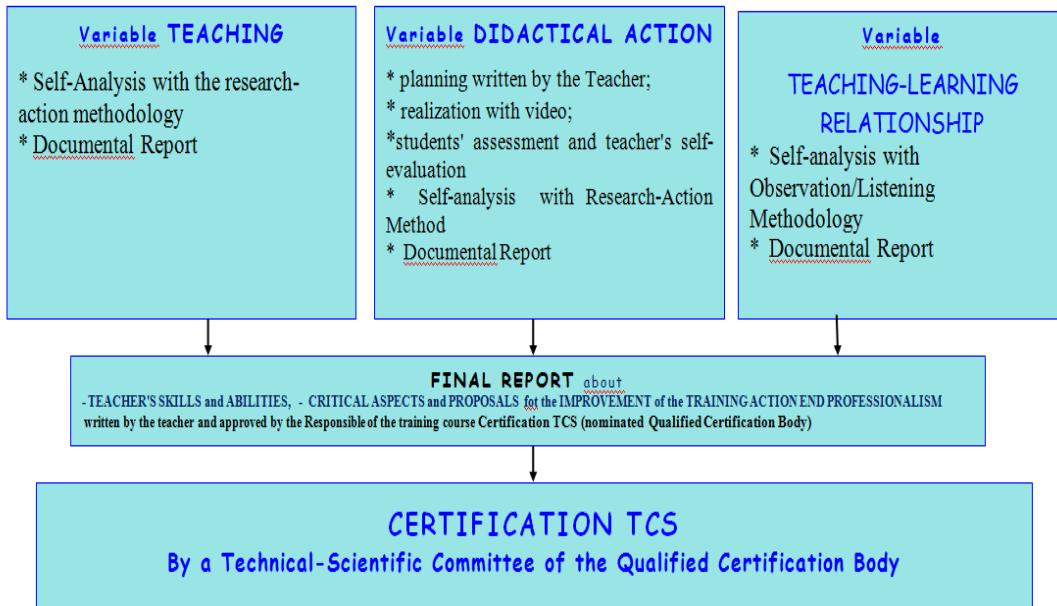| Variable TEACHING	Variable DIDACTICAL ACTION	Variable TEACHING-LEARNING RELATIONSHIP
* - Questionnaire QuAE – Versions A and B – Chek list about "Motivation in Teaching" and "Teaching Skills" * Self-Analysis with the research-action method * Documental Report	*3 types of lessons focused on Teaching,Teaching/Learning Relationship and Students: - planning written by the Teacher; - realization with video; -students' assessment and teacher's self-evaluation. * Self-analysis with Research-Action Method * Documental Report	* PIT Questionnaire for Teachers and students * Self-analysis with Research/Action Method * Documental Report

FINAL REPORT about
- TEACHER'S SKILLS and ABILITIES, - CRITICAL ASPECTS and PROPOSALS fot the IMPROVEMENT of the TRAINING ACTION END PROFESSIONALISM written by the teacher and approved by the Responsible of the training course Certification TCS (nominated Qualified Certification Body)

CERTIFICATION TCS
By a Technical-Scientific Committee of the Qualified Certification Body

429

3. The I.S.P.E.F.'s assessment of the student's competencies

The **training for aptitudes and competencies** and the **assessment of the competencies** of the scholastic/university has been realized by the following I.S.P.E.F.'s Models:

* the **"ISPEF Model of University Master" Training Model**
(http://university.ispef.eu/accreditation.master.htm)

* the **"SCA – Student Certification Assessment" Certification Model**
 (http://ispef.eu/SCA); (http://university.ispef.eu/cert-sca.htm)

From 2012 to 2015 the ISPEF's Training Model of University Master e la SCA Certification – Student Certification Assessment have been realized in the European Project namely PERFORMER "Perspective of the training through Specialist Master in the Education field of the Infancy and of the Primary School at a superior qualitative level", in a POSDRU/86/1.2/S/62508 contract.

The PERFORMER Project has had the goal to improve the University Education provided by the development of a Master study Program, as a double degree recognition (Italy-Romania) for the Infancy and Primary School Educational Specialists, conforming to the requirement of the European labor market.

The Master study Program has the intention to answer the need to complete the university education and the scientific research of the Degree in " "PsychoPedagogy of the teaching in the primary school and in the preschool education " in Romania.

The PERFORMER Project has been realized in the following 3 Universities of the Romania:
 * University "Transilvania" of Braşov - UTBv,
 * University "1 Decembrie 1918" of Alba-Iulia,
 * University "AurelVlaicu" of Arad.

The PERFORMER Project has realized the ISPEF Model of University Master and has successfully assessed the competencies of the students with the SCA Certification:

- http://performer.ispef.biz/english/,

- http://performer.ispef.biz/english/certification/.

3.1. The "ISPEF Model of University Master" Training Model

The ISPEF's Training Model of University Master has the goals:

- to promote, to develop, to strengthen and to enhance **the educational and the learning quality** at scholastic/university level,

- to adequate the training proposes to face the demands of the XXI Society and of the addressed social-scientificeducative-professional, in a way to realize a **professionalized, personalized and contextualized education**. (http://university.ispef.eu/ispefmaster.htm) .

The I.S.P.E.F. Model of University Master is innovative because of the following 3 basic reasons:

1) teaching by disciplinary and transversal competences, characterized by formative paths with the intention:

- to develop and to strengthen the students' motivations, attitudes, interests and personal expectations;

- to acquire to the students' abilities and professional aptitudes and competences, more than study knowledge.

2) to train based on the 4 field of knowledge (know how to do, know how to know, know how to be, know how to communicate), proposed by the European Commission chaired by

Jacques Delors in the 90's following methods and criteria of Educational Sciences, in a dynamic and contextual to the needs of the Knowledge Society of XXI century ways.

3) to realize 4 learning modalities during the training process, which developed together allow a real efficacy and significant training:

A. Attend modality: classroom lessons and seminaries

B. E-learning, internet research and monitoring of formative processes through a comparing in a discussion platform in internet;

C. Formative Internship in a professional field realized inside a network of organizations- institutions- companies operating in the territory, which are assuming the responsibility for the practice training and the evaluation of the activities realized and the goals achieved.;

D. Reflective Analysis and training process assessment by a realization of a Portfolio made up by the activities documentation and the goals achieved, with a drafting of a final relation and a public presentation.

4) achievement of University Qualification and a Competences Certification of I.S.P.E.F., (SCA Certification - Student Certification Assessment), (exposed below) of a international value.

The SCA Certification is determined by the evaluation of the training process documentations, by the student' knowledge-abilities-competencies and reflections exposed in the final Report of the Master.

This Certification is done by an independent System of assessment, different from the University and Teachers one.

3.2. "SCA –Student Certification Assessment" Certification Model

The SCA – Student Certification Assessment Certification Modelit is obtained only after the achievement of the University Master/ Higher Education Course by an public recognized Institution to release training titles and attestations.

The achievement of the SCA Certification permit to the student to acquire a double qualification:

- the professional Qualification from the University/ Higher Education Institute legally valid about the country's current legislation;
- the Certification of professional competencies recognized by an external accredited Organization valid as international attestation of the quality training process achieved and of the professional knowledge-abilities-competencies acquired.

The consequently double qualification with the SCA Certification is determined by two different typologies and way to assess the training process and the competencies acquired by the students:

- the University/School Teachers where it is realized the Master/Course evaluate based on the development of the training processes (**TRAINING EVALUATION**) of the students. The evaluation of the teachers is determined by a relationship between teacher/student. In this relationship the interpersonal relation and the sharing of the contents with the other students are important as the acquisition of knowledge-abilities-competencies in the field of study.
- the SCA Evaluator is extern from the training process, executes a **PRODUCT EVALUATION** determined by the analysis of the realized documents from each student. The SCA Evaluator's analysis permit to certificate the quality of the professional competencies level of the graduated students, which is able to realize in the work sector.

