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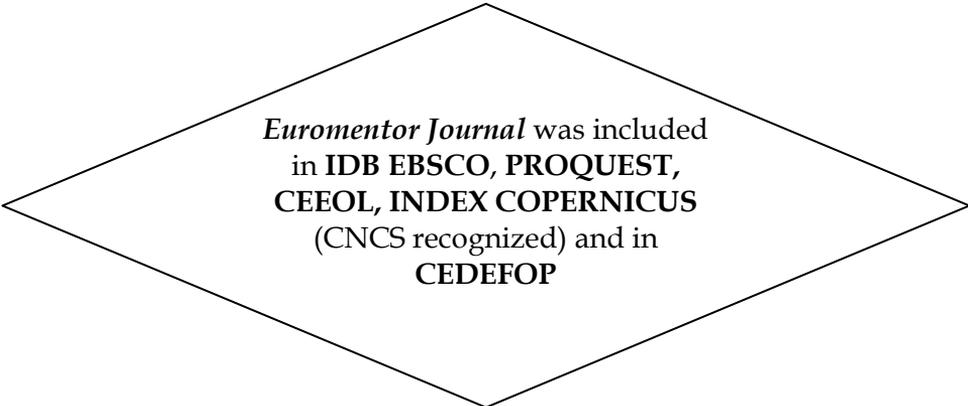
EUROMENTOR JOURNAL STUDIES ABOUT EDUCATION

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CONTENTS

INVESTMENT IN EDUCATION – A CHANCE FOR THE FUTURE

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Abstract: *The contemporary school faces a great number of challenges, general ones (which affect, to different extents, the school everywhere) and some specific ones (which, for our country, are linked to the transition peculiarities and to the school reform particularity). Among the general ones, the most significant are: globalization, the cognitive society and its requirements, mass school and its democratization, schooling and the world of work (the entrepreneurial paradigm and the deviation of the market economy logic in education), the decrease of the state's role in education, the diversification of the educational field and the social sources of education, the offensive of the pragmatic and commercial values over the humanistic ones in education, etc. Among the challenges customized to our country (but not only) we can mention: the crisis of educational ends, disrupted and contradictory educational policy, incoherent discourse on the social role of the school, degradation of the school social status and the crisis of the teaching profession identity, the anomic school culture (incoherence of values), equality and equity (or "paid gratuity") in the schooling system, etc. All these lead us to admit that the contemporary school is undergoing an identity crisis. Without a lucid outlook on the current state of the educational reality, we cannot rethink education and look ahead.*

Keywords: *general and specific challenges, identity crisis of the school, innovative, lifelong education, self-education, adult education.*

The world we live in can be expressed by the phrase "geopolitics of chaos" invaded by information that mixes up truth with falsehood, characterized by globalization and hyper- consumption. The specificity of the postmodern era implies, at pedagogical level, primarily, epistemological readjustments. Substantial changes are expected to occur thus, at the level of the formative and instructional contents involved. The social actors of the postmodern society are increasingly aware that, under

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the circumstances of accelerating the scientific and technical progress, the acquisition of up-to-date and high quality skills and knowledge decisively determine their status and professional success. From this perspective, the efficiency of the educational systems is largely overlapping to the extent to which that they constantly update and diversify their curriculum structure and information offer.

The diversification and timely updating of the curricular structure of the educational systems belonging to the postmodern society is determined by another phenomenon, namely the merchantability of the information supply. The reduction of the state involvement in the organization of education systems implies, along with decentralization, the reduction of the budgetary resources allocated to them. This situation increasingly requires that the various educational institutions assume the principles of self-management and self-financing, as well as concern for competitiveness as a basic condition of survival in terms of a competitive type educational reality. In this context, those who are educated will be more interested in the actual practical utility of their knowledge or theories, rather than in their truth, in the added value of the competence which will enable them to act.

The school as an institution, and particularly universities, become thus competitors in the market of educational offers, and the potential beneficiaries of the various systems of education are, ultimately, consumers of education. The principle of equal educational opportunities suffers under these circumstances the following reformulation: all individuals are equal in their capacity as consumers in the education market, having the freedom to choose the most convenient educational (cf. Cowen). In the beginning of his book entitled *Emil*[1], Rousseau says that plants need to be cultivated and man needs to be educated, thus underlining the role of the formative and instructional actions in becoming a spiritual human being. Man lives in the environment of his natural existence but he exists and tends to exist within the space of his cultural existence. Man's approach to the cultural existence space is performed only in and through education. Education is the one which transforms the human subject, prepares and shapes him in order to adapt to the conditions and specificity of his cultural beingness. As Gilles Deleuze

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[1] Rousseau, J., *Emil or on the Education*, Didactical and Pedagogical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1973.

stated, cited by Liviu Antonesei[2], the "traces" left by culture on the human beings are indelible, *man is sentenced to culture* and his permanent "mark" is education (Antonesei, L., 1996, p.19). In his turn, E. Cassirer[3], quoted by the previously mentioned author, states that man is not so much an *rational animal rationale* as an *animal symbolicum* because "his whole spiritual behavior, objectified in various spheres of culture, is a symbolical one, and culture, as objectifying the specifically human spiritual activity is a compact thesaurus of symbols" (Cassirer, E., 1994, p.54). Education becomes thus an activity of irreversible passage of the human being, through the symbols conveyed, from the domination of biology and immediate needs into the field of culture, values and universality. Being constantly under the ever growing pressure of the educational market and meaning to ensure and maintain competitiveness in this sector, today's educational institutions are forced not only to frequent restructuring of the learning content and better selection policy of the teaching staff, but also to establish some close collaboration links with the scientific research departments existing in the various fields. To these priorities will be added over time, due to the competition in the educational market, the increase in the standards for the selection of candidates. In the context of self-financing and competitive educational systems, it becomes obvious that the relevant criteria for the selection of candidates should be established in such a way that their education should involve lower costs and their subsequent performances should contribute to improving the image of the institution which has trained them. From this perspective, major changes are also required in terms of the school management system which must become more flexible and willing to react quickly and appropriately to the present socio-economic challenges. In their turn, teachers at all levels of education will be encouraged to take on directly and explicitly the responsibility of the academic progress of those who are educated, avoiding that the teacher- student relationship become devoid of any significance. Postmodernism thus brings along a higher professionalization of education, its effectiveness criterion being competitiveness and the extent to which graduates are equipped with the operational skills required in the context of an educational markets which, more often than not, exceeds the national boundaries, becoming

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[2] Antonesei, L., *Paideia. Cultural Fundamentals of Education,* Polirom Publishing House, Iasi, 1996.

[3] Cassirer, E., *Essay on Man,* Humanitas Publishing House, Bucharest, 1994, p.46.

international. In this regard, education will focus mainly on the training, as much as possible, of some experts and of a highly qualified personnel for the top sectors, elements capable of ensuring the viability of various educational institutions and validate the place they occupy in the competitive space of the educational market offers. We believe that, in order to successfully face the various challenges of the contemporary society, education needs to focus not on the non-discriminatory and abusive pedagogical ideas of modernity but rather on transforming and adjusting them to the specificity and characteristics that postmodern society imposes. The contemporary society, often called *a society of generalized communication, is, par excellence, an educational society.*

The major openings produced at epistemological, cultural and technological level require frequent adaptive restructuring of the educational phenomenon both as a factor and consequence of the development of society. *We appreciate that restructuring processes performed at the level of the current educational reality can be grouped around three main trends: multiplication of the dimensions of education, permanent education and emphasizing the prospective character of education.* Along with the consolidation of the status of the dimensions of education (intellectual, moral, aesthetic education, etc.), the new dimensions of education have started to be the introduced at school level: ecological education, intercultural education, education for democracy, nutritional education, education for communication and media, education for change, etc. If the necessity of multiplying the educational dimensions is widely recognized, in terms of concrete ways to implement the new educations, the opinions of the specialists in the field are diverse. A first way of implementing the new educations is the explicit introduction in the curricular structure of some individual study subjects, covering the areas mentioned above. The criticism of this proposal focuses mainly on the fact that the undertaking of such an approach would inevitably lead to overloading the school programs that are already too bulky. A second possibility of multiplying the dimensions of education would be either introducing within the traditional education some chapters appropriate to the content of the respective disciplines but especially dedicated to these sizes, or the undifferentiated inserting of the contents subsumed to new education in the structure of the classical school subjects. The objections to this alternative are related to the risk of an inadequate reception of the educational messages inserted. We believe that the solution to the problem mentioned above is represented by the combination of the two types of

strategies in terms of capitalizing the new dimensions of education, depending on the specific socio-historical conditions, both for disciplines with optional or compulsory status and for an appropriate curricular dissipation at the level of various subjects. The concern for multiplying the education dimension is doubled at the level of the contemporary educational phenomenon by the need to ensure, as JW Botkin specified, quoted by C. Cucos[4], an optimal ratio between education and maintenance learning, and education and innovative learning. Maintenance learning focuses on the acquisition of information, methods and fixed rules necessary to cope with well-known, algorithmic situations, this type of learning being intended to ensure the operation of an existing system and a well-known way of life, only stimulating the individual's ability to act within the strict framework of a particular cultural experience.

The innovative education proves its utility under the circumstances of existential shocks, breaks or breaches in the paradigm accepted up to a point. This type of education is designed to prepare individuals and hence societies to act in situations of crisis and implies the possibility of rapid access to integrative thinking, able to quickly restructure the old knowledge and join operatively the recent information entering the flow. Whereas maintenance education tends to consider the already rules already imposed as unassailable, the innovative education must be willing to question the basic values, goals and objectives of any system. If maintenance education, focused mainly on algorithmic processes is essential in well-defined situations where assumptions remain unchanged and the values they support are clearly defined and recognized, innovative education, based on heuristic structures, is prone to shattering stereotypes and paradigmatic frameworks, being common knowledge that progress is not achieved by respecting traditions (cf. C. Cucoş 1996 p.30-31). We appreciate that the proper implementation of these strategies in the educational reality is able to contribute both to the significant increase in the quality of learning and to the resizing of the socio-cultural space of human existence in order to enhance its formative potential. The necessity of lifelong education was intuited by the classics of universal pedagogy but the features of the contemporary society impose, by their very essence, qualitative and quantitative expansion of education and multiplication of learning situations beyond the spatio-temporal boundaries of the school throughout the existence of the individual. We refer in this context

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[4] Cucoş, C., *Pedagogy*, Polirom Publishing House, Iaşi, 1996.

primarily to the fact that, although the efficency criterion of any educational system is at present the extent to which it can train and form experts for the top fields of knowledge and highly skilled personnel, it is becoming increasingly obvious that this desire is, in most cases, difficult to achieve within the strict limits of the school type education. Besides, there are many other reasons that require, in their turn, the necessity of permanent education: the exponential growth in the volume of information and its degree of perishability, the increased leisure time duration and average life expentacy, accelerating the pace of changes, etc. The reality of contemporary educational is thus characterized by emphasizing the need for permanent education and imposing widely the two forms of achieving lifelong learning: self-education and adult education. Self-education is defined as the conscious and deliberate activity of the human being undertaken with a view to improving its own own personality and hence the ideals proposed for accomplishment.

Self-education requires, therefore, an active, dynamic involvement, free from any external constraints of the individual in its process of improving. The importance of training and developing the self-education capacity of students is abundantly highlighted by various authors (cf. Salade, D., 1998, p.179)[5] who stated, for example, that "The most important attitude that can be formed is desire to continue learning"[6] (Dewey, J., 1977, p.97) or "Who wants to teach us a truth should take us there where we can find it ourselves" (Gasset, YO, 1996, p.75)[7]. Apart from metaphorical character of the above statements, it becomes obvious that, due to the current huge flow of information and the fast pace of changes at all levels of society organization, forming the self-education capacity is one of the main priorities of the contemporary educational systems. Adult education, as a complementary formative and instructional activity of self-education, is another form of lifelong learning objectification. The idea of adult education is not new in the field of pedagogy. For example, (see Dave. RH, 1975)[8], in 1792, Condorcet stated that "education must include all the citizens, regardless of age, providing them both with the possibility

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[5] Salade, D., *Dimensions of Education*, The Didactic and Pedagogical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1998.

[6] Dewey, J., *Democracy and Education*, Didactic and Pedagogical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1972.

[7] Gasset, Y. O., *What is knowledge?*, Humanitas, Bucharest, 1996, p.75.

[8] DAVE R H in *Developing and Writing Behavioural Objectives* (R.J. Armstrong, ed.) Educational Innovators Press, 1975.

to preserve their knowledge and to acquire new one" and in 1798, at Nottingham, he founded the first school dedicated to adults. The effective success of adult education depends on the combination of several conditions, such as: the existence of adequate human and material resources for this type of education, the existence of physical time available for performing these formative and instructional approaches and, last but not least, taking some convergent measures to stimulate the adults' involvement in lifelong education.

Self-education and adult education, as forms of lifelong learning in the context of the contemporary society, are adjusting strategies of utmost importance to overcome the difficulties caused by the rapid pace of information accumulation and technological progress, thus increasing the chances of individuals to achieve a socio-professional integration in accordance with their aspirations, skills and training.

Highlighting the fact that change, under all its forms, is a milestone of the contemporary society aroused the need to accelerate the prospective nature of education. The emphasis on the prospective nature of education involves undertaking two distinct activities: shaping the educational ideal clearly and adequating, as much as possible, the formative and instructional activities to the goals and objectives derived from the assumption of the respective ideal. Outlining the educational ideal will be achieved not only starting from the features and requirements imposed by the present, but also anticipating their influences on the evolution of the future society. In formulating the educational ideals will be thus envisaged not only the existing resources and difficulties, but especially the requirements of the society in which the current pupils and students are to be integrated upon graduation. We mention that the educational ideal structure in relation with the predictions of the society evolution will be achieved in terms of taking into account the opportunities and resources available, otherwise the subsumed goals and objectives become utopian and unfeasible. *The balance between the actual possibilities of the moment and the characteristics imposed by educational ideal characteristics as a result of pedagogical prospecting is a prerequisite but it is not sufficient to adequate education to the specificity of the future society.*

Capturing and condensing the general trends of the socio-economic evolution as educational outcomes represent only the theoretical context of achieving formative instructional approaches, as this framework needs to be completed with concrete activities in accordance with endowing the students with the skills and competencies foreshadowed by didactic goals

and objectives assumed. In this respect, it is necessary to conceive and design some teaching strategies which, although subordinate to the needs of the future, should not lead to depriving the students of the knowledge and skills necessary for a proper integration in the current modern society, or to the emergence of some maladaptive behaviors and attitudes blatantly inconsistent with the requirements imposed by the present moment.The prospective nature of education imposes therefore a double conditioning: relating properly to the features of the future society and not disturbing by the activities undertaken to organize and operate the current society. The prospective evaluation of the educational phenomenon is intrinsically linked to noticing some aspects such as: demographic evolution estimation, the predominance of some directions of scientific trends, identifying political institutions as to the sectors of activity considered to be essential for the future economic development, fluctuations occurred and anticipated to take place in the labor market, last but not least the general trends noticed in the evolution of the international community. The adequate correlation of the elements mentioned above represent both the starting point in developing any strategy or coherent educational policies and the premise on which, ultimately, the efficiency of the education action is based.

The prospective nature of the educational action involves not only relating the school to the future requirements of human existence, but also considering the shaping influences that education exert on society improvement. The potential hypostases of the future society to which education must adjust, due to its prospective character, are not just the mere product of some external determinations of the educational phenomenon but the result of its manifestation. What the future society will look like depends largely on the efficiency and quality of the educational action carried out at present. The prospective nature of the educational phenomenon implies the existence of a double modeling action: of education by society and of society through education. In fact, anticipating the occurrence of changes and training in relation to them often equates to favoring, more or less voluntarily, their appearance. Along with adequating the current educational action to some conditions which have not occurred yet, assumed to characterize the evolution trend of the society, its implicit orientation towards the respective direction is taking place. Due to its prospective character, education not only adapts to the specific changes expected to occur but also prepares the conditions for developing these

changes and, by the current actions, shapes the very specificity of the future society.