So, the SCA Certification, shall analyze and evaluate the produced DOCUMENTATION in each discipline of the Master/Course and in the Final Thesis (Product Evaluation), made up by each student:

- during the training process (**process evaluation** in the realization of the product),
- in the exposition and in the final exams (**results evaluation** of the made product).

The documentation will be evaluated in the SCA Certification both:

- at individual level: student concerning the activities of the course, seminar, of 'e-learning, study of books and research, internship in training, typically consists of a portfolio that contains all the material produced during the semester, concerning the discipline acquired;
- at group level among students, developed during the study disciplines and/or in the Learning Community network. This documentation is mainly gathered in Reports where are written the times, the modalities, the realized activities and who has attended the group work.

The SCA Certification is structured based on a double analysis and documental test:

1. **QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE DOCUMENTS**, characterized by the verification and analysis of the documents produced during the training path and in the realization of the tasks necessary in order to attend the exam in the University/Higher Education discipline.

The Quantitative Assessment criteria are:
- specific for each Discipline,
- determined by the topics and the themes studied.

2.**QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE DOCUMENTS**, characterized by the analysis and the verification of the documents produced during the training path and in the presentation of results, in a way to verify the satisfaction of the qualitative criteria of the SCA Certification.

The SCA Certification criteria to evaluate the quality of the produced Documentation by each student are:
- Completeness
- Significant
- Coherence/Consistency
- Richness/Accuracy
- Efficacy
- Originality

The evaluation of the SCA Certification is realize by compiling the two following Sheets
(Presutti, 2012b):

- **TUAAD -TEACHING UNITS ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE**

The TUAAD Sheet is a specific instrument for the Assessment of the Discipline Teaching Units. The TUAAD Sheet allows to have the Discipline Assessment on the basis of the analysis and the verification of the training path and of the results achieved by the student in each Teaching Unit of the Discipline.

The assessment of each Teaching Units consist of two levels:

- The Documents QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT
- A brief descriptive and synthetic report that highlights the quality (QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT) of the training path and of the results achieved by the student.

- **GAAD- GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE**

The GAAD Sheet is the specific instrument that certifies the positive or negative result in the achievement of the SCA Certification on the basis of the global assessment of training path and results achieved in every Discipline.

The score assigned in the SCA Certification evaluation is determined by the competence level achieved by each student based on the produced documentation and by the provided reports.

The scores to identify the *competence level* of the SCA Certification are assigned by a scale from 0 to 5 values, where:

- 0 is the minimum: it is assigned when there is not documentation to evaluate;
- 5 is the maximum: it is assigned when the documentation is complete, significant, efficacy, coherence/consistency, rich/accurate, original.

The quantitative assessment of the documents allows to assign a SCA score from 0 up to 3,0, that is based on the demonstrated competencies in the produced documentation. The qualitative assessment of the documents allows to assign a SCA score from 0 up to 2,0, that is based on the criteria satisfaction of the quality of each student's documentation. The SCA score is obtained by the sum of Quantitative assessment score (from 0 up to 3) and the Qualitative assessment score (from 0 up to 2).

The general criteria of the SCA Certification to evaluate the *competencies level* acquired in each discipline of study and in the final Report. It will assign a score from 0 up to 5 based on the following criteria:

- 0, the minimum level, corresponding to not have provided the documentation;
- between0.1 and 1,4 corresponding to FAR FROM ADEQUATE documentation in the training process and missing the professional reflection;
- between1,5 and 2,4 corresponding to NOT ADEQUATE documentation in the training process and in the professional reflection;
- between 2,5 and 2,9corresponding to SLIGHTLY NOT ADEQUATE documentation in the training process and incomplete, poor or missing in some part professional reflection;
- -between 3,0 and 3,4 corresponding to an ADEQUATE documentation in the training process but realized with low efficacy and low significant reflections of the achieved results and of the developed processes;
- between3,5 and 3,9 corresponding to a GOOD documentation with a complete training process and with a coherent and well-structured personal reflection;
- between4,0 and 4,4 corresponding to VERY GOOD documentation of the training process and complete, efficacy and significant the exposed reflections, that is useful for the operating training context;
- between 4,5 and 5 corresponding to an EXCELLENT documentation of the training process and complete, original, significant, coherent/consistency, rich/accurate, effective reflections. The EXCELLENT Documentation acquire the right to be disclosed as Good Practice.

Then, in the SCA Certification, shall consider that the Competence level with a score:

lower than 2,5	⟶	is NOT ADEQUATE,
between 2,5 and 2,9	⟶	is SLIGHTLY NOT ADEQUATE,
between 3,0 and 3,4	⟶	is ADEQUATE,
between 3,5 and 3,9	⟶	is GOOD,
between 4,0 and 4,4	⟶	is VERY GOOD,
between 4,5 and 5,0	⟶	is EXCELLENT.

To obtain the SCA Certification Attestation, the student has to obtain, at least, a score of 3,5 in each Discipline and in the final Report.

If the evaluation of the SCA score is lower than 3,5, the student to achieve the SCA Certification will have to complete and/or improve his documentation and the professional reflection during the two years of the Master/Course or later.

The total score at the end of the two years of the Master/Course is obtained by the sum of the SCA assessment of the all Discipline of study and the SCA score assigned for the final Report of the Master.

This score shall be adequate at the evaluation system of the University/School; for example, the University score of 7/10 (is equivalent to 21/30 or 70/100) is equivalent to 3,5/5 in the SCA score. This correspondence is useful to make equivalent the SCA Certification evaluation and the University system score adopted in the specific Country.

The score between the University/School and the SCA Certification could be different because the SCA evaluation is based exclusively on the PRODUCED DOCUMENTATION of the training process and on the achieved results of each student. Instead, the University/School evaluation is based on the relation and on the experiences developed with the teachers and the students, during the training process.

Moreover, the positive outcome recognition between the University/School and the SCA Certification could be different. For example, at least a corresponding score of 3 ("adequate") could be enough to achieve the University Qualification, instead it is necessary to obtain at least a score of 3,5 ("good") to obtain the SCA Certification.

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ROMANIAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE CURRICULA, AND NATIONAL EVALUATIONS

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Abstract: *The aim of this article is to offer an image of the way Romanian language and literature are studied in primary and secondary school, both in schools teaching in Romanian language, and in schools teaching in minorities' languages. The change in the paradigm of creating and then applying the curricula brings the change in national evaluations. What is this change consisting of? Are there alterations necessary to the teaching process? These are the questions the article is trying to answer.*

Keywords: *school curriculum; continuity; competence; evaluation;*

1. Introduction

The new framework plans, by OMEN no. 3371/12.03.2013, for primary schools, and through OMEN no. 3590/05.04.2016, for secondary schools, as well as the new school curricula for primary school subjects - OMEN no. 3418/19.03.2013 (preparatory grade, 1st and 2nd grades) and through OMEN no. 5003/02.12.2014 (3rd and 4th grades) – and for secondary school subjects (OMEN nr. 3393/28.02.2017), generated a gradual shift to the new model of curricular projection, focused on competences.

Introducing the *Communication in Romanian* school programs for the preparatory classes, 1st and 2nd, through OMEN 3371 / 12.03.2013, starting with the school year 2013-2014 (in the preparatory class and in the 1st grade), then gradually *Romanian language and literature* programs in grades 3rd-4th led to the modification of national evaluations for 2nd grades (starting with the national evaluation of 2015) and 4th grades (from 2017), respectively.

Starting September 2017, the *Romanian language and literature for the 5th grade* programs entered into force, and from September 2018 the school curricula for the 6th grade, elaborated on the basis of the framework educational plan approved by OMEN no. 3590 / 05.04.2016, which led to the rethinking / adaptation of the subjects for the 6th grade national assessments of 2019 to the requirements of the current programs.

2. Analysis of the new Romanian language and literature programs in force from the preparatory grades to the 6th grade

For the *Communication in Romanian*(preparatory to 2nd grade) and the *Romanian language and literature* (grades 3rd to 4th), different school curricula were developed: for the Romanian mother tongue, respectively for Romanian for pupils who are studying in schools and teaching sections in the languages of national minorities. Different school programs require, on the one hand, different school textbooks, on the other, different national assessments.

At the level of primary education, the Czech, German, Hungarian, Rromani, Serbian and Slovak minorities have developed separate programs of Romanian language, while at the level of secondary school education, only the Hungarian minority has a separate school curriculum of Romanian language and literature, and pupils belonging to other minorities

attend schools and teaching sections in the languages of national minorities, studying Romanian on the basis of the native Romanian language program.

The school curricula for the *Romanian language and literature* for 3rd and 4th grades were achieved "on the basis of the *Common Framework for the Development of Communication Skills in the Mother Tongue*, developed between June and August 2014, starting with the conclusions of the developed studies in the framework of the POSDRU project 35279 *A performance based education based on substantiated decisions - Strategies for capitalizing the international evaluations on the learning outcomes* "(*Presentation note* in the *School curriculum for the Romanian language and literature, 3rd and 4th grades) Annex No 2 to the Order of the Minister of National Education No. 5003 /02.12.2014*, Bucharest, 2014, p.2).

The documents underlying the realization of the Romanian language and literature school curricula for gymnasium were:
The background note for the framework plans for gymnasium education (2016);
- *Key Competences for Lifelong Learning — a European Reference Framework, Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006*, in Official Journal of the EU, 30 dec. 2006;
- *LiFT-2 – Literary Framework for Teachers*;
- *The European Language Portfolio* (https://www.coe.int/en/web/portfolio).

Analyzing the curriculum framework, we find, according to Table 1, the following allocation of hours of *Communication in Romanian / Romanian language and literature* (mother tongue).

Table 1. Share of Romanian mother tongue and literature classes

Grade	Number of hours	Total amount of hours	Share %
Preparatory	5	19	26,32
1st	7	20	35,00
2nd	6	20	30,00
3rd	5	20	25,00
4th	5	21	23,81
5th	4	26	15,38
6th	4	26	15,38
7th	4	31	12,90
8th	4	31	12,90

The minimum number of hours per week was taken into account, which could be added, at the primary education level, to another hour in the *School curriculum (optional subjects),* which has a 0-1 hourly schedule. As it can be seen, at the level of primary education, especially in the basic procurement cycle, the Romanian communication hours occupy, on average, one third of the total hours allocated per week. This demonstrates the importance of this discipline, which provides the basis for fair and effective communication for all other disciplines. The training of oral and written communication skills in Romanian provides the necessary support for the formation and development of the general and specific competencies established for the other school subjects.

In the case of schools / departments with tuition in the languages of national minorities, the situation is sharply different, the minimum number of hours being increased by

the hours allocated to mother tongue and literature, without neglecting communication in Romanian (Table 2).

Table 2. The share of mother tongue and Romanian language classes in schools and teaching sections in the languages of national minorities

Grade	Number of hours mother tongue language	Number of hours Romanian language	Total amount of hours	Mother tongue language share %	Romanian language share %
Preparatory	5	3	22	22,73	13,64
1st	7	4	24	29,17	16,67
2nd	6	4	24	25,00	16,67
3rd	5	4	24	20,83	16,67
4th	5	4	25	20,00	16,00
5th	4	4	28	14,29	14,29
6th	4	4	31	12,90	12,90
7th	4	4	34	11,76	11,76
8th	4	4	33	12,12	12,12

Analyzing Table 2, it can be seen that the number of hours allocated to the mother tongue of pupils belonging to national minorities is identical to that allocated to Romanian mother tongue (Table 1), and the number of hours allocated per week for Romanian is the same (4 hours per week), except for preparatory classes (3 hours per week). It is necessary to mention that writing in the Romanian language is only studied in the second grade, after the pupils became familiar with writing and reading in their mother tongue. Starting with the fifth grade, the number of native and Romanian language lessons is the same, but the share is lower than in the teaching classes in Romanian, for example 14.29% compared to 15.38% due to the higher number high hours per week in schools / sections with tuition in the languages of national minorities by adding mother tongue classes.

The analysis of Romanian language and literature curricula should start from a comparison of general and specific competencies, in order to establish the extent to which there is a progression of competences and observance of pupils' age and linguistic peculiarities (see Table 3).

Table 3. Correspondence of general competencies

Education level	General skills - Romanian language and literature	General skills - Romanian language and literature, in schools / departments with teaching in the languages of national minorities
Primary – preparatory to 2nd grades	1. Receiving oral messages in *familiar* communication contexts 2. Expression of oral messages in various communication situations 3. Receiving messages written in *familiar* communication contexts 4. Writing messages in various communication situations	1. Receiving oral messages in *familiar* communication contexts 2. Expression of oral messages in various communication situations 3. Receiving messages written in *familiar* communication contexts 4. Writing messages in various communication situations

Education level	General skills - Romanian language and literature	General skills - Romanian language and literature, in schools / departments with teaching in the languages of national minorities
Primary, 3rd to 4th grades	1. Receiving oral messages in *various* communication contexts 2. Expression of oral messages in various communication situations 3. Receiving messages written in *various* communication contexts 4. Writing messages in various communication situations	1. Receiving oral messages in *various* communication contexts 2. Expression of oral messages in various communication situations 3. Receiving messages written in *various* communication contexts 4. Writing messages in various communication situations
5th to 8th grades	1. Participating in verbal interactions in various communication situations, by receiving and producing the oral text 2. Receiving written text of various types 3. Writing written text of various types 4. Proper, adequate and effective language use in the process oral and written communication 5. Expression of linguistic and cultural identity in context national and international	1. Receiving oral text in various communication situations 2. Production of oral text in various communication situations 3. Receiving written text of various types 4. Writing written text of various types 5. Manifestation of multi- and intercultural sensitivity through the values promoted in various cultural and social contexts

The correspondence of the general competencies, indicated in Table 3, highlights identical general language formulations in Romanian, in primary education, differentiation being achieved only at the level of specific competencies. The table lays down the differences between the general competencies established for the three grades of the fundamental procurement cycle and the first two grades of the development cycle. One of the principles of effective learning - respecting age and individual peculiarities of students - is noticed.

In secondary school education, differentiation / nuance is also evident at the level of general competencies. Such a differentiated approach, specific to the study of another, non-mother tongue, is necessary because: "The *Romanian language and literatureprogram for schools and teaching schools in Hungarian* fosters an inter- and transdisciplinary approach to learning, as provided for in the Law on Education, following:

- rational understanding of language facts and their structural coherence, based on the essential mechanisms of generating the message in oral and written communication;
- ensuring the conscious control of the use of linguistic communication in listening, speaking, reading and writing, in relation to the norm of the Romanian language in force;
- knowledge and understanding of the basic lexical and grammatical elements common to the Romanian language and other modern languages (romanic or other families), in a synchronous vision;
- acquiring cultural cognitive skills formed mainly by reading, as a life skill;
- the assumption of the ethical values and of the national humanistic ideals, defining the modern man, necessary for his own emotional and moral development, having as a

reference the contemporary socio-cultural model." (*Presentation note* in the *School programs for the discipline Romanian language and literature for schools and departments with teaching in the Hungarian language. 5th-8th grades*. Approved by Order of the Minister No 3393 / 28.02.2017, page 2)

While until 2017, secondary school students belonging to national minorities were studying on the basis of a unique Romanian language and literature program, only textbooks and school auxiliaries being adapted to the linguistic specificity of national minorities, the new Romanian language and literature program for secondary school promotes significant and relevant aspects for learning Romanian as a non-mother tongue (Norel, 2017b):

- emphasise the role of Romanian language as the second communication language for the Hungarian minority, as means of expressing thoughts, feelings, and personal experiences;
- substantiate the communicative-functional model, which targets the integrated study of the language, of the communication (oral or written), and of the literary/nonliterary text;
- covering, in an integrated manner, the three components: linguistic, interrelational, and estethic and cultural;
- facilitate the learning approach from an inter- and trans-disciplinary perspective;
- promoting the personal development of the student in an enlarged socio-cultural environment.