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EUROPEAN MODELS OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

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Abstract: *Our paper has planned to review the facts and trends in the European management culture. At global and systemic level, we see that all European organisational models are structured on quality in various stages of its approach. School organisation tends to be based on a contract, both at institutional and community levels. At the organisational level, in our opinion, it is necessary to consider the organisation and classroom management, as well as the management of the group of students, in which the respect of human personality and knowledge are crucial. The European models tend to emphasise the involvement of the manager side which imply awareness of status, style and their roles in the school organisation. Therefore, the knowledge of psychosocial and transactional human personality is sine qua non.*

Keywords: *European culture management, quality, management of organisation and classroom, student group management, psycho-social and transactional knowledge of human personality.*

1. Since the 80s, most EU countries have created specialised structures that promote the evaluation and development of schools. Some examples are: the National Service for Quality Education (Italy) and the National Institute of Evaluation (Sweden). Schools gain more autonomy, to contribute more effectively to manage resources and to assume their own institutional development. At European level, the educational policy guidance was subject to a quality assurance pilot project involving 101 schools from 18 countries (Mac Beath, 1999[1]). The data of this project funded by the European Commission shows that **the self-assessment** tends to be preferred external evaluation and quality control. In many countries (Norway, Belgium, Finland, Romania), the self-assessment is

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[1] Mac Beath, John, *Schools Must Speak for Themselves*, The Case for School Self-Evaluation. London: Routledge, 1999.

officially recognised and integrated into legislative documents. These trends are recognised and encouraged through incentives for institutional development and self-evaluation. For example, France and Spain, where the education law provided that each school to define a project of the school unit and annual reports on this project. Development plan and public report exist in Belgium, Iceland, Ireland, and the Netherlands. In some länders in Germany, the reports are used for comparing and ranking schools. Stimulated by these initiatives, schools and research institutions have developed their own tools for self-assessment and quality assurance. For example, in Portugal, the document *The European Quality Observatory* (EQO[2]) recommends 18 performance indicators grouped into four areas: family, teaching and learning, the educational context, results); the project *Indicateurs de pilotage des établissements secondaires[3]* in France; the project *Quality in schools* in Austria[4] etc.

2. During the early 2000s, the interest in self-evaluation and quality assurance intensified. The experience gained through these projects showed that the three steps of quality assurance - taking objectives, self-assessment and public responsibility - have important effects in promoting the quality at school level. Data provided by SICI, for example, show that, in most EU Member States (including, the new member states such as Slovenia, Hungary and Malta), have adopted quality assurance methodologies already functioning on large scale, exceeding the research and piloting state. Here are some examples: the *CIPO Model* in Belgium (Flanders[5]), *Integral School Supervision Model[6]* in the Netherlands, the

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[2] *The European Quality Observatory* (EQO), http//:www.eqo.info**,** accesat la data de 12 .05.2014.

[3] *Indicateurs de pilotage des établissements secondaires* (IPES): Indicateurs pour le Pilotage des Établissements secondaires: indicateurs de résultats, de ressources et de moyens, et sur la population prise en charge dans les lycées et collèges. Chaque indicateur est assorti de références permettant de situer l'établissement par rapport aux échelons national, académique et parfois départemental.

http://www.infocentre.education.fr/, accesat la data de 12.05.2014.

[4] Apud Sammons, Pam et al, (1995), *Key characteristics of effective schools*, report by the Institute of Education for the Office for Standards in Education, University of London.

[5] The model CIPO evolves on four levels: **Context** Analysis and Evaluation, **Input** Analysis and Evaluation, **Process** Analysis and Evaluation, as well as **Output** Analysis and Evaluation.

[6] Apud Joyce, Bruce, *Changing School Culture through Staff Development*, Ed. the Taylor & Francis Library, New York, 2005.

system *How Good is Our School*?[7] - Scotland, *the ESSE model* (*Effective School Self- Evaluation*[8] - integrated project of the European Commission), etc.

Although there is an agreement in principle on quality assurance methodology, each country has developed its own system of criteria, indicators and standards, so we can speak of a variety of European models in this area. These sources reveal the following significant trends for the Romanian context:

a) Quality is a priority for all European education systems. The term is used as well contextually: there is not quality in itself, but in relation to certain criteria, with specific performance indicators and specific standards.

b) Quality management is done on several levels:

- the control structures level: school inspectorates, audit bodies, institutions of external evaluation;
- at the school level, by means of quality assurance.

Schools are encouraged to become competent in developing their quality assurance systems. To do this, schools are concerned to secure the three conditions defining quality assurance:

- **clear definition of the mission and organisational objectives** (e.g. through institutional development plan);
- **mobilising internal resources** for self-development, self-innovation and self-evaluation;
- establishing a system of **public responsibility**, for example, through regular reports, audit and benchmarking.

c) Shift emphasis towards autonomy for institutional development and collective responsibility led to the development of self-relevant tools to ensure objectivity, comparability and accuracy of self-evaluation. To this end, all European education systems are concerned to define criteria and areas of analysis, indicators and standards, evaluation tools. The Netherlands (secondary) were produced as 60 global indicators (plus 144 specific indicators), France is using 80 indicators and Scotland is working with 89 indicators.

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[7] *How Good is Our School*? Self-evaluation using quality indicators, HM Inspectorate of Education, Norwich, 2002.

[8] Ibidem 4.

The complex analysis of school organization involves **a matrix structure** on several levels:

- level I: key areas, criteria or aspects;
- level II: indicators or descriptors (information relevant to each criterion, area or aspect), expressed: in the statistical form - statistical indicators; by qualitative indicators - individual or collective behaviours;
- level III: variable or operational components of an indicator (for example, Scottish model uses the additional details);
- level IV: performance standards or excellence level of an indicator; if the indicators are describing the situation as such (expressed by the relevant information for the evaluated criterion), the standards contain rules or specifications desirable state (e.g. how should be an indicator to consider whether the objectives have been achieved). We represent the indicator as an ascending or descending scale, and the standard would be the exact place on the scale that we want to get the allocation and use of resources.

These findings vary, of course, from one country to another. They express the essential parts of quality assurance and development of schools as organizations of change.

3. Quality management is activity management is to develop and implement a set of rules and tools that form the quality management system aims to ensure the desired level of quality for the product organization.

Quality management has three main components:
(1) **quality control;**
(2) **quality assurance;**
(3) **quality improvement.**

During 1970-80, particularly, in industrialised countries, there has been a paradigm shift in education: priority to move from quantity to quality. This is the development or emergence of schools (Per Dalin and Ali, 1995[9]). What natural resources are increasingly scarce and expensive,

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[9] Dalin, Per, Rolff, Hans-Gunter; Kleekamp, Bab, (1995), *Changing the school culture, School development series*. London, Cassell.

the spotlight turned to investment in human resources, with direct consequences for educational policy: expanding flows school, raise standards of teaching - learning - assessment, management efficiency and supply of educational services. Most European education systems have opted for more autonomy and direct management of resources based on clear objectives and responsibilities assumed in the educational institutions since 1990. Decentralisation has become such purpose, especially for countries transition.

Function of systems is related to **school - centred management**: transfer of responsibi–lities from the external administration of school to professional staff within the school (Caldwell, 2005[10]). The school - centred management involves more autonomy built on a set of individual and collective skills, shared, but with the individual and collective liability:
- competence to develop projects;
- competence to plan and manage their own resources;
- competence to respond to the public welfare of the institution;
- power to mobilise internal resources of the school ;
- power to empower its staff ;
- power to achieve a democratic and participatory management.

Evolution is to use the potential of self-development of the school and its location in the centre of public policy. The evolution of the educational community has been seen often in the opening metaphors, such as "*school without walls*" (Reimer)[11] "*virtual school*" (Gordon[12]) or "*society without schools*" (Ivan Illich[13]). Viewed under aspect of the generating quality human resources, school becomes *mutatis mutandis*, **the centre of educational reform**s. The school from which is expected to generate wider reforms and social changes is another type of public institution.

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[10] Caldwell, B.J., *School-Based Management*, Paris, IIEP – International Academy of Education, 2005.

[11] Apud Birzea, C. et al *Tool and Quality Assurance of Education for Democratic Citizenship in Schools*. Paris-UNESCO, Strasbourg – Council of Europe, 2005.

[12] Ibidem 11.

[13] Illich, Ivan, *Une société sans école*, Paris, Ed. Seuil. The concept of Ivan Ilich is related to the miss-schooling of school, which means, first of all, to create a gap in the school monopoly regarding the knowledge and its dissemination, 2003.

4. Trends and legislative measures in the Romanian society

In Romania, the concept that underpins the promotion of quality education through the enactment Ordinance No.75/ 2005 is compatible with European travel trends to focus on quality control assurance.

(1) The first component is based on an external authority - for example, inspectors, auditors, policy makers - that the administrative position has the responsibility to control the proper functioning of educational institutions in financial, pedagogical or managerial terms. This control traditionally has advantages related to the objectivity, authority and overview, but it does not reach the issues of mobilisation and accountability of the organisation. For this reason, with quality control in education in the member states of the EU's principle of quality assurance, applied initially in Japan in human resource management. According to reports SICI (*The Standing International Conference of Central and General Inspectorates of Education*[14]) European body in the field, quality assurance is an option in most European countries. In general, methodological choices are converging, although there are differences in the definition of quality assurance tools.

(2) **The methodology for quality assurance** in schools is governed by three principles:

- explicit definition of the **mission and organizational objectives** of each school;
- **responsibility of professionals in school** for using resources and achieving objectives at the level of performance: leadership, teaching and administrative staff;
- **concrete ways of public accountability** on the use of resources and achievement of quality assumed standards (ESSE, 2002 Birzeaetal, 2005[15]).

In the new logic of quality assurance, schools receive well-defined responsibilities and resources, practice in self-development and effective use of resources, are responsible in relation to achieving the quality target level. Quality assurance becomes the operational space of the approaches of educational policies in Romania, decentralisation and promotion of quality.

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[14]*** *The Standing International Conference of Central and General Inspectorates of Education, SICI, http://www.sici-inspectorates.eu/,* accesat pe data de 9 mai 2014.

[15] Birzea, C. et al, *Tool and Quality Assurance of Education for Democratic Citizenship in Schools*. Paris-UNESCO, Strasbourg – Council of Europe, 2005.

By GEO, 75/2005, is regulated quality assurance in Romanian education: the operational framework and concrete benchmarksof policies in this area, in line with recent developments in Europe. The Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Pre-university Education (RAQAPE) and Romanian Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (RAQAHE) are autonomous institutions that implement legislative measures of quality and ensure quality standards for all schools in Romania, both at pre-university and university level. The package and documentation of quality assurance give responsibilities to **the educational institutions and resource management decisions**, in particular, the use of information, evaluation and public responsibility. The basics of the program of decentre–lisation and promotion of quality are capacity schools are the ability to access, collect and use databases in the decision, the self and public reporting. The public responsibility and managing their resources are achieved by building capacity to know his potential and development needs in the immediate, short, medium and long term.

The new organizational profile of the school is linked to factors of change:

- **services competition of lifelong learning** within the global system and society: school is competed by other sources, for example, online learning, training services from other benefit-ciaries, competitive system of public school of the state - public school in private regime;
- **the need for internal democracy**: encouraging participation, equity and collective decision;
- **decentralisation of public administration** has direct effects on school-community relations;
- **quality and quality assurance** evolve in conditions of autonomy and responsibility of schools;
- **funding regime change**, for example, by funding focused on products (not entries), proportional financing, non-public sector participation and local authorities in school life.

Socio-cultural and political context is changing - as such, the status and role of the school manager is required to be adaptive and complex. Portfolio manager training school should require to proving a comprehensive and appropriate training, ethics to assume the role of leader, because he decides, organises, optimises the educational process.

Students 'achievements and teachers' professional and practical performances are influenced by the global activity of school manager.

It can distinguish three types of managers within the school organisation: **institution manager, class manager and manager of students group**. Leader status is also co-determined in the triangle built by the powers, authority and management responsibility. There is a difference between the status and role of the teacher and director, because the switching from a function to another one requires specific training – usually, the good teachers become good managers. Moreover, this practice of recruiting the good managers of good teachers, validated by the Romanian school tradition, was lost or, more accurately, we left to lose it, in favour of so-called "technical manager", concept taken over mimetically in the current European context. Director of the school's is administrative manager, coordinator of all activities of the school unit, in administrative, accounting and educational areas. He is subordinated to the school inspectorates, ministry and, in some extent, local governments. To determine the competence of a school manager is required to determine **status** (school manager in the education system and educational establishment) and a **role** (school manager behaviour, expectations of subordinates or those who are subordinated).

5. Transactional competences of manager

Of current applicable regulations, are arising the following main roles that a school manager should assume:

- as a state and educational community representative - chairman of the teachers and administrative staff of the school -establishes, conforming to the *Unique Management Plan*, purpose and learning objectives;
- authorising officer, in the financial plan;
- decision maker, in the context of decisions ;
- organiser of school space that it manages;
- mediator - a negotiator in solving situations;
- evaluator of carried out activities of teachers and students.

The main tasks of the school manager are related to the **compliance of management functions**. At the same time, each school manager has its own personality, has a certain style and has a certain level of efficiency. **Management style** must be consistent with the personality of the

manager, differentiated according to the situation to be solved, and possibilities of the subordinates.Performance managers are also co-determined by:

- the training and management level;
- exercise capacity and availability to specific problems in the community;
- correct decisions;
- support when necessary;
- success in activity.

For these roles, the manager achieves, usually, **personal and professional development goals taken from the transactional competences area**:

- proposing rational objectives;
- global approach to problems in terms of efficiency;
- identify resources and alternatives for solving optimal organisational problems;
- choice of the direct organisational and ergonomic alternatives in decision-making;
- recognise his own limitations and mistakes, identifying their resolution;
- effective communication with all educational partners;
- appropriate management style to the different situations.

On the other hand, as noted above, along with the role of **manager of the institution**, are also important **the roles of classroom manager and students groups manager in a school organisation**. The teacher leads directly and autonomous activities at the students micro group, at classrooms and school level. He is in an ongoing partnership relation with students in educational, formative perspectives. The teacher must assume a set of responsibilities, with increased powers to the class. The teacher is actively involved in what is being called *change management*. The roles of the teacher, as a leader, are multiple. According to D Hainaut[16], roles that teacher can activate and use the different stages and forms are:

- receiver and emitter of the different messages, participant in the specific activities;

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[16] D'Hainaut, *Des fins aux objectifs de l'éducation*, Nathan, Paris, 1980.

- creator , designer, organiser, responsible of any actions;
- decision in the selection of objectives, content, strategies, resources;
- source of information;
- ethos: model of behaviour, values holder;
- advice, guidance;
- security, protection.

In relation to all these roles, the teacher is militant and interactive factor in the classroom, being in direct contact with students. In the teaching / learning / assessment lesson, it handles a particular learning situation, any interactive strategies, each student and all together participate in a process quietly led by the teacher.

Management design approach starts at the map formed by school education skills and available resources (human, material, information). Considering simultaneously aims of the most general, also concrete reality, we can construct a non-contradictory curriculum. From this perspective, given the purpose of education that it aims, objectively and subjectively, the human being, every educational act must have at least two dimensions: **the task of learning and human relationships** (with individuals and / or groups), both as how to be set in concrete and real ways.