The national assessment in the 6th grade will have as a starting point the evaluation of general competences 2, 3 and 4, cf. the *School program for the Romanian language and literature. 5th-8th grades* and general competences 3 and 4, cf. the *School program for the Romanian language and literature for Schools and Schools with Teaching in Hungarian. 5th-8th grades*. However, the development of these competences is only accomplished if the oral communication skills and those aimed at forming the mediation and intercultural understanding skills are developed.

The training of students for the 6th grade national evaluation in 2019 starts, in fact, from primary education, on the one hand, by the development of communication skills in Romanian language, on the other, by familiarizing with the specifics of national evaluations , in 2nd and 4th grades.

What will the novelty of the national assessment in the 6th grade be? In the formulation by the National Evaluation and Examination Center of different subjects for students who have studied Romanian mother tongue and literature and for pupils who have studied Romanian as a second language in capitalizing pupils' learning experiences in the adaptation of literary texts and informative, proposed for analysis / interpretation, to the age and individual peculiarities of the pupils.

Are changes in the teaching process necessary? Of course. They are required by changing the paradigm in the application of school curricula, student focusing and the development of oral and written communication skills of pupils. The 6th grade national assessment focuses on assessing students' written communication skills, but only the harmonious blending of the formation and development of oral and written communication skills, the permanent reporting to the student, the linguistic background from which he / she comes, the adaptation of the didactic approach age and individual peculiarities of pupils can lead to school performance.

3. Conclusions

The direct involvement in the elaboration of both the Romanian language and literature school curriculum for secondary school entitles us to write this article to highlight the importance of

Romanian language in the process of personal development of the student. Only by the joined effort, school curriculum designers, manual authors, appraisal specialists, and teachers can achieve a quality education that puts the students in the center of their concerns and evaluates the skills they have developed over the years of study, going from a quantitative assessment of knowledge to a qualitative assessment.

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EVALUATING TEACHER PERFORMANCE IN THE UNITED STATES

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Abstract: *Teaching is a complex task. It requires academic content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and skills, organizational skills, understanding of human development, and interpersonal skills to engage with students, colleagues, and, in the United States, increasingly diverse families. Given its complexity, its evaluation likely needs to be multifaceted. This article first briefly presents the policy context for teacher evaluation in the United States. It then examines policies under which students' scores from standardized tests have been the essential source of data to evaluate teacher performance and describes how these evaluation systems influence teachers' classroom practice. Finally, it briefly considers evaluation systems that may better reflect, inform, and support the complex task of teaching.*

1. Introduction

School systems reflect and promote their surrounding political, economic, and social systems. Given the intertwined nature of these systems, I will first describe features of these systems in the United States. Following this, I will examine how standards-based reforms (SBR) and their testing systems have been used to address and improve the fragmented, complex nature of the U.S. education system, including the evaluation of teacher performance.

I will then introduce policies of standards-based reforms, particularly the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), which governed much of public schooling between 2002-2015. Such standards-based reforms have sought to improve teacher and student performance and narrow gaps in achievement between students of different backgrounds. I will discuss the influence of these testing and evaluation systems on teachers' practice. Finally, I will consider efforts to institute evaluation systems that may better reflect and inform the complex task of teaching.

2. The Context for Teacher Evaluation Policies in the United States

The U.S. education system is complex and unequal. The complexity of the education system reflects the complexity of its political system. The Constitution of the United States, written in 1787, outlines the structure of the federal (national) government of the United States and its areas of authority or power. Powers not granted by the Constitution to the federal government was to be accorded to the states or to the people themselves. In response to the powers wielded by British monarchy which had formerly ruled the American colonies, the Constitution's framers sought to divide power and prevent a centralized ruler from exercising overarching control. At the level of the national or federal government, power was divided among the executive (Presidential), legislative (Congress), and judicial branches. In addition, power was divided between the federal government and the states. The federal government has powers over such things as minting money and declarations of war, but the Constitution does not accord the federal government power over education. Therefore, under the Constitution, authority over education was to be exercised by state governments (which

are also divided into an executive, legislative, and judicial branches) or by the people themselves.

Given the federal governments' lack of Constitutional power over education, perhaps it is not surprising that the federal government only established a Department in Education (DoE) in 1980. Among the DoE's key roles are to collect data, and enforce federal laws, including civil rights laws, that apply to any institution that receives federal money. In addition, it distributes federal money for education to states and sometimes to districts. It is the latter function that gives power to the federal role in education. In essence, the federal government exercises the "power of the purse" within the U.S. education system. However, on average, in 2015 just 8 percent of state budgets for education come from the federal government. Nearly all the remainder comes from state and local taxes (Leachman, Masterson, & Figueroa, 2017). Though federal funds are proportionately small, they have a potent effect: States' and school districts' budgets are typically stretched thin by teacher and administrator payrolls, health insurance costs, and pensions, building and maintaining school buildings, and school security, in addition to curriculum and assessment materials, educational technology, and teachers' professional development.

States and their departments of education are typically responsible for establishing curriculum standards – a responsibility for which the federal government is specifically forbidden (see, e.g., U.S. Department of Education, Laws & Guidance). They often stipulate textbooks which may be used in the state's public schools. In the era of SBR, they have also specified assessments the school districts must adopt. In addition, they establish their own requirements for teacher certification and ongoing professional development. They collect and allocate a large proportion of school tax dollars for local schools.

The day-to-day operation of the schools takes place within some 14,000 local school districts. The number of school districts varies widely across the states. Hawaii has one. New Jersey has 678. School districts are typically governed by a locally elected school board which appoints a superintendent to manage the daily operations of the district's schools. School districts must follow all state policies and federal policies regarding teacher certification requirements, data collection, and requirements regarding academic standards and teacher evaluation. However, school boards typically still retain important powers. For example, if the state doesn't determine textbooks, this is done by local school districts, or even by local teachers. School boards also have the power to hire teachers, to fire them (union rules in various states influence this as well), to establish school budgets, and requirements for professional development and teacher evaluation processes.

Across the nation's 14,000 school districts, 50.7 million public school students are educated in some 100,000 school buildings (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). Traditionally, each school's principal was responsible for carrying out teacher observations and evaluations. Their methods for doing so varied across schools and districts. In essence, the US has never had one approach or system for teacher evaluation, certification, or professional development.

Up until the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, many states did not require that teachers be certified or that they be certified in the disciplinary content that they actually taught in classroom. For example, in some states and school districts, "teachers" might not be licensed or certified to teach. It was also possible to have a teacher certified to teach English assigned instead to teach science or other content for which she was not certified. Such issues were especially common in rural school districts and high-poverty districts.

One implication of the U.S.'s fragmented school "system" is that it will not provide equally competent teachers across the states or even within states' very unequally funded local school districts. Not surprisingly student achievement is also quite variable, both across states and even across school districts within the same state.

3. Addressing Unequal Teaching and Learning through Standards-based Reform

To address the problems of unequal teaching and learning across states and districts, and to hold schools accountable for using public resources to benefit students, policymakers and since the 1980s have advocated standards-based reforms as have some scholars (Smith & O'Day, 1991; O'Day & Smith, 1993). By 2000, nearly every state had fully embraced such reforms. In 2001, the federal government through its powers of the purse, stipulated that all 50 states adopt NCLB, a standards-based reform policy.

Standards-based reforms are built on a theory of "alignment" (O'Day & Smith, 1993 Smith & O'Day, 1991). Specifically, each component of an education system – its instructional practices, curriculum, assessment, school resources, teacher education, and professional development – should be aligned to explicit academic standards. The standards specify what students across grades (e.g., from kindergarten to Grade 12, roughly ages 5-18) "should know and be able to do" in different disciplinary content.

To assess whether teachers were actually teaching to the state standards and students were learning the standards, states' departments of education instituted tests that, in theory, were also aligned to the state standards. To ensure that teachers and students focused their efforts on the state standards, scores from the state tests typically carried "high stakes." That is, test scores were used to assign consequences to administrators, teachers, and/or students. These high-stakes consequences varied across states and districts. For example, test results might lead to school administrators losing their jobs, teachers facing disapproval from administrators and fellow teachers, schools being closed, or students being required to repeat a grade, go to summer school or being denied a high school diploma. In some states and districts, scores might generate financial rewards for teachers themselves and/or for the school as a whole and public awards. Scores from schools and districts were also commonly published in newspapers, which subjected educators to public approval or shaming (Ravitch, 2014)

However, no state had full alignment of all the components of the standards-based reform. For example, states faced multiple obstacles with regard to aligning teacher education with the standards. The higher education systems of each state, in which teacher pre-service education takes place, are divided between public and private institutions. The latter are far less responsive to state directives. Even within the public systems of higher educations, K-12 public schools and colleges and universities have fragmented communications and rarely coordinate their efforts. Thus, pre-service teachers were not typically enabled to teach to state standards.

In most states, the components of the system that were aligned to the standards were typically tests, and then only incompletely, because standards were often too sprawling to be adequately assessed (Koretz, 2017). Curriculum and instruction also tended to be aligned more to the tests than the standards, partly because the standards themselves were too broad to test them all and because educators, schools, and/or students were judged by test scores. As the test content became clearer over years of administration, curriculum and instruction increasingly mirrored the test content much more so than the disciplinary content (Koretz, 2017). Thus, instructional time increasingly focused on learning how to take high-stakes tests, which were typically a multiple choice exam.

Although standards-based reform was aimed in part at creating more equal learning opportunities, the effects of these reforms were not uniform across schools, even within a given state's school districts using the same set of academic standards. In poorer communities, an enormous amount of the school year was spent on test preparation (e.g., Kirp, 2013). However, in wealthier districts, where students benefitted from more highly educated parents and often better-prepared and experienced teachers, the curriculum remained

enriched. As a result, SBR showed little evidence of closing achievement gaps or enabling students, across disparate districts and states to achieve at more equal levels according to federal data (e.g., The Nation's Report Card, Achievement Gaps Dashboard, n.d.).

SBR spread from the states into federal policy. Using its power of the purse, the federal government's NCLB legislation required all states to adopt standards and align their education systems to the standards. Under NCLB, all states were required to adopt standards but only for English language arts and mathematics. States were required to test all students in these two subjects each year in grades 3 through 8 (approximately ages 8-14) and once in high school. The test score results were to be used to determine how well each public school and each school district was performing. In an effort to attend to achievement disparities, test results had to be disaggregated and reported separately for different students by race, poverty, language, and disability status. Under NCLB, each school had to meet specific test score gains and to do so for all subgroups of students. Failure to meet the specified test score gains triggered a series of consequences through which schools could lose students and money, teachers and staff could be reassigned, and the school eventually closed.

Under NCLB, all students were to be proficient in both mathematics and English language arts, regardless of background poverty, race, ethnicity, native language, or disability status by the spring of 2014. That goal was both unrealistic and perhaps even nonsensical: Human performance is variable, though in an equitable education systems, achievement variation by race, gender, ethnicity or other background variables should be minimized. Universal proficiency was also absurd because there was no one set of curriculum standards across the state, in part because the federal government is not permitted to interfere in curriculum and standards (See e.g., U.S. Department of Education, Laws & Guidance). NCLB continued to enable wide variations across the states in the design of the standards themselves (e.g. how rigorous and how detailed), the testing system (e.g., the rigor of the tests and what scores represented "proficient" performance), and high-stakes consequences (e.g., states could include financial incentives and consequences for students, though these were not required under NCLB).

NCLB also required that all teachers had to be "highly qualified." Specifically, teachers should be certified to teach their subject areas. Thus, a math teacher should have taken course work and passed teacher licensing exams for math. Nevertheless, different states required different course work and licensing exams. In addition, because there are shortages of teachers, especially in rural areas, it was not possible to staff schools without exceptions to the mandate for "highly qualified" teachers. Furthermore, since salaries across school districts – even neighboring districts – can vary markedly partly because communities' tax bases vary, teachers who are certified and experienced tend to find employment in districts serving more affluent students.

While NCLB was the longest-lasting SBR, it was not the last SBR. For example, beginning in 2009, the federal government incentivized another SBR, the Common Core, which was intended to promote uniform standards and tests across the states. In addition, it was supposed to make teacher preparation and evaluation more uniform. However, political backlash to this reform largely undermined the aligned testing, which is a cornerstone of all SBR approaches (Kornhaber, Barkauskas, Griffiths, Sausner, & Mahfouz, 2017). States modified the standards and adopted different tests, continuing the prior pattern of differences in the rogor of standards and assessment across states as well as differently resourced districts within them.

4. The Influence of Standards-Based Reform on Teachers' Practice

State and federal SBR policies aimed to foster teaching and learning that reduced disparities and also to hold schools and educators publicly accountable for producing such

results. However, numerous studies, including some undertaken by the federal government (e.g., The Nation's Report Card, Achievement Gap Dashboard, n.d.) indicate that such these policy aims were largely unmet. In addition, the policies produced numerous unintended consequences.

In my view, a substantial but unexamined consequence of standards-based reforms is that it can change educators' understanding of their own and their students' obligations. That is, it can erode the understanding that teachers are professionally obligated to provide the best possible instruction to students and instead encourages educators to view students as obligated to produce good scores by which the schools and their teachers are evaluated. This problem is evident in several different influences of SBR on teachers' practice.

First, the range of curriculum offered to many students is narrowed. Subject areas that are not tested are eliminated or reduced. Such narrowing logically follows from the view that efforts to teach such subjects do not directly improve the scores in subjects that are used to evaluate teachers. Therefore, students in some schools may not have instruction in history, music, art, or even science. Since teachers must raise scores and also because they want to keep their jobs and their schools open, students can lose access to these bodies of knowledge (Ravitch, 2014; Nichols & Berliner, 2007). Students may also lose access to physical education and to recess periods. Thereby, time for these activities can be shifted to test preparation.

Second, and relatedly, within the subject areas that are tested, the range of topics may be reduced. This has occurred as the tests' format and content became clearer during years of its administration (Koretz, 2017). Thus, if a third grade math test did not include understanding and explaining information presented in graphs, then students would not be taught that information, even if they were interested and ready to do so. If poetry was not included in the sixth grade English examination, then students would not have units on poetry. In addition, the range of expression in the tested subjects was narrowed. Because the tests were overwhelmingly comprised of multiple-choice questions, it made more sense to emphasize sentence structure than literature. It made sense to teach how to eliminate a multiple-choice answer at least as much as it did to teach how to think about the relationship between time and distance. In some schools, the better part of the school year was spent on preparing for the test and teaching test taking skills (e.g., Kirp, 2013), rather than teaching a rich and full curriculum.

Third, teachers of untested subjects, such as music, history, science, or physical education, have been asked to provide instruction in subjects that are tested. This increases the time spent in preparing students to take tests and thus may increase scores and ensure that schools and teachers remain viable. It is not always evident that teachers are being directed to provide instruction in subject areas for which they lack training. For example, in a study of the state of Virginia's SBR policy, it appeared that the arts were still being taught, because there was still funding and jobs for arts teachers. However, interview data revealed that instead of teaching the arts subjects for which they were trained, art teachers were teaching vocabulary or math concepts to improve test scores (Mishook & Kornhaber, 2006).

Similarly, in some school districts and states, including New York, teachers of untested subject areas were evaluated on the basis of scores in tested subjects. That is, the scores from students they had not even taught were used in the evaluation of their teaching. The mentality behind this bizarre approach is that all teachers should be working to improve the tested performance of students, no matter whether or not they actually taught the students. This form of evaluation was judged to be arbitrary and a court has ruled in favor of the teacher who had sued New York State (Strauss, 2016).