Model management style

Issues				Involvement
Autocrat	Paternalistic		Advisory	Democratic
Say	Give	Involves	Co-determines	

(After **TannenbaumandSchmidt**, 1958[17])

It appears, therefore, a new continuum, depending on the focusing on the task or human relationship, in which it may be identified four basic styles:

a) **Directive style**: for the persons to be educated cannot and will not carry out the required activities. The teacher asks the manager what to do student and controls every action;

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[17] Tannenbaum, A.S. and Schmitt, W.H., *How to choose a leadership pattern, Harvard Business Review, 36,* March-April, 1958, 95-101.

b) **Tutorial style:** for persons to be educated which cannot, but want to achieve the respective tasks. The teacher tries to convince, uses, alternatively, suggestions, decisions, information.

c) **Mentoring style:** for the persons to be educated whose skills and motivation to be developed. Educator participates with hints, tips, help, when they are required;

d) **Delegator style**: teacher learners delegate decision-making authority.

It is recommended not only **the adequacy styles to the concrete situation**, but also the successive application of these styles, from the direct to the delegator one: the group of educators and / or are new learning task, the teacher should inform learners what and how to proceed.

The teacher leads directly and autonomously many activities, either in the micro group of students or the class or the school.

6. Psycho-social and transactional knowledge of student and group

Howard Gardner (2000)[18] exploited the multifunctional cross and psycho-social knowledge and transactional human personality. Gardner talks about the following types of intelligence:

- **Linguistic intelligence** is the ability to think in words and to use language to express and appreciate complex meanings;
- **Logical-mathematical intelligence** makes it possible to calculate, quantify, assess propositions and hypotheses, and also complete complex mathematical operations;
- **Spatial intelligence** involves the ability to think in three dimensions, as sailors, pilots, sculptors, painters and architects;
- **Kinetic – body intelligence** refers to the manipulation of objects and physical nuanced skills;
- **Musical intelligence** is obvious for individuals who have sensitivity to reproduce, to hum, to keep the pace and tone;
- **Interpersonal intelligence** is the ability to understand and interact with others;
- **Intrapersonal intelligence** refers to the ability to construct an accurate perception about itself and to use their knowledge to plan and guide their lives.

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[18] Gardner, Howard, *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century.* Basic Books Inc, 2000.

- **Naturalistic intelligence** is to observe patterns in nature, identifying and classifying objects, understanding natural and human systems.

  (N.B: translation is ours)

(a)Knowing the student and the group

Areas	Knowledge forms	Features and appearance
Material dimensions	Somatic itself	Features and physical appearance
		Physical condition and health
	Possessive itself	Possession of objects
		Possession of persons
Personal dimensions	Self-image	Aspirations
		Enumeration of activities
		Feelings and emotions
		Tastes and interests
		Capacity and aptitudes
		Qualities and flaws
		Simple denominations
	Self-identity	Role and status
		Consistency
		Ideology
		Abstract identity
Adaptive dimensions	Self-value	Competence
		Personal values
		Adaptation strategy
	Self-action	Autonomie
		Ambivalence
		Dependency
		Actualisation
		Life style
Socio-cultural dimensions	Concerns and social attitudes	Receptivity
		Domination
		Altruism
	Reference to gender	Simple references
		Attractiveness and social experience
Relationship with other	Reference to other	Empathy
		Expression
	Opinion of others about the self- image of himself	Self-image

(b) Personal and socio cultural managing according to interests and aspirations

Interests and aspirations consist of correspondence between a trend and a needi n the present at the subject, object or behaviour level which corresponds to:

- Perceptual, motor, lexical aspirations, interests and natural aspirations;
- Subjective interests and aspirations;
- Objectives interests and aspirations;
- Rational interests and aspirations: intellectual, social, moral and aesthetic (Emile Planchard, 1976[19]).

(c) Human resources management

From the perspective of resource management class, the teaching action, mainly, should aim at:

- Personal and socio-cultural self-development;
- Ability to solve problems each encounters in real life;
- Ability to generate new problems to solve;
- Ability to make something or provide a service that is valued in each culture;
- Ability to make something or provide a service that is harnessed for the benefit of others.

There cord of human relations groups is well to observe student behaviours, depending on various parameters, such as: the potential expression, sociability versus privacy, peers influence, family influence, potential for learning through interaction, exchanges between peers in organised activities or support playfulness, friendship etc.

8. Management approaches in (peri) education

School development plan is based on **the concept of the contract of the school** as a public organisation in the local community. As such, we consider both education and peri-(education)-daily education in and through the local social community.

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[19] Planchard, Emile, *Introduction to Pedagogy*, Bucharest, 20th Century Pedagogy, 1976.

Figure 1 – School development plan

School time   Out of school time

Pedagogical side

School and grade cycles functioning

Continuation of schoolactivities

Support for studebts in difficulty

Educational and innovative activities

School Contract

Educational and cultural side   (Peri)-education
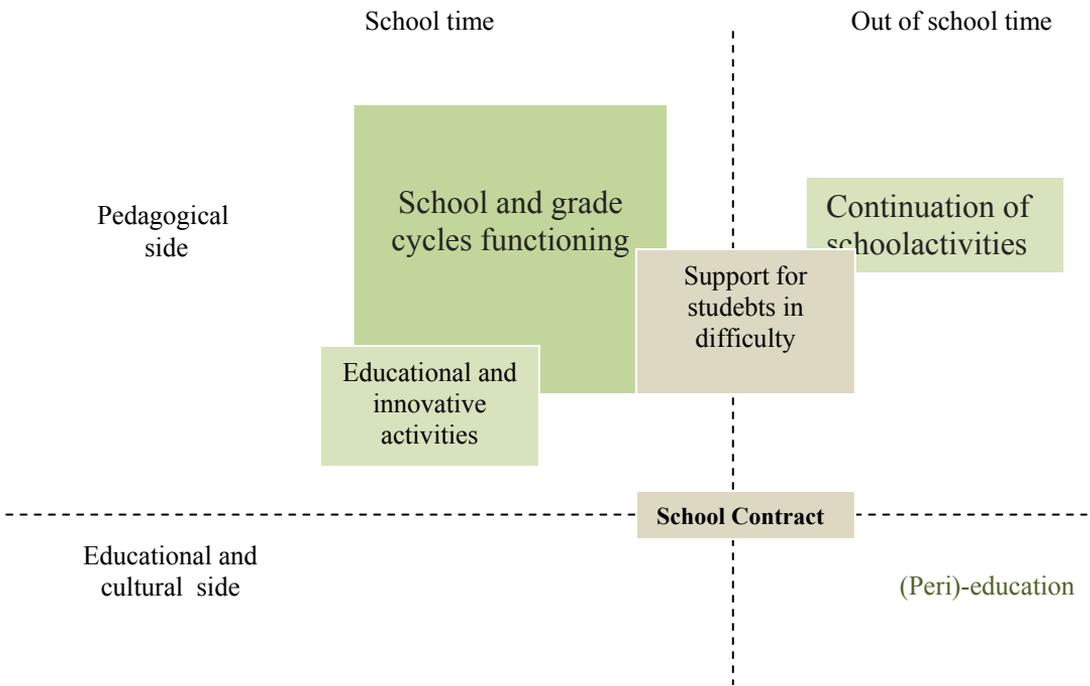
(After Emile Planchard, 1976[20])

Actionable premises of human resources management

Establish a positive interpersonal environment	Identification of criteria for achieving groups Determining classes of values and rules Joint activities between classes
Collaborative learning	Considerations on collaborative group Roles of students Social skills Cooperative learning activities
Conflict management	Common causes of social conflict Participatory management
Learning services	Services incorporation in the school program Reflections on learning of service Services resources
Valuing differences	Teaching learning styles for students

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[20] Ibidem 19.

	Taking and adaptation of learning styles
Developing multiple perspectives	Knowledge of self and group
	Understanding different points of view
	Assuming the role of current events from different perspectives
	Global perspectives of curriculum
	Framing systems
Local and global problem solving	Identify the choice between alternative and solution
Intercultural education	Teaching - learning from multi- and intercultural perspectives
	Understanding cultural diversity through the arts
	Cultural images
Homo faber in interpersonal intelligence	It gives a constructive existence
	Understanding the usefulness of the world built

(e) Relational management

After Gottman (1983)[21], social skills of the students are in the phase of synchronisation with themselves and with others, establishing a common context, exchanging information and exploring similarities and differences, while simultaneously resolve conflicts that they instantly occur. Additionally, Dodge (1983)[22] believes that bullying others is the factor that determines the status of similar groups. The class is comprised of heterogeneous groups, both of a variety of social problems, is connected to inculcate variety of reasons which include: dis - or smooth -related behaviour of a variety of causes.

In conclusion, we see that all European organisational models are structured on the quality at the global and systemic level. School organisation tends to be based on a contract both institutional and community levels. At the organisational level, in our opinion, it is necessary to consider management and classroom organisation, and management of the group of students, in which respect and human

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[21] Gottman, John Mordechai; Katz, Lynn Fainsilber; Hooven, Carole, (1997), *Meta-emotion: How Families Communicate Emotionally*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc., Publisher.

[22] Dodge, K.A., (1989), *Problems in social relationships*, in Behavioral treatment of childhood disorders, edited by E.J. Mash & R.A. Barkley, pp. 222-244, New York: Guilford Press.

personality knowledge are crucial. European models tend to emphasise the involvement of the manager side which imply awareness of status, style and roles of this. Therefore, knowledge of psychosocial and transactional human personality is *sine qua non*.

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PERFORMANCE AGREEMENTS IN DUTCH HIGHER EDUCATION

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Introduction

In the last decades, most governments have been concerned to balance public expenditure. The result has been the growth of funding mechanisms associated with market mechanisms. The governments' main objective has been to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of HEIs, within a regulated context which is clearly related to the state supervision model, where the state fosters competition between the institutions in a higher education market (Horts 2008). Funding allocation methods can be utilized to stimulate universities into more competitive behavior. The reward for a better performance, at least in principle, is supplementary funding (Orr 2007).

Performance-based funding is ex post model. Few countries have implemented this approach, but among them Britain has led the way. The main virtue of performance-based approach to funding is that it is ostensibly meritocratic, rewarding success and improving quality. A performance-based system increases efficiency in the short term. It also provides greater accountability. Performance –based funding is a rational method of moving resources from less well-performing areas to areas where they can be used to greater effect (Geuna, 2003).

Public funding for higher education institutions is mostly oriented to support organizational expenses. Although varying among countries, the major share of this funding is usually attributed directly to higher education institutions and calculated through formula based on the number of students and/or on a historical basis, This funding is critical for supporting the salaries for faculty and administrative staff as well as the support services such as libraries, student administration, human resource department (Horts 2008).

Scarcity of public resources, public budget constraints and constantly reduced public funding for university forces the states to carefully

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consider how effectively their finance is spent on higher education (Horta 2008). In most countries the funding was allocated on the basis of the enrollment which is regarded as input based funding. But the scarcity of public resources led to the emergence of a strong tendency which can be seen towards contract management in higher education sector of USA and of many European countries (Austria, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway).

Austria, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway include agreement negotiations, role-statements or performance contracts as substantial elements in the government-institution relationships but in most cases such contracts have multiple purposes, like stimulating overall performance, quality and national proprieties. These performance contract activities appear to include a multitude of dimensions and indicators. In Germany and Norway it leads to such a broad range of performance areas that all institutions develop in the same direction. The performance contracts do not always appear to result in the intended profiling effects, quality improvement and strategic positioning, in many cases they have transformed the government-institutional relationships into more transparent processes based on dialogue. In addition, like the German Excellence Initiative as well as the performance contracts (Zielvereinbarungen) made HEI much more aware about their own identity (Benneworth, 2011). Contracts and multi-year agreements between the state and higher education institutions are examples of new governance instruments.

As a result of the New Public management policy with the introduction of more market-oriented governance approaches, public authorities have started to use contracts and performance-oriented approaches to shape the budgets of national higher education institutions. Implementation of the New Public Management policy in public sector since 1990s (Pollitt et al., 2007) has led to reforms in the funding of higher education. «Together with the introduction of more market-oriented approaches, public authorities have started to use contracts and performance-oriented approaches to shape the budget of national higher education institutions. Performance-based budgeting seeks to link performance measures to budget allocations and as such it is expected to improve the management and accountability of higher education institutions (Jobgbloed, 2011, 173)

Performance-based funding is higher education finance strategy that links state funding for public higher education institutions with

institutional performance. It represents a fundamental shift in higher education finance – a shift from state inputs to campus outcomes and from institutional needs to state priorities. Performance-based funding is an incentive-based policy instrument predicated on resource dependency theory. This theory posits that changes in resource availability will threaten organizations and encourage adaptation for continued existence. This approach to higher education finance has three main components: goals, measurements and incentives (Harnisch, 2011).

Performance-based funding is a system based on allocating a portion of a state's higher education budget according to specific performance measures such as course completion, credit attainment and degree completion, instead of allocating funding based entirely on enrollment (Miao, 2012)

In the Netherlands performance-based budgeting has been in place since the early 1990s. Performance contracts were introduced recently. Whilst contracting allows for more differentiation between institutions/departments and gives budget holders more freedom to choose their strategy within (national/institutional) budget guidelines, it also has disadvantages. Contracts may have high transaction costs and a tendency to turn into yet another accountability instrument (Jongbloed, 2011, 183)

Higher education sector in the Netherlands

'Government policy on higher education in the Netherlands has over recent years, been strongly focused on enhancing the institutional autonomy of universities, particularly in relation to their non-academic affairs' (de Boer et al., 2007, p.45). The Higher Education and Research Act (WHW) entered into force on August 1993. The Act redefined the administrative relationship between the government and the higher education and research institutions. Previous legislation provided to a large extent for ex ante regulation and planning, assigning a central role to government (de Weert et al., 2007). In 1985 the Ministry published a white paper entitled Higher education: autonomy and quality (HOAK-nota, 1985). 'This is a policy statement heralded a new governance approach, characterized as 'steering from a distance'. Within this approach, the Ministry became less directly involved in the regulation of universities' operations and concentrated more on determining their longer-term orientation' (de Boer et al., 2007, p.47).

Since the mid-1980s in sector of higher education universities received increased entitlements of the ownership of public property, were introduced not only new quality assurance systems but new funding schemes (de Boer et al., 2005; Neave, 1998)

Results of research

In July 2011, the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science published its White Paper on Higher Education, Research and Science, entitled Kwaliteit in verscheidenheid (Quality in diversity). All of the Dutch universities were invited to indicate by spring 2012 how they would respond to the major themes included in the White Paper: improvement of their teaching and learning performance, enhancement of their teaching and research profiles, and alignment with the future's grand challenges and the needs of business and society (Profile of the University of Amsterdam, 2012, p.iii). The parameters for these agreements were defined in a broad agreement with the Association of Cooperating Dutch Universities (VSNU)

In December, the Association of Universities in the Netherlands and the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science signed a Hoofdlijnenakkoord (General Agreement), in which the Dutch universities pledged to sharpen their respective profiles and enter into contracts on their teaching and learning performances based on their profiles. The Ministry subsequently appointed a Review Committee to compare and reflect on the profiles and contracts submitted. The task of the Committee was to evaluate the level of ambition in these submissions, together with the viability of their proposals and the anticipated contribution of these proposals to national policy goals (Profile of the University of Amsterdam, 2012, p.iii). The Review Committee assessed the universities' plans on the basis of certain criteria:

- level of ambition,
- sense of reality,
- alignment with the desired developments on the system level, determination of priorities, differentiation and feasibility.

The Review Committee announced its results in September sending the institutes a letter with the findings and the Committee's chairman, Frans van Vught, officially presented these findings to the State Secretary.