Fourth, teachers' willingness to work with the range of learners has been undermined by SBR. Several studies, both qualitative and quantitative, showed that under various SBR policies, teachers' attention was disproportionately spent on those students whose scores were just below passing. (Booher-Jennings, 2005; Neal & Schanzenbach, 2010). In an effort to correct for this problem, a number of SBRs have embraced "value added measurement" (VAM), which evaluates educators on the basis of all students' score growth (v. for example, the percent of students who are "proficient"). Yet, VAM also presents a variety of problems (Haertel, 2013) and does nothing to eliminate the problem of narrowing of curriculum and time spent in test preparation.

Fifth, the preceding examples of the influences of evaluation systems on teacher practice illustrates that how an education policy reform that was intended to improve educational opportunity and evaluate educators' accountability can potentially de-professionalize and deskill teachers. Experienced teachers who had developed rich and extended curriculum units and dynamic instructional approaches were asked to abandon these and attend instead to test prep and score increases. Young teachers had fewer opportunities to see such rich curriculum and instruction enacted by senior colleagues. Moreover, while it is common in the U.S. for young teachers to leave the profession after just a few years, many experienced educators whose professional lives had been devoted to teaching – even those in more affluent districts – have grown increasingly dissatisfied with the profession and are considering leaving (Smith & Kovacs, 2011), even as the supply of new teachers is diminishing (Espinoza, Saunders, Kini, and Darling-Hammond, 2018).

Sixth, score-based evaluation systems have also had the unintended consequence of undermining some educators' ethics. Per "Campbell's Law" (Campbell, 1976, p. 49), whenever a quantitative indicator, such as a test score, carries important social consequences (e.g., the potential loss of one's job or one's school), the process that produces the score will be corrupted. Moreover, the result, such as a test score, will be hard to interpret. Standards-based reform is a text-book illustration of Campbell's Law. In addition to corrupting processes such as curriculum narrowing and student targeting, some educators resorted to outright cheating. This includes telling students the answers to test questions, changing students' answer sheets, encouraging other teachers to cheat, or even tinkering with the test reporting system (See e.g., McCray, 2018; Nichols & Berliner, 2007). As a result of these and many other practices that were spurred by test-based evaluation, scores produced by districts and states on the standards-based test often showed much bigger gains than audit tests of the same content (Koretz, 2017; McCray, 2018). Thus, many billions of dollars have been spent in the U.S. for test development, scoring, and reporting that do little to promote genuine improvements in learning, teaching, or teacher evaluation.

To conclude, teaching is a craft, a complex choreography of content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge and skills, interpersonal savvy, organizational skills, dedication, and care. Surely, bits of this craft can be measured. However, much of it cannot. When teacher evaluation rests largely on a test score or other single measurement, per Campbell's Law, it will undermine the process of teaching and learning and fail to provide the basis for meaningful teacher evaluation.

Because teaching is a craft, evaluating it must rely to a great extent on professional judgment. Such judgment must be cultivated and sustained in cultures that value the craft, rather than undermined by policies of test-based measurement. Such cultivation and practice existed in the British inspectorate system. This system relied on expert judgment of senior education administrators who, as staff of Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI), visited schools and classrooms and generated lengthy reports with suggestions for improvement. The HMI process was watered down largely to rubrics and checklists which might generate technically reliable, but hollower, feedback. Before the hard press of NCLB and a few years thereafter,

the state of Nebraska enabled school districts to develop their own standards and assessments of them. These locally-developed assessments were audited by a standardized test, and a state-wide writing assessment developed and scored holistically by teachers. Because there was local involvement and scoring by teachers, and tests were used for auditing rather than assigning consequences, evaluation was formative and useful in improving practice. Nebraska teachers valued their state's approach, despite its time demands (Dappen & Isernhagen, 2005). In addition, at Harvard Project Zero and elsewhere, "authentic assessment" has long been valued. Authentic assessment entails judging teaching and learning against real-world standards and practices for teaching and learning history, writing, mathematics and other disciplines. Each of the foregoing approaches briefly mentioned here, as well as others, reveal there are no short-cuts to good evaluation of teachers or students. The commitment U.S. policy circles to enact such short cuts have, in fact, been costly and ineffective in improving teachers' practice or students' learning.

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TEACHERS' PERCEPTION AND KNOWLEDGE REGARDING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

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Abstract: *Inclusive education represents an issue focused on different problems such as conceptual delimitations, attitudes towards children with special needs or children from different social and economical areas. Teachers' perception and knowledge regarding inclusive practice represent a very important topic of today's world. This study was designed to identify the major obstacles in implementing inclusive principles in mainstream schools and to analyze different aspects of teachers' attitude towards inclusive education. A total of 427 teachers completed a questionnaire which contained 8 categories of items regarding knowledge of specific terminology and prejudice towards children with special needs. At national level, there are major confusions regarding the difference between inclusive education and integrated education.*

1. Introduction

For a great period of time, *inclusion* was a concept related with the *special educational needs* one. Since the end of the 20th century priority has been given to building an educational context, in which all children could learn, all children have potential that should be valorised – an inclusive educational context. Social equality, cooperation, the concern for people and for their needs regarding the development, integration and innovation are few of the main characteristics of nowadays society. If you want to develop a positive attitude towards people who are different but equal in rights and obligations, no matter the social, economical or educational background, you have to make the first step in order to achieve the goal of inclusion.

European educational systems see this concept more related with educational integration but there are major differences between these two. Integration represents the challenge to adapt children with special educational needs to the standards of mainstream education and inclusion represents the challenge to adapt the educational standards and context to the children's needs and characteristics. To do so, education has to transform diversity into a comprehension factor for national, European and international understanding: „*education has to take on the difficult task of turning diversity into a constructive contributory factor of mutual understanding between individuals and groups*" (UNESCO, 2003, p. 5). The first main barrier in the practice of inclusive education is represented by the teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and its principles.

The majority of the studies in this area were based on the idea that teachers should have a positive attitude towards inclusive education but unfortunately, they didn't. There are several educational conditions which can influence this attitude: the degree of the children' difficulties, the nature of children' disabilities, teachers' experience with children with special educational needs, conviction in their own capabilities to implement inclusive activities or expectations towards the children no matter what are the differences between them, curricula and so on (Chhabra, Srivastava and Srivastava, 2010). Some studies revealed that teachers who have an opened perception over the inclusion are more confident in their own abilities to implement the inclusive education (Buell, Hallam, Gamel-McCormick, Scheer, 1999) but

there are many mainstream teachers who believe that children considered „different" are not their responsibility, idea which revealed the fact that there are many schools where the medical-pathological model still dominates the educational activity (Angelides, Stylianou, Gibbs, 2006). A large number of teachers believe that the successful implementation of the inclusive practices should be based on a review of the curriculum and of the teaching strategies used in classes with children with special educational needs (Ghergut, 2010).

2. Purpose of the study

The main purposes of the study were to identify if there are differences between teachers' perception and knowledge regarding inclusive practices in school and to see which are the major obstacles in implementing inclusive practices in mainstream schools.

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

There were 427 participants from 5 major counties of Romania (Bacau, Brasov, Toplita, Odorheiu Secuiesc and Piatra Neamt), primarily female (n = 425, 99.5%). Their age ranged from 20 to 59 years (mean = 43.84).Most of them have graduated medium level educational studies (high-school with pedagogical profile – n = 313), but there are also participants with master degree (n = 114). The number of years in the work field varied from 2 to 41 years (mean = 23.88).

3.2. Instrument

The study involved a self-administrated questionnaire which contains items for demographic data and items regarding inclusive education. The items related to inclusive education were divided in 8 categories and they provided information regarding the knowledge of specific terminology (inclusive education, integrated education, children with special educational needs) and prejudice towards children with special needs (for example „*Children with Down syndrome cannot be integrated in the community*" or „*Children with special educational needs should learn in special schools*"). The internal consistency of the questionnaire was measured by Cronbach' alpha coefficient which showed a good internal consistency of the entire scale (α = .710).