Table 1. Scores for all Dutch universities

University	Selective budget score
University Maastrich	Very good(15)
University Utrecht	Excellent (19)
Erasmus University Rotterdam	Good (14)
RUG	Very good (16)
Wageningen University	Very good (16)
LEI	Very good (16)
Rotterdam University	Very good (16)
University Twente	Very good (16)
UvA	Good (13)
VU	Good (13)
Technical University Eindhoven	Very good (15)
TiU	Good (12)
TUD	Very good (15)

Besides passing its own opinion the Committee also makes a recommendation to the state secretary for Education, Culture and Science on the performance agreements with the higher education institutions. The institutions had to do a final agreement with the state secretary in early November. Part of the financing (7%) will then be dependent on the agreed goals being met (Plans for agreements on performance given the go ahead, 2012).

The Ministry made 5% (€105 million) of the annual teaching grant conditional upon agreement having been reached on the White Paper targets, for example for Maastrich University 5% of the state funding is over €6 million. A further 2% (€38 million) was withheld and will be assigned selectively to the universities on the basis of their profiles (Profile of the University of Amsterdam, 2012, p.iii).

The agreed targets in performance agreements relating to education and success rates are linked to a form of conditional funding, which means that failure to achieve them either in full or in part would put even greater pressure on universities' revenues

The aim of the performance agreements

Government introduced performance agreements in order each university to adopt a more distinctive profile in education and research, both nationally and internationally. The curriculum will also allow for

greater variation, to correspond more effectively with the specific needs and requirements of students.

Government expects that universities in cooperation with industry will translate research results into products and services. In singing the performance agreements, the government gives a guarantee for these ambitious plans with the provision of necessary funding and legislative support.

Performance agreements together with the strategic plan of the university define the directions of development for the following years, for example University of Twente examined the alignment of the ambitions defined in the performance agreements and 'already deployed strategies established in RoUTe'14 plans' (University of Twente Performance Agreements, p.1)

As we can judge from the title 'performance agreements' this type of document must concern setting of the goals and aims of performance in different directions of activity of HEIs – education, research, valorization – 'these agreements are designed to deliver a higher level of performance in a range of areas '.

Universities define the purpose of the agreements of performance in the following way –agreements set out concrete ambitions for the coming years and goals aimed at creating a system that is not only sustainable but first and foremost internationally competitive (University of Twente Performance Agreements).

Performance agreements are aimed to resolve the problem when students fall behind with their studies. One way of achieving this is universities to provide a more ambitious culture in which to study, by improving the quality of teaching staff, by working to ensure a good match between students and their programmes, by selective intake of students and by offering broad-based Bachelor's programmes.

Beside declaring goals and aims in performance agreements, universities define certain measures aimed at the achievement of the beneficial performance, for example, though these measures, the University of Twente aims to substantially improve the pass rates for its Bachelor's programmes, to a greater extent that other universities of technology.

Performance agreement of Utrecht University received the highest score. This document consists of such units as:
  - quality and excellence;

- study success expressed in terms of dropout rate, number of switches and study success rate;
- measures regarding educational intensity and the quality of teaching staff;
- educational profile;
- development of core research areas;
- valorization;
- effective allocation of funds.

Performance agreements of Wageningen University contain the following chapters:
- research ambition (ambitions related to content of the research domain, ambition on the quality of research);
- education ambition (ambition for education, improving study success, quality measures);
- valorization ambition;
- cooperation ambition (international partnership, national partnership).

University of Twente performance agreements concern the following issues: education, research and valorization.

Areas presented in the performance agreements of Dutch universities

Education

The main issues about education: quality and excellence. As it concerns excellence the most important indicator is the number of students enrolled in honours programmes which must rise each year (5% in 2006, 9% in 2010 and 12% in 2016) in Utrecht University. At the same time Wageningen University only plans to start an excellence programme. And University of Twente launched excellence programme called ATLAS, its unique University College of Engineering, in September 2013. The new educational model in place at the University of Twente from September 2013 with a view to enhancing appeal, quality and efficiency is regarded by the Review Committee as an example that 'the University of Twente is pursuing a sound policy with regard to educational differentiation' (Performance agreements signed: government backs ambitious university plans (2012).

As it concerns Bachelor programs Utrecht University will manage to retain 3rd place in the top six of general research universities with the highest number of Bachelor's programmes rated good/excellent by NVAO.

Study success starts with a conscious choice for a study programme, that is why Wageningen University asserts on importance to provide prospective students with realistic information and to be available for personal advice, university should guide students in choosing the options in their learning track that best match their talents and interests (Profile and Performance Agreements Wageningen University, 2012). Study success is expressed in terms of dropout rate, number of switches and study success rate:

- Dropout rate: the percentage of all full-time Bachelor's students (first-year higher education students) no longer enrolled at the institution after one year will decline from 20% in 2006 to 18% in 2010 and to 15% in 2016 (Performance agreements for Utrecht University, 2012). The drop out in the first year in Wageningen University plans is low (15 %). Part of the drop out is inevitable because students were unable to take their first study choice, but the university expects that the first year drop out to increase slightly as a result of both governmental policy, intensive study advice and, possibly a negative BSA. The aim of the Wageningen University is to keep it below 20% (Profile and Performance Agreements Wageningen University, 2012).

University of Twente also plans to have a first year drop-out rate less then 20%.

- Switch: the percentage of all full-time Bachelor's students (first-year higher education students) to switch to another study programme at the same institution within one year will develop from 6% in 2006 to 7% in 2010 to a projected total of 6% in 2016 (the percentage will remain stable due to more effective matching/selection before the start of the study programme and better options for students seeking to switch to another study programme in the first year) (Performance agreements for Utrecht University, 2012, p.4). Switching study programmes in the first year in Wageningen University is a rare phenomenon, 3.5% of the students switched in 2010-2011 in the first year (Profile and Performance Agreements Wageningen University, 2012). University of Twente plans to have first year switch major less than 10 % (University of Twente Performance Agreements, 2012).

- Study success rate: the percentage of all full-time Bachelor's students (first-year higher education students) to re-register at Utrecht University after the first year and obtain a degree certificate at Utrecht University within four years will develop from 69% in 2006 (2003 cohort) to a projected total of 77% in 2016 (2013 cohort) (Performance agreements for Utrecht University, 2012). University of Twente plans to have Bachelor efficiency after 4 years more then 70% (University of Twente Performance Agreements).

Measures regarding educational intensity and the quality of teaching staff:

- Quality of teachers staff: the percentage of permanent lecturers with a basic teaching qualification will grow from 20% in 1999 to 60% in 2010 to a projected total of 80% in 2016. Utrecht University will retrain its position as the Dutch university with the largest percentage of lecturers with a BKO or SKO qualification (Performance agreements for Utrecht University, 2012). At the Wageningen University only 24% of lecturers have a formal University Teacher Qualification (UTQ, BKO). For 2015 the university aims that 45% lecturers are qualified by BKO or SKO, with another 30% are following the UTQ-track. University expects all lecturers to obtain official Teacher Qualification. UTQ is a starting qualification and these courses are focused on strengthening three Wageningen University educational characteristics: relevance for society and industry (translating developments to course content, knowledge of labour market), international (English, multicultural skills and didactics), and inspiring students (innovating education, study skills). (Profile and Performance Agreements Wageningen University, 2012). In University of Twente in 2015 – 45% of the lecturers will have BKO qualification, and university plans that in 2020 their amount will increase to 70 % (University of Twente Performance Agreements).

- Educational intensity: by 2016, the number of scheduled contract hours and other structural education-related hours in the first year of all full-time Bachelor's programmes will total 12-18 hours per week. By 2016 the average number of scheduled contract hours and other structural education-related hours in the second and third years of all Utrecht University Bachelor's programmes will total 12-18 hours per week (Performance agreements for Utrecht University, 2012, p.4). University Wageningen states that education programmes have a relatively high number of contact hours and small groups of students. None of the bachelor plrogrammes has less than 12 contact hours per week. In the

contract hours university are included the hours programmed for lessons and practicals, and examinations. In the social sciences programmes, the contract hours range from twelve to fourteen, in the beta sciences, the contract hours vary from fifteen to twenty-two per week (Profile and Performance Agreements Wageningen University, 2012).

Research

When the government took office in 2010, it appointed nine key sectors that it deems crucial to the economy and employment in the Netherlands. These sectors have been highlighted in the innovation and stimulation policy for the coming years: 1)Agro & food; 2)Horticulture & plant reproduction material; 3) High-tech industry; 4) Energy; 5) Logistics; 6) Creative industries; 7) Life sciences; 8) Chemistry; 9) Water.

Such sectors as agro & food, horticulture & plant reproduction material, life sciences and water are at the core of Wageningen UR's domain, and there are also clear overlaps with such areas of research as energy, logistics and chemistry (Profile and Performance Agreements Wageningen University, 2012).

Utrecht University plans to invest in four strategic themes and research focus areas (including the recruitment of exceptionally talented staff, partnerships and additional funding) as a part of its contribution to nine Dutch Top Sectors and six EU Societal Challenges (Performance agreements for Utrecht University, 2012).

In order to develop research profile Wagwningen Universities defined two instruments – chair plan and strategic funding. Wageningen University has a chair plan in place which registers the chair groups and the chair holders. 'The chair plan policy can be described as 'new for old': when a chair becomes vacant, the university investigates whether developments in research and in education require a new purpose for that chair' (Profile and Performance Agreements Wageningen University, 2012, p.25).

Strategic funds support the development of the research profile of Wageningen University and consists of a fund for investments in the investment themes of Wageningen UR, special PhD programs and a strategic fund for the Wageningen graduate schools. Besides Wageningen University defined ambition on the quality of research which concern the following issues: PhD-candidates, postdocs, tenure tracks, grants, publication and ranking. For example, an important indicator for the efficiency of the PhD. training is the time-to-degree and at Wageningen University the median time to graduation lies at 4.8-4.9 years, in line with

the national average. Wageningen university will implement the 'talents and topics' programs for all graduate schools to further develop the competencies and to increase the employability of postdocs. The tenure track system is focused on attracting top talents, to stay in tenure track, staff have to meet targets set for research, education and valorization. As it concerns ranking, Wageningen University aims to improve its Shanghai ranking in 'Life and Agricultursl Sciences' from the current position (36) to within the top 30 (Profile and Performance Agreements Wageningen University, 2012).

Valorization

'Although valorization and transfer of knowledge is a core activity, students and staff are not always aware that it plays an important role in their education and research' (Profile and Performance Agreements Wageningen University, 2012, p.32). Wageningen University asserts that in order to bring innovation in its domain to its full potential and contribute to the major challenges that the world is facing, university needs to expand and improve its valorization aspect. Wageningen University defines two directions of valorization – valorization through research and its output and valorization through education. For research the university aims to maintain the currently high level of third party funding. Wageningen University supports the knowledge chain within Wageningen UR and works on the improvement of the valorization infrastructure (Profile and Performance Agreements Wageningen University, 2012).

By 2016 Utrecht University will spend at least 2.5 of all public government research grants on activities in the area valorization. The percentage of students enrolled in entrepreneurship courses will increase from 1% in 2006, via 3% in 2010 to a projected total of 5% in 2016 (Performance agreements for University Utrecht).

University of Twente in the context of valorization pays great attention to the number of spin-off companies (University of Twente Performance Agreements, 2012).

Besides education, research and valorization Dutch universities take into consideration such issues as effective allocation of funds and cooperation ambitions. Utrecht University focuses on the allocation of its funds in an effective manner, ensuring that the ratio between overhead and turnover does not exceed 20%. Wageningen University seeks partnerships with strong national and international partners at university

level because university wants to be a major global player in its 'domain with an international profile, relevant for (international) society and industry, inspiring Dutch and international students and staff' (Profile and Performance Agreements Wageningen University, 2012, p.34)

Conclusions

Performance agreements of the Dutch universities which are focused on such areas as education, research and valorization provides a basis for the increase of the efficiency and performance of higher education institutions. They contain qualitative indicators and that is why can be used not only as instrument for planning but also as instrument of evaluation and control of performance. Performance agreements increase the accountability of the higher education institution before state and provide the basis for the efficient funding allocation of the state budget. Besides performance agreements contribute to the positive development of competition between higher education institutions as it concerns such issues as quality of education, research and valorization. The positive experience of the Dutch higher education institutions can be used as the higher education institutions of other countries.

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A TOOLBOX FOR THE NEW UNIVERSITY TEACHER BETWEEN SOLIDARITY, EDUCATION TO THE COMPLEXITY AND DIGITAL SKILLS

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Abstract: *Although training young people has been extensively studied, similar attention has not been given to the training of adult learners already active in the contexts of high professional responsibility. In adult education a more active role on the part of the learners is certainly necessary. In practice this would mean the capacity to capitalize on past experience, the need to redefine the learner's role and finally a dialogue based on exchange and reciprocity between teachers and learners. In order to give greater prominence to the subject, adult education cannot simply be understood as a different and updated version of the "old" pedagogy: the learning dynamics that arise require a different approach, and especially with regard to the type of cognitive involvement at play. In adult training, active involvement by both subjects is a necessary condition for obtaining a positive result.*

The training leads to a conscious evolution of the subject, especially when it comes to an atypical universe consisting of adults active in the same professional context. Compared to traditional training, which is understood as an intergenerational relationship, training which is implemented in a professional context is undoubtedly an unusual challenge.

The traditional model of the University was, by definition, based on a drastic difference between teaching/speaking and learning/listening. This fundamentally dualistic, and practically oppositional model, came to an end when university attendance was opened up to the masses and access was granted to persons outside the university tradition, such as children of non-graduated parents. From that moment on, the teaching style and the ability to involve the learners increasingly became a competitive resource.

However, the real turning point that radicalized the need for an effort to upgrade the teaching skills of teachers took place when the mass media - especially television - imposed itself as a form of elementary cultural socialization. Even more significantly, when the Internet required a paradigm shift from the traditional mainstream media to personalized media such as the PC, tablets and

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smart phones, the skills of the media audiences, and sometimes their self-confidence, increased to the point of seeing themselves in competition with the university teachers. In other words, the cognitive differences on the 'pedestal of the distinction' between those who teach and those who learn, mentioned by Bourdieu, were reduced. This created a real didactic training emergency: at the time of an abundance of media offers and the reduced prestige of the institutions, teaching became strategic to building the authority of teachers and their recognition.

Keywords: *University Teaching, Adult Education, Teaching Innovation, Media Education, Transnational Education.*

The New University and its mission

In today's world, where the imbalances and difficulties in managing the complexity seem to indicate the beginning of a new phase of humanity, the University needs to adapt without betraying its traditional mission. This does not mean, however, that the University should abandon its historical functions of training and disinterested search by caving in to the fad of the day and become the uncritical protagonist of fashion and of a certain "standardization" of its work and its protagonists. On the contrary, we believe that the greatest contribution that the University - and only the University - can give to the development of society is that of maintaining, within the study of issues of general interest, critical thinking, the value of objectivity, and the 'passionate commitment'; in short, the habit of thinking aimed at a better understanding of being human within the framework of history. This does not however exclude creativity or the specific characteristics of the individual disciplines, including those of the hard sciences. Indeed, only within an interpretative framework based on problem awareness, doubt and the understanding of the consequences of investigation and scientific production on people, groups, and on the future of humanity will university teaching and research acquire more relevance. Focussing on the humanistic culture does not mean abandoning the complexity of contemporary life in pursuit of various a-temporal nirvanas. *The University remains strongly anchored to the docks of the present in preparation for the departure to the seas of the future.*

Seen as an academy for free of scientific research, grounded in rational thought, the university institution emerged at the time of Abelard, whose

name is linked to the history of higher education in Paris and from here, freedom of research and autonomy in spreading of knowledge was born. It was here that the free spirit and creativity, in dialogue with the civil authorities, began. The strength of this institution derived from the harmony existing between the goals of higher education, on the one hand, and the major societal needs, on the other. These shared the mutual need to counter oppressive sovereignty and the excessive bureaucratic organization of things. The 'philosophical' university was to be the barometer of this movement of spiritual education in the world and it created the setting for the main expressions of the civic spirit of the time: the measure against the authoritarianism of any kind. However, once abstract philosophy began abandoning the search for the true nature of things, modernity and the need to take sides started the decline of the academic institution. After three centuries of intense existence, and isolated from the real world, the French university was in a state of agony by the time of the French Revolution.

While avoiding innovation and hanging on to a teaching anchored in the past and struggling to maintain dogmas far removed from actuality, the university remained deaf to the new currents of thought. Its ideas failed to have any impact outside its own academic walls, and the changes at work in society at large failed to penetrate it.

This example from the history of European higher education was not chosen by chance. This is an example of a serious oversight due to recurring causes in the evolution of the university: isolation from the social context, absolute submission in the face of institutional decision-makers, and a detachment from the problems of real life.

As early as the 80s, theoreticians, considering the errors in the history of the university, proposed some guidelines to ensure the repositioning of the university with regard to the various internal and external stakeholders. Among these guidelines, the following two may be mentioned:

a) the development of a critical spirit in the learning process which enhances the "general culture" as a vehicle for science education, cultural and civic education. This is especially important in the era in which the university has been opened up to ever greater numbers of students (Touraine, 1980);

b) the transformation of the University in the spirit of the democratization of access and the promotion of continuing education by putting the energies and the results of research and education at the

service of the community and situations requiring urgent intervention (Carton, 1983).

For society as a whole, the University should be a source of orientation for values by offering action models, cognitive, habitudinal and behavioural styles.

The proliferation of the social functions of the University - centres of teaching, research, production but also generator of moral values and behavioural patterns - has resulted in a shift from a self-referential system to one that is open, flexible, receptive to reform and innovation, as well as becoming interdisciplinary; a responsible and autonomous University practicing the principles of efficiency and administrative effectiveness, cultivating more democratic participation and articulating innovation and tradition[1]. All of these "amendments" summarize the essential features of the need for change that the European University has experienced since the 80s. This reformist direction has been even further radicalized since the early years of the third millennium, at times giving the impression that the succession of laws and protocols have been used as a compass to "play it by ear", but without any clear end goal. In other words, it is not enough to simply steer north; we need to know what and who will be waiting for us at the other end.

In general, but with particular reference to the Italian situation, which is the main subject of this paper , what is apparent is a sense of approximation, which will have medium to long-term consequences; university policies have abdicated their universal vocation of contributing to the establishment and planning of the society of the future. The issue becomes even more urgent when it comes to university teaching, a kind of Cinderella of the Italian system, entrusted to a vocational calling (if any) and the good sense of the individual teachers, and only rarely stimulated and enhanced through specific updating and training programs. It is not surprising therefore, that in Italy teaching is considered little more than of residual variable in the evaluation of teachers for the purpose of career advancement.

Although late, the Italian academic community is trying to respond and rectify this issue. It is doing so with pedagogical optimism which is reflected in the naming of a television program of the Sixties: Non è mai troppo tardi (It is never too late).

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[1] Reformes et innovations dans li enseignement, supérieur, "Dossier di information B.I.E.", nr. 3/1985.

Old and new knowledge for new University

Starting from these premises, and investigating university teaching from a cross-disciplinary point of view and with particular attention to the Italian situation, the objective of this paper is to arrive at a proposal aimed at training university teachers, regardless of their specific scientific fields.

At the basis of any training course - regardless of the level and audience - several principles should be anchored in the idea of the common good and the total knowledge base that makes up the university. A few years ago, encouraged the recovery of a cross-sectional awareness of the scientific disciplines, Hessel and Morin reflected on the true essence of teaching at all levels, with the aim of maintaining balance and harmony in society.

It is essential, yes, to teach humanism, but also what the human being is in its triple nature: biological, individual and social. It is essential to spread a clear consciousness of the human condition, its history, its twists and turns, its contradictions and its tragedies. It is essential to teach human understanding in order to promote solidarity and brotherhood. It allows us to understand our identity and our differences relative to each other, to recognize its complexity rather than reduce it to a single, generally negative identity. It is essential to teach knowledge of the planetary era that we live in, its opportunities and its risks, including individual and collective problems, of our era marked by globalization. It is essential to teach how to deal with the uncertainties that every individual in the community inevitably encounters, the history of nations; uncertainties that have worsened in the beginning of the twenty-first century for ourselves, our society, our humanity (Hessel, Morin, 2012).

Today, therefore, more than ever, we need broad-based knowledge which can help address complex and multidimensional problems, even outside the fortified citadel of individual disciplines. Making explicit reference to Weber's thought, we must admit that in our time the institutions and, in particular, the University may regain its centrality on two conditions: on the one hand by continuing to be a repository of knowledge and tradition which permeates and gives shape the life of society and its evolution; on the other hand, becoming and "appearing" much more functional and close to the learners themselves; that is to say, young people and adults who see in the university a guide towards the future.

There is a need to invent a specific educative tradition aimed at accompanying people in the complexity of modern society. If universities are to be the frontier of change, then there is only one way to reduce the

discomfort inevitably created by the new demands of society and by the increased level of social knowledge: this way is precisely a re-evaluation of teaching as a strategy of socialization and investment for future generations.

While it is true that there is the risk of chasing after fads and losing sight of its historical identity, of *what it has always been*, it is also true that without undergoing procedures for updating and "mobilization" of knowledge there is no future, and only a *narrow self-referential alternative* remains. Training can open the doors to society and to change, without pursuing the ephemeral scraps with which the new so annoyingly presents itself. Focussing on training should therefore be seen as a decisive strategy for the university and not as a complacent way to link itself to modernity. When all of society changes and dynamism becomes compulsive and incomprehensible, only studying, sharing of educational situations, encounters and maieutics can restore stronger the mental preparedness which is adequate to the new challenges facing society.

A bridge in history to save the University and its role in the future

These transformations and the changing needs of society and, consequently, of the University community, too require the identification of some transversal knowledge in order to enable the main purpose of university education: fostering greater harmony and synergy between the various instances that make up society as a whole. Above all, the reform of education, including that of the university, should start from the words of Rousseau's Emile, "I want to teach them to live." In this complex system of knowledge aimed at helping students to learn how to live, the training of university teachers, which in turn will be transmitted to their students, must not overlook some of the issues developed by Edgar Morin (2001) in his book *The Seven kinds of knowledge necessary to the education of future* and further developed in a subsequent study.

"The reform would introduce, at every level of education, from primary school to university, the following subjects: the knowledge of knowledge, knowledge of the human; the ability to deal with uncertainty; trinitarian ethics (individual-knowledge-species)" (Morin, 2011, p. 141)

To achieve this aim several fundamental educational objectives still need to be specified. Among these are: to understand what is meant by knowledge, its cognitive systems and to recognize their respective strengths and especially their weaknesses and susceptibility to error; to understand the psychology of the age and characteristics of the education

of young people and adults; to learn about the communicative opportunities and risks; to be available to question the purpose and contribution of the individual disciplines to the development of humanity; to be open to the use of new teaching methods and teaching innovation; to know how to promote innovation and adaptation of curricula; to have the skills needed to address local and global challenges facing the University; to understand the media and communication technologies as strategies to approach students and the various disciples, and for the transmission of shared knowledge rather than as danger of trivialization and vulgarization of science.

The examination of pedagogical, medialogical, and philosophical literature, as well as an intelligent reading of the data regarding the main developmental directions of society, requires identifying some key points in the training of teachers as this will, in turn, affect the quality of training of learners.

- – educating to educate;
- – educating towards an interdisciplinary perspective;
- – educate towards internationalization;
- – educate for integration and solidarity;
- – educate to divulge;
- – educate about the media (developed in section *Findings. Towards a model of media education for the University teachers*).

1. Educate to educate. The first question calls for a renegotiation of the three key issues that are at the basis of any process of instructional design: What to transmit? Who to transmit to? How to transmit?

The new trends in the mode of transmission of knowledge and life in the *age of access* (Rifkin, 2000), call for a radical reassessment of the previous answers to these questions. *The answer to the first question is not limited to exclusive focus on pure knowledge*. Knowledge is made available by the great Library of Alexandria which is continuously replenished by the media as a whole, but in particular by the Internet as a meta-media. Instead, what is not easy to find outside of the walls of schools and universities is precisely the questioning of knowledge creation; the chain of events that generate a discovery or a thought; the strong emotional surge, which is both human and humanistically inspired; the models, the aesthetics, that which can be kept and what we should leave out of the history of a discipline or a phenomenon; empowerment that knowledge alone can give us.

In a world of information overload, the diversity of sources available for obtaining information becomes an exacerbated response to the increasingly felt need of the individual to control reality through constant updating. This becomes one of the main concerns of modern actors, who add a different issue to the economic crisis and the crisis of values, namely, an expression of the difficulty of controlling and selecting the sources of information at their disposal. This is especially true when the earthquake of digital media upsets the balances of the traditional economy of attention (Goldhaber, 1997; Reeves *et al.*, 2008). University teachers can no longer control this trend by competing with the various information sources. They can, however, act as a tool in guiding student orientation by teaching them how to distinguish valid information from partial or misleading information. The professors may be bearers of a vision of the whole and of the integration of phenomena into the complex alchemy of human history. In doing so, they would facilitate not only the understanding of single phenomena within whole, but above all, the return of a sense of integration, of responsibility and membership of the pupils with respect to society and to the world they "inhabit".

*The second question, "Who to transmit to?", s*hould accompany the teachers into the universe of their students, both young and old, with their specific characteristics, their cultural behaviours , their passions, the crises they experience, their suffering and their future projections. Michel Serres calls the young people of today the Tom Thumbs since they use their thumbs for most activities, from writing text messages, online experiences, interactions and searches for information in order to better carry out the activities related to job seeking or leisure pursuits. Although they are not always digital natives, the modern Tom Thumbs are hyper-connected and communicate with each other through the Internet, through Facebook and Twitter (CENSIS 2013), watch TV on the Internet and do not feel politically engaged. Compared to previous generations they have on their side an ease and naturalness of access and show a great need to recover their roots, history and place in society. Therefore, the differences between the youth and adults in the third millennium might be considered in terms of access to information mediated by technology. All areas of social life, once exclusively mediated by traditional agencies and individuals themselves are now renegotiated in the light of the presence and use of technology: free time, training (online courses, research materials, the use of the tablet, video, educational products, books etc.), work (job seeking and work as online research, preparation for work, with the training in

working in the media in schools and universities), travel, health, and finally, interpersonal relationships.

University training, therefore, cannot turn a blind eye to these transformations. In fact, by merely being aware of these, the university can transform technologies into new opportunities for teaching / learning, and building bridges between the generations rather than erecting walls.

How to transmit? In a changed world the question, "How to transmit?" becomes the true cornerstone of education. The differences of opinion between the younger and older generations, Internet users and non-Internet users, teachers and students, are often evident: it is as if the use of this media conditions thought, or opinion, and more or less decisively determines the choice to immerse oneself into the online environment. The same kind of relationship to the internet is presented as a factor of "interpretive community". In fact, hyper-connectivity further accentuates the differences between people. The challenge of this project becomes then, just this, to create a "place", a common space of sharing between generations and between the community of teachers and students. That is to say, a place where ideas of reconciliation, facilitators of social, cultural and even economic capital, can dialogue. This complexity threatens to almost completely ruin pre-established prescriptive methods. Teachers are urged to undertake continuous search for the most appropriate strategies to address evolving situations, helping students to "learn to live", but also to know, be themselves and to transform individual capital into social capital and vice versa.

The reasoning that underlies the entire preparation and updating of teachers is based on a number of key dimensions, which see, in the continuum between theory and practice, a teaching strategy and a tool for mutual growth of the whole community participating in the processes. On the one hand, the aim is to enrich the technical and socio-cultural preparedness of the teachers, who have often had significant experience in their own fields. Such a strategy will be able to enhance interchange and sharing with colleagues from other fields of study. But equally involved in these processes of exchange are also teacher trainers of whom many have experiences in various Italian universities. Gathered around the key question of improvement and enhancement of teaching as a strategy of evaluation and transmission of knowledge, these trainers, in turn, are involved in situations of understanding and elaboration of their knowledge according to the needs and specificity of this new community of shared interests. In short, we are dealing with a real laboratory in which

competition should be replaced by a more profitable and value-adding collaborative effort of all participants in the educational process.

In doing so, one creates a virtuous circle, requiring conscious management between individual learning and the learning organizations to which they belong. Furthermore, these processes may also become extreme favourable incentives for the creativity of teachers and students as part of a translational process, which is stimulated by contact with "other" knowledge and is expressed through the ability to transfer content, techniques, languages, metaphors of knowledge from one context to other (Cinque, 2010, p. 63).

The University, therefore, should recuperate and update its mission of becoming a meeting space: a space of teaching and university life based on the connections and development of the network of knowledge and expertise located within an academic environment (Siemens, 2004). Lectures, seminars, research shared with students, dissertations, multimedia examinations and project work must be integrated with everyday activities in some universities: lectures, debates, panel discussions, analysis of creative events such as concerts and theatrical shows, creativity techniques, and participation in creative and / or innovative experiences

Once it is clear that there is healthy need for university enhancement and an updating of its educational mission, the other dimensions that we have identified as critical to the training of university teachers can be explained quite naturally.

2. Educate towards interdisciplinary perspective. The Third Millennium University professor has to ensure superior teaching that takes into account the complexity of contemporary society, oscillating between the reassertion of local cultures and the unstoppable dynamics of globalization. Almost all disciplines, from medicine to engineering, sociology to physics and human geography, seek a real interdisciplinary debate, Indeed, Morin talks about a "blindness of a mode of knowledge which, by partitioning off knowledge, disintegrates fundamental and global problems which require a trans-disciplinary knowledge." (Morin 2011, trans. it. p. 5)

3. Educate towards internationalization. Internationalization is an integral part of a process of the globalization of knowledge, of free movement of knowledge and mutual enrichment. Today we share many

more things and responsibilities than in the past with foreigners, or "the other": our problems, "economic, environmental, religious and political are global and have little chance of being solved unless people, so distant from each other, unite and work together as they have never done before [...] we may think here of global warming, fair trade regulation, protection of the environmental and animal species; the future of nuclear energy and to the dangers associated with nuclear weapons; the movement of workers and the definition of decent working conditions; protecting children from drugs trafficking, sexual abuse and illegal work. All of these issues can be addressed effectively only at the supranational level" (Nussbaum 2010, p. 95).

But this humanistic understanding, which is, in some ways a bit romantic, is hidden behind the curtain of collaboration and networks organized according to economic benefits. It is no coincidence therefore, that for some years now, universities are in a competitive relationship among themselves at both the international and national level. The rankings that measure the performance of universities function as tools of advertising visibility and end up giving rise to a 'stock exchange' of universities, based on algorithms that involve numbers of students, teachers, funding, spin offs, technological innovation etc. (La Rocca, 2013, p. 95).

In this context there is no denying the importance of the meta-communicative function of languages in international circulation and in publications in foreign journals. This is fundamental to making national scientific production available to the global community. Were this not the case there would be a risk of falling into localism and self-referencing. But all this should not be confused with the quality of individual scholars and their scientific work and teaching. We need to think critically about the mystique of internationalization. Appropriately enough, Beck speaks about overcoming the container model of nation in order to explain social phenomena: to study any social phenomenon one cannot but help studying local facts in relation to their global consequences.