4. Results

This study revealed the fact that there is a major confusion between inclusive education and integrated education. Teachers often believe that inclusive education is the same thing with integrated education, so the major beneficiaries of this type of education are children with special educational needs. One of the items was asking the participants to define some concepts such as: *special educational needs, integrated education, inclusive education, disability, handicap and special education.* The answers revealed the fact that there are many teachers who don't know the correct meaning of the concepts related with this domain. Therefore, the results are the following: *special educational needs (87,3% - correct answers of the participants), integrated education (78,4% - correct answers), inclusive education (19,2% - correct answers), disability (34,7% - correct answers), handicap (98,3% - correct answers) and special education (54,3% - correct answers).* In spite of their answers, the teachers think that they know well these concepts. They were asked to range on a five-point

Likert-type scale the response that corresponded best to their beliefs (1 – strongly agree, 5 – strongly disagree) concerning their knowledge of the concepts. The results are presented in table 1.

Table1. Teachers' beliefs regarding the knowledge of concepts

The concept	Knowing very well	Knowing well	Undecided	Knowing a little	Knowing very little
Special educational needs	18,4%	33,9%	27,1%	15,6%	5%
Integrated education	16,8%	44,6%	19,8%	12,4%	6,4%
Inclusive education	19,2%	30,1%	28,4%	12,6%	9,7%
Disability	24,8%	26,4%	20,7%	19%	9,1%
Handicap	34,1%	12,7%	16,7%	20,4%	16,1%
Special education	22,8%	19,5%	29%	16,4%	12,3%

As it can be seen, there are some differences between what teachers think to know and what they actually know about integrated and inclusive education.

In order to identify the teachers' prejudice towards children with special needs, the teachers were asked to range on a five-point Likert-type scale the response that corresponded best to their beliefs (1 – strongly agree, 5 – strongly disagree). They filled out a scale of 6 items which evaluated their beliefs regarding students with special educational needs, students with physical disabilities, children with parents who are not living with them (they are working in another country), children with autistic disorders and Down syndrome. The results are presented in table 2.

The main difficulties encountered by teachers in implementing inclusive principles such as: insufficient initial or continuous training of teachers (97,6%), the „parents' wall" (44,8%), the lack of time (27,8%), the rejection of children with special educational needs by their colleagues (19,3%), stereotypes and prejudice towards children with SEN (67,4%). The most important solution found by the participants at this research is an efficient initial or continuous training of teachers in order to know, apply and implement inclusive educational practices in their classrooms. There were teachers who considered that it is also important to establish and maintain a strong relationship with the children's parents or with the local community for a better just inclusive community.

Table2. Teachers' prejudice towards children with special educational needs

	Mean
Every child has the right to be educated corresponding to his own development characteristics.	2.21
Children with physical disabilities should not learn in special schools.	2.97
Children with parents who are not living with them do not have a higher risk to abandon school than the others.	3.42
Children with autistic disorders can be recovered.	4.31

Children with Down syndrome can be integrated in the community.	3.46
Children with special educational needs could be integrated in mainstream schools.	3.67

5. Conclusions

The results of this research underlie the fact that there are differences between what teachers know and what they think they know about inclusive education and this should pullout an alarm signal for the decision factors that can make a reform in order to increase teachers' level of competence for inclusive practices.

We have to observe that the knowledge of basic concepts such as inclusion or integration is a very weak one. The inclusive education represents a very large domain which cannot be taught in one semester of the bachelor degree programme. Therefore, it is necessary to rethink and reform the bachelor programme curricula in order to assure a better understanding and a better training of the teachers for inclusive education.

Despite the fact that the majority of teachers declare that it is important for every child or student to be educated corresponding to his level of development and his needs, the results founded that there still are prejudices regarding children with special educational needs. One possible explanation could be that mainstream teachers don't know very well the main characteristics of children with different disabilities (physical, autistic disorders, Down syndrome, emotional problems or behavioural disorders). They need support from school counselling or school psychologist in order to help every child and to develop an efficient educational activity.

This research also revealed the necessity of showing good practice examples in order to motivate teachers to apply and promote inclusive principles. The optimisation of pupils' learning is a result of a differentiated teaching which can provide for each pupil the opportunity to valorise his full potential. The teacher's most important role is to identify the right strategy for each child and to try to adjust his curricular steps according to his level of development, needs, demands and interests for educational domain.

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SOCIAL WORK NETWORKS FOR THE ELDERLY WITH MENTAL DISORDERS – A COMPARATIVE INSIGHT

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Abstract:*Our article refers to the work of **the Réseaux professionnels et personnes âgées** project, which is an ERASMUS Plus project, a strategic project aimed at improving the professional networks of intervention and care for the elderly who have contacted a mental illness. The project puts forward innovative objectives through close collaboration between the partners involved who have a diversified professional experience. The project benefits from a multidisciplinary team: sociologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, doctors, pedagogues, social workers, etc. who, through study, exchange of good practices and experience, aim to improve the professional skills of professionals accompanying older people with mental health problems. Their interventions aim at improving the quality of life of elderly people in vulnerable and risk situations. The purpose of the project is in fact to have a dual perspective: improving healthcare networks and optimizing the care of elderly people with mental health problems.*

Keywords: *mental health, training, education, competences, involvement, strategies*

Introduction

Health is one of the main concerns of society, and Romania since 1977 has stated that "*the main social goal of governments and WHO in the coming decades is to achieve a health condition for the entire population of the Globe, allowing all people to take a productive life from an economic and social point of view.* Health prevention and preservation, especially mental health and the fight against mental illness, are permanent concerns of modern society, which seeks to prolong human life as much as possible. The issue that concerns modern society is that of the quality of life, the hope of active life is the one to be pursued. Medicine often contributes to prolonging life, but efforts must be made to increase the quality of life. This concept is also a social indicator that states the quality of life of the elderly people. An obvious challenge are the mental disorders that bring about significant changes in social and family life. The OECD in the annual report on the health of Europeans states: "*We can and must do more to promote psychological well-being and prevent mental illness."* Mental health is part of a multidisciplinary system of theoretical and practical means that seeks to protect, preserve and strengthen mental health, but also to prevent and eliminate suffering, respectively to increase the quality of life and, implicitly, the well-being of the individual. According to S. D. Kipman, 1996 the concern must be directed towards mental health care, and after P. Bailly-Salin, 1996, the focus must be on the causes that lead to the deployment of mental illness, with a view to their final elimination. In our project, we have carried out a rigorous analysis of the social context of each country involved in the project, we have identified the pressing needs of optimizing mental health networks and the need to improve the care system for elderly people suffering from different mental illnesses.

Social context

At least 250.000 Romanians suffer from a severe mental illness (Kelemen, G., Laurence Fond-Harmant, Michel Pluss, Jean Michel Stassen, Catalin Nache 2015), therefore urgent and necessary measures are mandatory (Gavrilă-Ardelean, 2008; Fond-Harmant et al., 2016). According to a national statistic from 1965, at the time there were 460,000 psychiatric patients. Of them, 82% (381.000 patients) suffered from neuroses, alcoholism, personality and behavioural disorders and 18% (79,000 patients) suffered from a severe depressive syndrome, psychoses, dementia, and other mental diseases. (Gavrilă-Ardelean & Gavrilă-Ardelean, 2017). The situation in Romania is similar to that in Europe in so far general population ageing is concerned and unfortunately demographic ageing is increasing[xx]. Romania`s population at the beginning of 2018 registered 19.7 million resident citizens and statistics show that by 2050 the general population will register a systematic decrease, some studies showing that by 2100 the number of citizens will be around 7 million.

Fig.1. Demographic evolution of Romanian population[xxi]

At the moment 20% of Romanians are over 65 years of age and it is a well known fact that once one advances in age, several physical and psychological problems start to emerge, hence the large majority of those over 65 start to accuse different unwanted effects.