4. Educate for integration and solidarity. The very idea of society and being together is based on integration: it is a constant game of mirrors, identity, identification and recognition which makes the exclusion or inclusion become foundations of the quality of life within the society (Santoro 2005). But integration in contemporary society is measured with a deeper dimension, with less clear rules: individualization.

«Individualization is at the same time, cause and effect of autonomy, of freedom and personal responsibility, but also has, as a downside, the decay of older forms of solidarity, the atomization of individuals, self-centeredness and, basically, what could be termed *metastasis of the Ego*» (Morin 2005, p. 43).

University teaching must take these processes into account. It must do everything possible to create opportunities for collaboration instead of competition to deal with crisis situations and to act as a platform of stability and strength in a society described by scholars as "unstable" and "liquid" (Bauman, 2000). On the other hand, life together involves identification, seeing "Soi -même comme un autre" (Ricoeur, 1990). It implies the cultivation of the sense of encounter, respect and sharing among cultures. With this in mind, even before being taught, solidarity must be seen as the connective tissue that guarantees solid human relationships and solidarity underlying the way of acting for all members of the community. Indeed, solidarity must first be experienced by the university itself as something indispensable for ensuring its identity and its mission. Through their style of work and orientation towards knowledge, teachers will provide an imitable model of solidarity. It is clear that the university-community, with a strong ethical identity, such as that which we have described will be an institution able to provide answers relevant to the needs of society and its people. We have to be prepared to deal with the globalization of economics, knowledge, information, and, necessarily, also of human needs. The network technology metaphor may be applied with some effectiveness to the idea of solidarity: networks - between people, between people and institutions, public and private institutions and enterprises, including the elderly, adults and young people – which make it possible to not feel alone and give back a sense of security and social harmony.

5. Educate to divulge. The cyclone of the Internet has shocked the world, and as result, cannot but give rise to issues and stimulate new research questions. Digitalization in the form of a media earthquake, has upset the equilibrium of the traditional economy of attention, making us discover previously unsuspected practices and relationships which are generally full of lived experiences and planning and anything but "media snacks", devoid of nutritional value and equally devoid of values and culture, therefore, a waste of time (Jenkins, 2013).

The question of teaching methods and learning environments is critical to current developments in the diffusion of knowledge. One should certainly intensify the exploration and experimentation with new ways and methods to enable the integration of the various elements mentioned above. The dissemination of results and best practices is essential and should be further stimulated. The *dissemination of knowledge*, in fact, has for several years been a topic of great importance and the subject of an expanding debate within the international scientific community. In recent times, questioning the mode of communication of research results has become more pressing. The European Union itself has been urging for the communication and dissemination of research results (see, for example, Horizon 2020, the European Framework Programme for Research and Innovation, Grant Agreement, General Conditions).

The experiences of distance learning and of 'cooperative education', which bring the academic world and industry together in the context of integrated projects, working methods and teaching methods for groups (groups of teachers, professionals, students) look promising, as do all approaches that promote the spirit of openness, comparison of approaches and disciplines, or the acquisition of skills. Far from merely coinciding with the activities of communication and publicity of experiences, practices, methodologies, knowledge, as well as publishing products tangible, dissemination rather aims at exploiting the results, presenting itself as a process of co-operation, exchange and sharing aimed at the enrichment and circulation of knowledge.

Findings. Towards a model of media education for the University teachers

Using the experience of study and research in the sociology of communication, which is often contaminated by aspects of Media Literacy, our proposal is to start from the recent affinities between education and communication.

The same differences between youth and adults in the third millennium could be evaluated in terms of technologically mediated access knowledge and information. All dimensions of social life, first mediated only by the traditional agencies are now renegotiated in the light of the presence and use of technology. And neither school nor family can escape these changes.

We cannot avoid thinking, then, with Michel Serres, on the future anthropological mutations generated by contamination among young

people, and even children from a fragile age, and a digital environment in which they almost constantly "live".

«Digital technologies disrupt the traditional anthropological paradigm. Virtuality, universal connectivity and access to sources of information are reshaping the cognitive abilities of children and distribute knowledge differently. Knowledge is no longer there, outside, remote, rough, and often distancing; it is now in your pocket, on your doorstep, without mediation, while the major mediators - the school system, but also the institutions of politics and the society of the spectacle – continue to shine, like stars long dead, unaware of their own end» (Serres, 2012).

The virtuous encounter between the fields of education and communication could lead to positive consequences in both areas: for science education the leap implies an approach to the world and the practices of the real lives of people, children, the youth and adults. On the other hand, communication, which is often identified with media popularization, could find an ennobling content education and a field of action and experimentation. What is certain now is the power of transformation that communication has on people. Therefore, only a strong synergy between the education and communication would guarantee the democratic exercise of the right to education and information.

Table 1. Education and communication. A comparative map

Education	Communication
Accompanying function	Does not report the normality of life but emphasises the miraculous and traumatic dimension of the world
Focus on the individual	Watchdog function
Training by objectives	Casual and unstructured training
Transfer of culture and concepts	Means of information, education and entertainment
Strategies and methods	Standardised structure and sloganeering
Standardization	Controlled improvisation/unstructured training
Mediated socialization	Non-mediated socialization
Generates significant changes in attitude and behaviour	Generates change in attitude and behaviour

Source: our own data elaboration

To bring teachers to the tools of communicative modernity, our training proposal will consider technologies as both means of overcoming distances with students and, at the same time, learning tools.

Educating about the media means training the mind to think critically, to be up to date with the needs of the changing times, in terms of innovation of languages and alliances between stakeholders, at the very moment in which the distribution of knowledge, encouraged by the media, implies a democratization of access and increased of life opportunities. Processes of media education contribute to the achievement of at least four socially relevant goals: the re-appropriation of the mediating role of teachers and their awareness of the feelings of their students through a full-emersion in communication studies and production; the acquisition by the students, at the level of technological literacy, of the necessary tools for a critical understanding of how much learnt, (self-taught and digital natives); the ability to observe the participation in the media of young people and the way in which they change consumption when making their consumption productive; last but not least, the guarantee of fairness due to the gradual, and therefore significant reduction, in inequalities.

This methodological framework facilitated by the media will, from time to time, allow for the inclusion of single issue discussions among and with teachers, taking into account the overall dimensions outlined above.

Conclusions

We have taken for granted, therefore, that in university studies a vacuum is being is created. There is a widening gap between knowledge and practice, between the academic walls and life outside, between research and teaching, including the experts and those who learn through "experience". In contemporary society, Sennett recalls, the sense of experience, meeting, and inquisitive opening up to things, has been lost; in contrast, rather than also putting its experiences to use in improving teaching, the university has often closed itself off from the rest of society in a self-referential reality. All this leads to a crisis of legitimacy for knowledge and the university.

Favoring this distance between the academic world and social life, as well as between teachers and students, the gap between the media users also plays an important role: to the extent that the new technologies do away with mediation while the old institutions of learning close themselves off and protect themselves by producing institutions and

bureaucratic devices for superficial self-assessed quality certification.

Instead of closing itself off in these knowledge fortresses, universities need to open up and be fertilized by the practices of life: pure fruit, in fact, goes crazy, as the anthropologist James Clifford said. It is here that education and the recovery of the pleasure of teaching can play an important role as long as teachers know and learn how to explain the products of their research as well as the methods used to obtain them: as argued by Michel de Certeau, teachers should not be afraid to submit their research to criticism (also from their own students), as they do from their own colleagues. In doing so, they do not close off the results of their intellectual labours to the future. On the contrary, they open them up (1974, p. 98-99). Indeed only in this way will the value of their research be amplified among those it are offered to students and society as a whole.

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THE POTENTIAL OF HUMANISTIC LEARNING IN THE ROMANIAN SCHOOL IN THE CONTEXT OF NEW EDUCATION METHODS AND OF THE PRESENT SOCIETY

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Abstract: *Humanistic learning in the Romanian school, in the context of new education methods and of the present society, can be seen as a viable alternative to the normative approaches of the educational practice. The potential of the humanistic approach to education has to stand, firstly, for a balanced approach of the cognitive and the affective; at the same time, teachers will have to accept the role of facilitators/assistants of the children/students in the education process, having the obligation to respect their uniqueness, and to apply those methods, procedures, and instruments capable to maximize their potential for growth and for psychological development. We believe that reaching an optimum balance between the interpretative paradigm and the normative paradigm in the current educational practice would generate the defining elements allowing "education to start from and come back to the pupils".*

Keywords: *pupil/student-social product, pupil/student-social actor, pupil/ student-social agent, non-directivism, facilitator, stimulating-personal model.*

I. Origin of the humanistic approach to education

In the beginning of the 20th century, the influence of traditional education was strongly challenged by the new humanistic trends arising in education, especially in the US. From that perspective, the representatives of the progressive current were John Dewey, Francis Parker and Charles Judd. They thought that the asymmetrical teacher-pupil relationship had to be humanized in order to ensure an optimal affective framework for the personal development of the students. John Dewey asserted that the ultimate purpose of education was to value the

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specificity of each learning situation, and not to provide general solutions; in that context, education becomes a life process.[1]

The founders of humanistic psychology who have carved the way for the humanistic approach in education are: A. Maslow, C. Rogers, and A. Combs. Later on, C.H. Patterson, A.L. Brown, Gordon, and Purkey added their own contributions; they have developed aspects concerning the role of affectivity in the learning process, the teacher-pupil relationship, as well as the importance of the students' self-image. We should also mention H. Kliebard, P. Freire, and W. Pinar. However, the most marked impact on education was that of Maslow, Rogers, and Combs.

Maslow has created the classical theory of human needs (the *theory of self-actualization*), and in his works he asks the educators to "*let the children grow*!" In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary to know the basic principles, which can be found in his work, *Toward a Psychology of Being*, 1968. We deem the following extremely significant: each individual is born with a certain inner nature; individuals control the largest part of their own behavior, therefore children must be given the chance to participate in their own development, by making certain decisions; parents and teachers must give children the chance to make wise choices and satisfy their need of safety, love, comfort and self-esteem. In *the education process*, Maslow's theory requires the use of three principles: *focus on the personal experience of the child; emphasizing human qualities (creativity, freedom to choose, personal worth); the importance of the psychological development of the human potential of the people who are learning.*

Carl Rogers has launched the *theory of therapeutic learning* as a challenge to the psychoanalytical and psychometric approaches to personality. He thought that people had two fundamental needs (the *continuous need for potential development and the need for being valued*), but the development of a strong, healthy personality also required "the absence of conflicts between the value conditions and the inner self-actualization impulse". In education, Rogers has brought forward the idea of *student-centered education*, using nondirective and therapeutic methods to facilitate learning. Also, his humanistic theory in education is based on the following concepts: the concept of reality (the child lives according to a perceptual map which is not the reality); nondirective teaching (therapy is an efficient learning method); phenomenology (the process of self-actualization and self-worth); the motivation of learning – "we only learn

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[1] Dewey, J., 1938, Experience and Education, New York, Macmillan, p. 69.

what is truly important and relevant for us as people, by promoting empathy, the unconditionally positive attitude and the congruence". Synthetically, Rogers' theory[2] can be contained in the following requirement: "*Education has to start from and come back to the student*!"

A. Combs has been searching for an alternative to the use of the cognitive perspective in the humanistic approach to education, assuming that "*all the behaviors of a person are the direct result of the perceptive field valid at the moment of their behavior*"[3]. That means any learning situation would be projected and accomplished from the student's perspective, since the personal perception of the person who is learning is very important. The syntagm synthesizing his position could be: "*The teacher is a facilitator, an assistant of the child.*"

The humanistic approach to education from the perspective of humanistic educational theories (the theory of self-actualization, the theory of therapeutic learning) and the postmodern humanistic approaches (the autobiographical method, the critical analysis and the trespassing strategy) are leading to the specific characteristics of teachers (school counselors) and of students (clients). The teachers have the obligation to respect the uniqueness of each pupil/student, and to apply those methods, procedures, and instruments capable of maximizing the growth and development potential thereof. Pupils/students as clients must become active participants, aware of their own becoming and formation by making decisions on what they will learn and how they will learn. However, in such conditions, a change of paradigm is needed.

In order to get to know the humanistic educational theories, one has to know first how education is seen and what the characteristics of humanistic theories are. *Education* is defined as follows:

- a human phenomenon, problematic situations, pure consciousness (Kliebard, Freire);

- personal becoming, autonomy, heart and soul (Pinar).

Beyond syntagms, the humanistic theory based on values and on the balance between the emotional, psychic and intellectual, sees *education* as a*: reflection, rethinking, redefining and reinterpreting* of educational experiences.

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[2] Snyders, M., *Where are nondirective pedagogies headed?* EDP Publishing House, Bucharest, 1978.

[3] Combs, A., *The Professional Education of Teachers*, Allyn and Bacon, Boston, 1965.

The characteristics of humanistic theories, in the educational context, are:
- focus on the individual as the subject of their own formation;
- inducing personal development by actions of self-awareness;
- selecting contents depending on the needs of the trained person;
- free access to knowledge guided by motivational and personal orientation;
- fostering resorting to multiple sources;
- exercising teaching authority by nondirective means.

II. Nondirective pedagogy and the stimulating-personal model

In the formation and development of human personality, a cardinal aspect is, first of all, the system by which the information/knowledge is organized and introduced. That system must ensure a motivating study to the pupil/student, must be structured along "the model of a well-rooted tree" that creates the possibility of acquiring basic knowledge, so that later on, the primary beneficiaries of education are able to develop though their own efforts; in that context, the development of capacities, abilities and competences creates a pupil/student who will be a winner both in their personal life, and in their professional life.

Starting from the "model of a well-rooted tree", we have to clarify the concept of model; the word comes from the Latin *modus*, meaning "measure". Didactic models are a product of scientific activity, a "scientific convention used both by the teacher, and by the researcher, for the purpose of building an educational epistemology structure related to the teaching and learning processes" (Jimenez, Gonzales, Ferreres, 1989)[4]. Cerghit I. (2002) introduces the pedagogical option that didactic models answer to practical needs: "Due to the different nature and to the special complexity of the specific phenomena to solve, process-based have been designed in the concrete form of didactic models or systems, relatively distinct, aimed at structuring the teaching and learning processes"[5].

Neacşu Ioan (1999) believes the "didactic models have characteristics which make them useful, both theoretically and methodologically: the essence-focusing, simplifying character in relation to the structure of the process, facilitating the understanding and manipulation of components,

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[4] Apud Romiţă B. Iucu, 2001, *School Training. Theoretical and Applicative Perspectives*, Polirom Publishing House, Iasi.
[5] Apud Păun Emil, Potolea Dan, 2002, *Pedagogy. Theoretical Foundations and Applicative Approaches*, Polirom Publishing House, Iasi.

as well as of the accentuated methodological character, with an increased operative potential, focused on building the model structure; the transparent, analyzable character; the prospective character; the productive character; the explicative character; the transferable character, in the meaning of adaptation to a large range of educational facts, phenomena and processes".[6]

There is a great *variety of didactic models*, but from the *humanistic perspective* on education, we believe that the operational choice of *Lesne (1977)* is an efficient and relevant one, since the entire approach is related to the *dominant formative goal*. In an adapted form, the synopsis of the above-mentioned author (pp. 178-179) is as follows[7]:

Characteristics	*Pedagogic action models*	
	Transmitting-normative	*Stimulating-personal*
1.Anchor	The social and cultural requirements of this stage.	The resources of the people being formed as internal dynamic and creative forms; the motivational system par excellence.
2. Logics of the pedagogic work	Strictly determined and focused on the individual as the object of formation.	Determination within the situation, focused on the individual as the subject of their own formation.
3. The action dominant	Providing content through a didactic activity focused on the individual.	Inducing personal development by actions of self-awareness within small groups.
	Accepting the idea of objective and cumulative knowledge, which must be acquired by transmission. Strong pressure from scientific contents. The need for a prior assessment identifying the starting point for the subject in	The recognition of the existence of various forms of knowledge, but while accepting the idea that their usefulness is relative. Selection of contents depending on the needs of the person undergoing the formation. The need for a prior action on the attitudes and motivations to clear or strengthen the personal

[6] Neacşu Ioan, 1999, *Training and Learning*, 2nd edition, revisited, EDP Publishing House, Bucharest.

[7] Lesne M., 1977, *Travail pedagogique et formation d`adultes*, PUF, Paris.

	their search for knowledge, for an adaptation and facilitation of the transmitted cognitive speech.	offer of the person undergoing the formation.
4.Relations with the knowledge	The pedagogy of the model, which is represented by the teacher's offer, by the contents established and required by the latter. The teacher as main source.	Pedagogy of free access to knowledge, guided by the motivational and personal orientation. Fostering resorting to multiple sources.
	Accepting the pedagogic authority and its direct exercise.	Refusal to explicitly exercising the teaching authority and expressing that authority by nondirective means.
5. The power ration in the didactic relationship	Minor delegations of authority to the people undergoing formation.	Creating means of joint management and self-management of power within the groups.
	Quantitative and standardized control of knowledge: sanctions are the prerogative of the teachers.	Quality, self-assessing control: sanctions come from the group.
	The teachers, who can, however, intermediate access to other specialists as well.	The leaders or teachers in the position of leaders, having the role of releasing the latent forces of the person and the group, in a self-forming direction.
6. Main agents of change	Reproduction of the system it is anchored in.	Mobile adaptation to system requirements.
7. Social effects	Formation of "social products" through the achievement, validated by society, of a certain cognitive and professional level.	Formation of "social actors" able to permanently change their place in the social and gnoseology field.

At a careful reading aimed at a good understanding of the synopsis, we see that *the dominant formative goal* is drawn up in the terms of the *final*

result of the educational approach; it also draws attention on the fact that human beings (pupils/students) can be seen as "*social product*", "*social actor*" or "*social agent*". Those roles given to the ones on whom the educational field acts have to be in consonance with the specifically nuanced "educational edifice". From the perspective of the statute and role of pupils/students of "*social products*", the pedagogical action model has to be of the *transmitting-normative type*; from the perspective of human beings as "*social actors*", reference must be made to a *stimulating-personal model*, and from the perspective of "*social agent*" there is the *model of acquisition by social insertion* (the characteristics of that model have been taken out the synopsis, since it is not relevant here and now, for our study).

The stimulating-personal model with reference to the seven characteristics proposed by Lesne gives the meaning and significance of a major change. The quintessence of transformations is based on the fundamental idea that pupils/students have to be the subject of their own formation and development, i.e. the emphasis is on the passage from the pupils trained and educated by the "magister dixit" principle, to the pupils forming themselves, developing themselves by their own efforts, made for pleasure; as such, education is not a chore for pupils/students or for the teachers. The educational route leading to that humanistic/nondirective paradigm strongly requires a new approach of the *teacher-pupil/student-knowledge-motivation relationship.*

In order to highlight the meanings of the changes proposed by the stimulating-personal model, we would like to bring forward a few major ideas concerning: the relations between students and the contents of knowledge; the teachers and the curriculum; personal motivation and choice as main resources.

a. *Relationships between subjects* (pupils/students) *and the contents of knowledge*

The traditional model, i.e. *transmitting-normative*, structures its entire philosophy on the "magister dixit" principle, i.e. the offer of the teacher is the single intellectual and moral and civic source of knowledge; subjects have to accept the idea of objective and cumulative knowledge that is transmitted and have to be assimilated/acquired. The essential goal of this model is "the head well filled" of the subject.

The stimulating-personal model exceeds the traditional model, since the teachers organize the training situations, activities from the perspective of the subjects' wishes; in that context, the subjects of teaching

have free access to knowledge, they themselves are cognitive resources, and instead of "the head well filled" there is "the head well-formed" by taste and power. The action verb "to know", specific to the transmitting-normative model, is replaced with the synthases "to know how to be, to know how to become, to know how to live", and where personal motivation and choice are important elements when referring to multiple resources of information. However, *humanistic pedagogy has not solved the problem pertaining to the relationship between what the subject wants from the perspective of contents and the normative side of the school curriculum and of the teaching plan.*

  b. *Teachers and the curriculum*
From the perspective of the *stimulating-personal* model, the role of teachers as *magister dixit* fades, since teachers are no longer the only scientific authority, this model emphasizing the roles of trainer, mediator, coach, facilitator, counselor; from this latter perspective, teachers must have the psychological competences allowing them to facilitate the personal construction of subjects in a pleasant way and by their own efforts. However, being a humanist, constructivist teacher and also a fine mediator requires, beside a *positive attitude* toward the subjects and beside *skills/vocation* (which the teacher can organize/plan/lead/assess, but with good results). From that perspective, teacher's role is no longer focused on "processing and transmitting knowledge of the takeout kind, that the students - if they want, or if they are obliged to - only need to warm up in order to assimilate them; its purpose is to lead students to the desire and instruments which allow them to independently choose and prepare their own menu".[8] Teachers choose and structure the contents; they're no longer under the influence of "mandatory" school curriculum, since the subject (pupil/student) is directly involved in their own formation process; that educational approach is not only addressed to the cognitive side or to some isolated psychic processes, but to the entire personality of the formable. Within that new humanistic/nondirective approach, inter-relations within the didactic act are clearly placed under the patronage of the teacher, who must possess the entire set of educational and psychological skills in order to facilitate to the subject the chance to participate in their own development, by involvement and options. Educational psychologists say that the subject finds that nondirective

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[8] Cosmovici A., Iacob L., 1998, *School Psychology*, Polirom Publishing House, Iasi.

posture better and easier (they learn with pleasure and efficiently), but it is certain that the teacher, the other partner in the education process, becomes more involved and flexible in the approach of the curriculum.

c. *Personal motivation and choice as main resources*

Humanistic education regards the success of teaching-learning-assessment as dependent on the degree of involvement of the subject in the educational act. Even if, in essence, the education process through its normative side does not allow the complete freedom of the pupils/students, teachers should create education situations where motivation, option, and the attitude of subjects lead to making favorable decisions, capable of producing the education desired, but also useful in life; at the same time, teachers should show a positive attitude towards the affective and cognitive needs of pupils/students. The self-image of the human being, in this case the subject, should start from the type of affirmation "I....", and a "fine teacher is especially the one who knows how to serve themselves and to serve the motivational system of that person."[9] In order to highlight the specificity of the stimulating-personal model, mention must be made that the traditional/transmitting-normative model emphasizes the use of extrinsic motivation, and only sporadically long-term interests. The humanistic/nondirective approach brings into focus spontaneous interests, the pleasure of action, but also the creation and management of motivating situations, i.e. the "*traction situations*" (a traction situation is a motivating situation which can trigger and attract a considerable effort, that, in the absence of the "traction" thus exercised, you are not willing to make).[10] Humanistic and constructivist teachers should use various motivational categories, so that the subject is fie pus in the situation of discovering the methods of action that will lead them to knowledge, to new, pleasant things, which are beneficial to everyday life\. From that humanistic perspective on education, Maslow, starting from the finding that any mentally healthy child searches for the life experiences which bring them satisfaction, has proposed the theory of "*gratification of needs*", stating that the pyramidal model of needs is "the one and only principle underlying the entire development, because that which is characteristic to all human reasons is the tendency that a higher need

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[9] Mucchieli,R.,1982, *Active Methods in Adult Psychology*, EDP Publishing House, Bucharest.

[10] Geissler, E., 1977, *Means of Education*, EDP Publishing House, Bucharest.

appears, once lower needs have been satisfied."[11] Also, by classifying needs into two large categories (deficiency needs/which arise from a certain lack, and growth/ development needs), Maslow has opened the way for beneficial implications, which, however, are not easy, for education. Examples:

- teachers have the role to facilitate the manifestation of the development motivation of the pupils/students, by augmenting and intensifying the attractions, by involving them in interesting tasks, while avoiding failure situations;

- pupils/students are capable of a higher efficiency if they carry out their learning activity in a safe, relaxed environment, and this is why educational context should be created in the classroom, which entail the pleasant involvement of subjects in their own formation;

- pupils/students being asked to chose freely between several variants concerning their own formation will make correct and opportune choices, since they know their own level and potential of development and learning;

- pupils/students, the more they are loved and admired for their positive results, the more interested they become, and more motivated for achieving new performances;

- when pupils/students go through the educational approach in their own rhythm, their desire for knowledge becomes visible and can be motivated more easily.

At first sight, the fundamental theory of Maslow (and even of Rogers) seems easily applicable to the education process, but in the conditions assured by the Romanian school the situation is rather delicate, whereas the curriculum products (the framework plan, the school curriculum) are normative, mandatory documents. In that context, teachers can approach the teaching-learning-assessment starting from the need for self-esteem of the pupils/students, and then, later on, each learning context would ensure a certain need is met in a relaxed and safe environment; it is also required to resort to the specific methodology for a didactics with humanistic/nondirective accents.

III. Humanistic realities and perspectives in today's Romanian school

Although the humanistic approach has emerged through the movement focused on children and initiated around 1900, in the US, in

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[11] Maslow, A., 1968, *Toward a psychology of being*, second edition, Princeton NY: Van Nostrand.

Romania the school takes over certain social, cultural, artistic and psychological accents of the educative nondirective act only at the end of the 2000. Humanistic theories, where values highlight the relations between cognitive and emotional, hold in teachers' training only an optional place, through the problematic of contemporary education; and this is why passing from the didactic transmitting-normative action model to the stimulating-personal model remains more in the theoretical, than in the applicative stage. From the perspective of the humanistic theory of personality (C. Rogers), from which it results that each person has two basic needs (the need for self-actualization and the need for appreciation), student-centered education should stand, in the Romanian education, for the possibility that, by nondirective, even therapeutic methods to facilitate learning can become a re-launch of education though the ongoing development of the personality of pupils/students.

We should highlight that the humanistic perspective in education does not exclude the cognitive, but stimulates the pupils/students by motivating themes which require an involvement from each and every subject of education. However, in the Romanian education, from the perspective of nondirective teaching[12], the one-to-one relationship between teacher and pupil/student should exceed the strictly behavioral[13] and cognitive[14] approaches by highlighting the *humanistic manner*[15]. It is also necessary that teachers permanently pay increased attention to the way the subjects of teaching feel and think about themselves; also, the need to clarify the set of personal values must not be omitted (beliefs, behaviors, situations of public speech and affirmation).

The goal of an education based on abilities, capacities and competencies, in the context of globalization, imposes triggering the desire of teachers from the secondary and tertiary education to find alternatives able to make of every education subject an active and aware participant to

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[12] Model inspired by the nondirective pedagogy (C.Rogers) and theorized by Snyders; it imposes exchanging the teacher's role for that of counselor, i.e. organizer of the educational space, but also as a resource in problematic situations created by the needs of the subjects.

[13] Behaviorist theoreticians are concerned with arranging as efficiently as possible the learning situation.

[14] Cognitive theoreticians are concerned with the way in which students perceive the learning situation.

[15] Humanistic psychologists highlight the manner in which the teachers permanently interact with the students, believing that aspect to determine success in school.

their own becoming. Although the process of bringing humanistic/nondirective teaching to the classrooms is not an easy one, we think that the debates concerning postmodern humanistic conceptions should become a reality with reverberations in the action and pragmatic activity of teachers. The cognitive and the affective, the psychological and the intellectual sides deserve to be treated responsibly in the Romanian school, which has too often been subjected to the personal desires of some ministers to replace education laws during each mandate. It would be beneficial for the academic world to open up cultural and educational horizons also based on the actual teaching experience of teachers, and capable to form autonomous and creative personalities, adaptable to the contexts of contemporary world.

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LEGAL EDUCATION – A SOCIAL NECESSITY

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Abstract: *In this article, we wanted to highlight the importance of legal education among the citizens and their awareness of the significance of this social process. We believe that such an approach will result in raising the awareness and education of the members of the Romanian society through learning, even very early, both of the civil rights and the correlative obligations. We also consider that, by means of such a legal education, the citizens of a state can fight themselves against corruption.*

Keywords: *Legal education, rights and obligations, prevention, corruption, legal culture.*

MOTTO:

"In a country where religion and purity of morals were removed by Epicureanism, the consciousness of right and wrong, good and evil are daily offended by the social rise of a group of dishonest people who, in their indifference, have come to admire petty but astute people, the public spirit seeks in vain a protection against corruption. Far from finding this protection anywhere, he is, on the contrary, drawn into this general whirlpool and will end up believing that the moral laws , the same for all peoples, are empty words that utter excuses, but which no one sees."

Mihai Eminescu

1. Introductory

The risks arising from the lack of minimum legal knowledge are frequent, which can materialize in committing antisocial acts, exposure to hazards that can be avoided or inability to defend their own rights and freedoms, therefore the students' access to the field mentioned ever since they were in school brings major benefits to society and the citizen.

Individual participation in the social life develop its legal awareness, helps it to know and understand the law positively, to develop the feeling

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of respect. The success of the company lies in the progressive development of its members, in knowing the law, respecting the right to be actively involved in social life. In order to achieve the above mentioned situations, legal education is presented to be a mechanism whereby people will be investigating education and the development of legal consciousness.

Contemporary society presents to be a dynamic, open to progressive reforms without prejudices.[1] It is indisputable that legal consciousness occurs through the mobilization of the entire society to promote and implement the reforms necessary for the development of society.

The need to reform a segment of social life is first of all passed through the legal consciousness of society, the subjects of law, the persons involved in the elaboration of positive law, it is analyzed, evaluated, opposed to the existing regulations, to the aspirations regarding the desired Regulations.

"*Justice has been and should be considered as the basis of society, and its achievement, the highest expression of the law.[2] Therefore, in any society, the work of justice is of national interest and needs to be fully supported, its citizens only ultimately benefitting from its services.*"[2]

Awareness, primarily by those involved in drafting the law, the imperatives dictated by time, the understanding of the need to adopt a new legal system, able to govern the newly emerged social relations, ravaged the legal consciousness of citizens, guided it in a new direction, enriched it with new values, knowledge and emotions.

2. Legal Education

The origin of the term "education" is a Latin one; in this language there are two verbs that have the same first paradigmal form (in the first person singular, present tense, active voice), but differs from other forms paradigm, namely:

- educo, Education, educavi, educatum = feed; produce; to teach another;

- educo, Educators, eduxi, eductum = remove; increase; to feed; the desert; clear; To remove something from somewhere; time consuming.

It is noted that both words have references to "grow, nourish", but the one which arrived in Romanian language (probably French) is the first,

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[1] Popa I, *Moral Substance of the Right,* Bucharest, Legal Universe Publishing House, 2009. p. 427.

[2] Stroe C, *Philosophical Reflections on the Law of* Bucharest, Lumina Lex Publishing House, 1998. p. 335.

from which derive other widely used words , such as "educated", "teacher", "education", "education". Even one of the other meanings of the originally Latin term leads to this interpretation on Romanian etymology of "education", ie meaning "to teach another."

The concept of "legal education" is a kind of education, a "specialized education" and, at the same time, professional "training". Assigning the quality of being "professional" seems to be excessive, because they could understand that other kinds of education would be performed by non-professionals and that legal education is the only expression of the law schools and not of other institutions, of education carried out with a view to removing the "legal professionals'; We have the opinion that we can identify two essential characters of the process of education:

- firstly, the transmission of knowledge in any way, either the non-institutionalized one (via autodidactic study, through contact practice, conferences) or the institutionalized one (school subjects, undergraduate or graduate courses, short courses or operational practices);

- secondly, the transfer of knowledge, especially terminology, should be done by professionals, preferably by those professionals with dedication for study or keen on the appropriate transmission of knowledge (from a pedagogical point of view and from that of essential inclusion of legal materials).