[xx] World Health Statistics 2010, **http://www.who.int/whosis/whostat/2010/en/index.html**
[xxi]https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?zx=zc8grq3imyr3#inbox/FMfcgxvzLhnDWPgwfWDXFsGGKbbJRGzr,
p.17

Fig.2.Population Pyramid in 2011[xxii]

Psychological modifications are determined by several factors, hereditary, retirement, loss of social status, biological decline, hormonal modifications, loss of a partner or family member, the feeling of uselessness, loneliness etc. (http://www.insse.ro/cms/sites/default/files/field/publicatii/coordonate_ale_nivelului_de_trai_ in_romania_veniturile_si_consumul_populatiei_2015.pdf)

As for life expectancy there are several differences compared to developed European states, Romania registering lower numbers with a higher difference between women and men, the latter category registering an average of 69.76 years compared to women who in average live to 77.30 years.

Studies identify several categories of seniors:

- young-old), between 65 and 75;

- middle-old, between 75 and 85;

- old-old, over 85.

http://www.cnpv.ro/pdf/analize2014/studiu_calitatea_vietii_2014.pdf

Services dedicated to seniors with mental issues in Romania are far from satisfying society`s real needs. Statistics show that in Europe 36.1% of psychological issues lead to disability, therefore considerable funds are allocated from public health resources for preventing and treating mental illnesses; Denmark allocates 44% of social services funding to the issue, Finland 43%, and Romania 37%. Although the necessity of investing resources in the domain of mental health is permanently repeated, as for example on the 10th of October – World Mental Health Day- funding remains insufficient and poorly distributed. In accord with Law no. 292/2011 (The Social Work Law) continuous care for the elderly is conducted at home, in day centres, residential centres as well as within the social worker`s home. Theoretically it sounds good but in fact things are rather disconcerting. We must acknowledge that there are socio-economic and cultural boundaries apparent mostly in countries from the ex communist bloc such as: bureaucracy, the lack of a national geriatric network, the lack of objective evaluative criteria, lack of transparency within the public administrative network, lack of specialists, lack of a database for beneficiaries and providers etc. The aforementioned law as well as in *Strategia Națională pentru promovarea îmbătrânirii active și protecția persoanelor vârstnice pentru anii 2014-2020* (national strategy for promoting an active ageing and the protection of the elderly for 2014-2010), objectives have been proposed regarding social inclusion and the reduction of poverty.

In Romania elderly people are by large taken care of by relatives and social dossiers are very cumbersome and hard to complete. Nursing homes do exists (both private and state funded); according to a 2016 statistic, in the state sector there were 123 such institutions registered providing a total of 7630 places and 246 private nursing homes providing 9659 places. Besides these there are several other similar institutions:
- 53 Socio-medical centres - 49 public and 4 private;
- 3 Palliative care centres - 0 public and 3 private;
- 42 Protected domiciles- , 23 public and 19 private;
- 4 Crisis centres, - 3 public and 1 private. (www.mmuncii.ro/)

[xxii] Ibidem, p.18

Several improvements are necessary for bettering social work services in Romania for the mentally ill elderly, chief amongst these a decentralization of financing and service providing for the elderly and further training of those specialists who work in the field:

- developing of a unique strategy for decentralizing and specializing on providing services for each category of mental illness;

- identifying the necessary resources and of associated costs;

- setting quality standards for various social work services;

- setting social indicators based on which the budget should be decided.

Good practices

Prior to 1989, when the state and the party controlled everything, non-profit organizations didn't exist in Romania. After the liberalisation a series of foundations and associations have been established with the help of foreign charitable organizations. Romania's accession to the European Union offered the possibility to submit proposals and win projects that added value to the social work system. Below are listed some successful examples:

a) **Estuar Foundation**, an NGO resulted as an outcome of a European project in partnership with the *General Directorate* for *Social Assistance and Child Protectionand the*Community Mental Health Service. It aims to create a nationwide social services network for vulnerable persons, for people with mental health problems and their families.

b) **Senior Net** association established for the elderly in 2014 by Caritas Romania Confederation and the Romanian White Cross Foundation.
c) **The "Caritas Metropolitan" Association,** a Christian, Greek-Catholic Association established in Blaj, aims to help people with special needs.
d) **"Pilantropia",** the Christian-Orthodox Association is an association dedicated to vulnerable people in Deva.
e) **The "Floare Rosie**" elderly care center, which provides residential services, socio-medical recovery services and saline therapy services.
f) **The "Princess Margarita" Foundation** from Romania, offers a free phone number for the elderly to ask for help.
g) **"Never alone"** is another nonprofit association that supports those seeking help.
h) **The "Caritas" Romanian Federation** is a nonprofit association for social protection of the elderly and has 43,000 members. (Http://www.carp-omenia.ro)

Urgent Needs – Necessary Measures

Thus, a series of measures to qualitatively and quantitatively improve the social care system for elderly people suffering from a mental illness, must be taken:

- developing a specialized infrastructure for the elderly with psychiatric disorders;

- training professional specialists: social assistants, geriatric doctors, psychiatrists, caregivers, ergotherapists, kinetotherapists, doctors, etc .;

- creating a social care system comprising multidisciplinary teams providing specialized home-based services to elderly people with mental health problems;

- creating services to deal with social and professional reintegration and maintaining an active life of elderly people with mental health problems.

Brief qualitative study

I thought it might be useful to discuss social perception about the elderly, but especially about those who have acquired a mental illness, as well as determining the patterns of perception that young people possess about elderly people and capturing the social effects which these patterns of perception, such as social stigma, bring about. If we identify the stereotypes resulting from the way in which elderly people with mental health problems are perceived, we can have a vision of how social stigma can be combated, how mentalities can be changed, how the reactions of young people and other social actors can be positive.

Table no. 1. Questionnaire respondents

Age Group	Students Educational Sciences	Students Social Assistants	Students Pshychology	Master Students Educational Sciences	Master Students Social Work	Master Students Pshychology	Total
20-25 years	10	12	11	6	7	5	**51**
25-30 years	12	11	10	7	7	6	**53**
30-35 years	10	9	9	10	12	10	**60**
35-40 years	10	11	12	10	9	8	**60**
45+	11	12	10	9	8	2	**52**
	53	**55**	**52**	**42**	**43**	**31**	**276**

The respondents are students and master students from the specializations of the The Faculty of Educational Sciences, Psychology and Social Work 'Aurel Vlaicu' University from Arad.

The questions were distributed on the internet and students volunteered.

Fig.nr.3. Perception regarding elderly people

We find that the answers of students and master students are very little different regarding the way to perceive the age.

Based on a questionnaire containing simple questions about the mental health issues of elderly people who have acquired a mental illness, students and master students are required to rank on a scale from 1 to 5 the answers they consider relevant: 1-strongly agree; 2. agree; 3. poorly agree; 4. disagree; 5.I do not know.

1.Which are the main needs of the elderly:

a. medical care;

b.surveillance;

c.affection.

2. Which are the main symptoms of mental illness at the elderly:

a. strange behaviour;

b. memory losses;

c. lack of livelihood;

3.Which are the most common mental illnesses at elderly people?

a.Alzheimer;

b.Dementia;

c.Depression.

4. Where do you consider it is better-cared an elderly person with mental health problems?

a. In the family;

b.In residential centers;

c.In specialized medical units, psychiatry type.

5.Which are the main ways to reduce stigma:

a.Education;

b.Mass media;

c. Specialized promotion campaigns.

Our study reveals a fairly good knowledge of students about stigma issues, especially of those students from the Educational Sciences. Regarding mental illnesses, we notice a more in-depth knowledge of students from the psychology program. Concerning the symptoms and the ways of intervention there are differences between the answers of the students, the ones from the social work speciality are better documented.

Conclusions

Poverty, social isolation, loss of independence are causes of worsening the mental health of the elderly people. Promoting mental health involves creating conditions for elderly people to

enjoy life, personal qualities and talents, to develop creative activity and to participate actively in social life.