Legal education requires some essential constituents, met in the educational process.[3] Despite the fact that volitional element would be guaranteed to any person, there are quite few people who would recognize their "ignorance" concerning matters of law, to accept to receive from others, in an unorganized the essential law knowledge. This is visible both in the family environment or in those of friends or acquaintances, where most declare that there is no difficulty for them to defend their rights.

Legal education is an open process, the interdependence of social, universal human. values The legal consciousness of the subject develops as a result of its participation in the social life, which ensures a better knowledge and understanding of positive law, forms its meanings corresponding to the legislation in form. Educating the members of society to respect unconditionally, voluntarily the legal norm is an essential task of a democratic state, based on a legal norm and on social individuals' social equity.

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[3] Poenaru G., *Legal Education – regarded as prerequisite of environmental policies*, AGIR Bulletin, no. 4/2009, p.141-142.

Realizing the importance of acquiring basic knowledge of law and promoting a legal culture to encourage, from an early age, the respect for law, social justice and civic attitude among students, we believe that a legal education is a necessity and a constant concern for all those duties or concerns in this area.

The role of legal education is to train members of society, through a learning process, so that they may understand the role and necessity of legal norms, as well as the fact that being carried out voluntarily, it does nobody any favors, but it ensures its own equitable and harmonious coexistence in the society.

In preparing this draft of legal education, the following two priority objectives may arise:

A. Cooperation institutions involved in promoting legal education in schools education from the age of onset of compulsory education, by facilitating access to basic knowledge of law students.

B. Areas and issues of law that will be the subject of legal education in pre-university school units will be, particularly, the human rights, some aspects of the legislative process, general issues concerning the organization and functioning of the judiciary and judicial proceedings, elements of civil and criminal law, the issue of prevention and combating corruption, issues concerning international organizations and relationships.

3. Legal Culture and preventing corruption

Legal culture is an integral part of human culture that defines all legal knowledge, processes, rules and possibilities of using laws and to respect the social and legal practice daily by the members of a society.[4]

We emphasize the role of legal culture in society, in general, and in the fight against corruption, in particular.

Firstly, the legal culture is a criterion of the level of human development. If law and other legal instruments create a favorable environment for business, then the legal culture intervenes as a form of exclusion of illegal behavior, including the corrupted one.

Secondly, the legal culture is a treasure of legal values accumulated by mankind throughout history. Therefore, the proper attitude towards the legal culture is a prerequisite for social progress and a guarantee of efforts to improve the personality.

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[4] Popescu T., *Education - Major problem of Humanity and Universality*, Review of private, Nr. 1, 2001, p.9-21.

Thirdly, through the legal culture occurs the development of statehood, of order, legal of the rule of law system.

Thus, we can state that the main function of legal culture is reduced to preserving the spiritual values in the legal field and transmission of legal experience to future generations.

If broadly speaking the legal culture includes all legal values and it is part of the individual's culture, accordingly, *sticto sensu*, the legal culture of each individual can include both the knowledge of the legislation in force, as well as the correct understanding and intolerant attitude to any violation of legality and legitimacy.

The high level of legal culture assumes that man is not a passive witness of the processes in society, but manifests social and legal activism, uses his legal knowledge to strengthen legality.

The latest opinion polls show the existence of a high degree of tolerance of people and economic agents towards the phenomenon of corruption, their acceptance of corrupt behavior to solve personal or group problems. This is a negative index of legal culture and requires the mobilization of the available potential in the state and society to reduce the corruption phenomenon to a level that would not substantially influence the socio-economic development of our state and the realization of citizens' rights.

In order to contribute to raising the legal culture it is necessary to improve:
- Individual legal knowledge;
- Development of legal science;
- Compliance with legislation;
- Improvement of legislation and jurisprudence.

Summing up the above mentioned, the legal culture helps to prevent corruption both by its functions and by ensuring the proper functioning of the rule of law.

A key aspect in preventing the commission of offenses of corruption is raising the legal culture of the population. The preventive measures are not currently focused on outward manifestations of corruption, that is on educating people in the spirit of knowledge, and of respecting the rules of law, the state institutions, man's rights and freedoms[5], but also the causes that generate it.

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[5] Brînză William, *Assimilate Corruption Offenses,* Signs, Publishing House, Bucharest, 2004.

Thus, raising the general education population is a major prerequisite in building human values, forming a conscious citizen, honest and systematically cultivated. The population's education in the spirit of anticorruption must aim to increase the understanding of the mechanisms of corruption and the adoption by the youth and the adult population of a hard civic attitude on reducing corruption.

An important role in increasing the level of legal culture of society is also played by the media sources: periodicals and television programs that inform the public about the work and competence of the specialized agencies in preventing and combating corruption, the referral, hotline, etc; they also inform the public on the results of countering-attacking corruption, hard facts and punishments of the guilty ones, predisposing the public too, to cooperation in the fight against corruption.[6]

Conclusions:

The reforms in the areas of legal consciousness reflect the direct expression of society. Through the legal consciousness occurs conditioning, boosting and guiding the reforms in society. However, the legal system of a democratic state should reflect its sovereignty, be flexible and adaptable to the new social dimensions, identified through the legal consciousness of the subjects of law. Connecting the legal system to the international standards, the level of democratization of society, the virtue of establishing viable mechanisms for human rights protection, appreciation of human value as supreme values which are directly related to the development of the legal consciousness of the society members.

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THE CRIME OF FAMILY ABANDONMENT IN THE NEW CRIMINAL CODE

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Abstract: *The family has an important role in society and that is precisely why, in all the legislations of the contemporary world, it is protected through various moral or legal rules. The family life, the relationships between spouses, children and their relationship with their parents* are *protected through a number of provisions of the civil code, but there are cases which require some criminal measures. We appreciate that the Government considers the acts which meet the constitutive elements of the crime of abandonment as reprehensible not only from the point of view of criminal law, but especially in terms of morale, no matter what the criminal law states strictly.*

Keywords: *the family, abandonment, felony, the new criminal code.*

1. LEGAL CONTENT and CHARACTERIZATION

The family has an important role in society and that is why all laws of the countries in the contemporary world protected it through various moral and legal norms. According to art. 12 of the European Convention on Human Rights, spouses enjoy equal civil rights and obligations between them and in the relationships with their children concerning marriage, during marriage and in the event of its dissolution.

Though virtually this obligation is reciprocal in nature, in particular, depending on the actual situation of the family members, it will have a unilateral character; due to an illness or any other cause, one person can reach to need maintenance; therefore, it is possible that in some particular case to change the quality of the subject, that the subject matter required maintenance become entitled to maintenance.[1]

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[1] Gheorghe Diaconescu, Constantin Duvac, *Criminal Law Treaty. The special part,* Ed. C.H. Beck, Bucharest, 2009, p. 907.

Family life, relations between spouses, children and their relationship with parents and are protected by a number of provisions of the Civil Code, but there are cases where necessary and criminal measures are required.

We appreciate that committing acts that meet the elements of the offense of abandoning the family is reprehensible not only from the point of view of the criminal law, but especially in terms of morale, no matter what the criminal law states strictly.

When the victim is a child, the negative consequences both physically and psychologically on his development are stronger.[2]

The new penal code criminalized Family abandonment in art. 378 of the Criminal Code. The social danger posed by the family abandon prejudices the family institution which is regarded as a primary social value in the Romanian society.

The fact is the commitment by the person who has legal duty to maintain, to the person entitled to maintenance, of one of the following facts:

a) leave, expulsion or leaving helplessly, exposing him to physical or moral suffering;

b) failure of accomplishing, in bad faith, the maintenance obligation prescribed by law;

c) failure, in bad faith, of paying for 3 months the alimony established judicially.

The families abandon the offense and failure, bad faith by the convicted regular benefits established by a judgment in favor of the persons entitled to maintenance from the offense.

It is also family abandon offense the failure, in bad faith, to carry out by the convicted the regular benefits established by a judgment in favor of the persons entitled to maintenance from the offender.

The incriminated act in the above mentioned conditions is not punishable if, before finishing the criminal prosecution, the defendant meets his obligations. If such an offense is committed, the parties may resort to mediation even if they do not want to meet face to face.

They can nominate an agent to participate in the mediation, a lawyer can be assigned. We specify that the Supreme Court states that the place

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[2] Daniela Iuliana Ştefan (Radu), *Police and Judicial cooperation in criminal Matters,* in UCDC Annals, series Law, 2006, p. 257.

where the offense is committed is where the beneficiary of the alimony resides and where the alimony has to be paid.[3]

2. STRUCTURE OF THE OFFENSE
2.1. OBJECT OF THE OFFENSE

The special legal object of family abandonment is the social relationships complying with the obligations or duties on material and moral support to the family or to a person entitled to it; this material and moral support should be concrete and consist in providing the necessary means of support to that family member who is in need. Instead, the family abandon crime has no material object.

2.2. SUBJECTS OF THE OFFENSE

The direct active subject of this offense is justified by the law, that is the person who has a legal obligation of maintenance. If the obligation to ensure the maintenance of the victim rests under the law, to several people and none of them fulfills, they will be all co-authors of the crime. The fact that the parent who has a monthly income, as a retiree, does not relieve the son of a legal duty to maintain, if the income is insufficient to cover the needs of the incapacitated to work.[4]

To the commitment of the offense may also participate as instigators or accomplices people who do not have the obligation of maintenance as to the injured. The passive subject of the crime is also illustrated the law, that the person entitled to maintenance. The passive subject of the crime is also circumstantial to the law that the person entitled to maintenance.

2.3. CONTENT OF THE OFFENSE

From the analysis of the incriminating text, it follows that the offense of abandoning the family is a deed with alternate content; this diversification of family abandonment embodiments has the effect of empowering each content, which thereby characterizes the existing single crime. The material element of the crime can be therefore done so through both actions and inactions.[5]

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[3] Trib. Supreme Criminal Division, in December. No. 4205/1971 in DRR, no. 12/1971, p. 151.

[4] Ketty Guiu, Adriana Voicu, *Law penal. The special part,* Legal Universe Publishing House, Bucharest, 2010, p. 446.

[5] T Vasiliu, D. Paul, G. Antony, S. Danes, G. Daring, D. Lucinescu, V. Papadopol, DC Popescu, V. Ramureanu, *Commented Criminal Code RSR, vol. II,* Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing House, Bucharest, 1977, p. 380.

The actions stipulated by law are done by leaving or chasing, exposing the one entitled to maintenance to physical or moral sufferings. It is those cases in which the maintenance obligation which operates under the law does not involve a monetary determination in the form of a pension, but direct rendering of those necessary for daily living - food, clothing, medicine, without which family life and the relationships between its members cannot be conceived.

It is essential for the sufferings to have intervened effectively, but there must be a high probability of achieving them; if the legislature would had wanted to condition the existence of the offense of the actual production of physical or moral suffering, he would have used the phrase "producing his physical or moral suffering."[6]

The chasing action involves expulsion, removal from home, the home of the victim, the perpetrator using various means such as moral or physical coercion, thus aiming to evade the obligations established.[7]

Inaction consists in leaving without help, situation in which the perpetrator has a passive attitude in the sense that he does not leave the home of that who is entitled to maintenance but continues to stay together, no longer providing the necessary means of living.[8]

It is also considered inaction the failure, in bad faith, the statutory maintenance obligation and the non-payment, in bad faith, for 3 months, of the alimony established by judicial. When the perpetrator himself puts an end to acts of omission, fulfilling his civil duty, the crime cycle stops.

In case of offense by not paying, in bad faith, the alimony established by court for three months, the condition to fulfill the obligations provided in the judgment call is carried out if the defendant proves that he has paid the alimony due until the pronouncement of the sentencing conviction.[9]

It is noticed that the three-month interval stipulated by art. 378 par. 1 lit. c) Criminal Code is only a minimum interval after whose expiration the

[6] Dobrinoiu, M.A. Hotca, M. Gorunescu, Dobrinoiu M., I. Pascu, I. Kish, C. Peacock, N. Neagu, M.C. Sinescu, *Commented on the new Criminal Code, Volume II,* Part Special Universe Law Publishing House, Bucharest, 2002, pg. 967.

[7] V. Dobrinoiu, M.A. Hotca, M. Gorunescu, Dobrinoiu M., I. Pascu, I. Kish, C. Peacock, N. Neagu, M.C. Sinescu, *Commented on the new Criminal Code, Volume II,* Part Special Universe Law Publishing House, Bucharest, 2002, pg. 967.

[8] Tudorel Toader, *Criminal Law. The special part,* Hamangiu Publishing House, Bucharest, 2012, p. 436.

[9] V. Dobrinoiu, M.A. Hotca, M. Gorunescu, Dobrinoiu M., I. Pascu, I. Kish, C. Peacock, N. Neagu, MC Sinescu, *Commented on the new Criminal Code, Volume II,* Part Special, Universe Law Publishing House, Bucharest, 2002, Pag. 971.

failure to pay the alimony, without criminal character so far, becomes a criminal offense and that the failure to pay by the deadline does not affect the obligation regarding any outstanding monthly performance nor regarding past performance, the obligation is permanent and will continue to have effect being susceptible, in case of voluntary failure to accomplish it, of foreclosure; secondly, it should be noticed that although the method of payment is periodic, monthly, both the obligation itself and the alimony payment are uninterrupted.[10]

The literature claims that the three months do not need to be consecutive. Failure to pay alimony established by judicial decision may attract criminal liability even if the minor entitled to this pension has made his own income, but not sufficient in order to ensure the necessary conditions for growth, education, teaching and professional training.

The defendant indicted for abandoning the family, committed in bad faith, by not paying the alimony for 3 months, will not benefit from amnesty if the failure to pay the alimony continues after being sent to the Court, and after the occurrence of the act of clemency.

The circumstance that the enforcement of the civil decisions establishing the alimony was not claimed is irrelevant, the existing criminal law does not condition the offense upon such a requirement. The constitutive elements of the offense are not met in case the required to maintenance is unemployed, has another maintenance person in maintenance, has paid a part of the pension, and one of the two children was most of the respective period part of the period in his exclusive care.

We appreciate that the content of the offense is not met either in case the offender has not paid alimony being unable to do it due to his custody or to any other cause. In case the attachment was set to meet the obligations of maintenance, established by court order, the obligation to pay further passes on third party maintenance seized, so paying alimony ordered by the court of law after the withholding is not an offense.

In connection with bad faith, the court has to verify maintaining the conditions on civil judgment, the maintenance of the need of the one entitled, as well as the situation of the income of that who owes him the maintenance, under the circumstances of the labor market liberalization, increased rate of unemployment, proving the steps for getting a job that he cannot get, even when accepting and performing retraining, one cannot retain bad faith.

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[10] Ibidem.

The bad faith of the perpetrator but result from the fact that, although he is able to work, he systematically refused to be employed to achieve the necessary revenue to fulfill family obligations. The fact that the defendant is fit to work does not equate to establish bad faith as long as he has presented documents that show he has no income and that is registered with the Office of Labor and Social Protection, without the benefit of unemployment.

The immediate consequence created by committing this crime is to create a sense of danger to the family members who are in special situations and they cannot secure their own sources of maintenance.

The causal link between the action/inaction of the perpetrator and immediate consequence have to be proven to paragraph 1 lit. a art. 378 Criminal Code. If the state of lack of material or moral means of support is due to other causes, for instance the refusal to get them from the one who required to provide them or the disappearance without trace of the one who was entitled to maintenance, followed by his reaching to the state of misery, in such cases there is causation, because there is no material element of the offense.

2.4. FORMS OF THE OFFENSE

The family abandonment offence consumes within 3 months of non-payment of alimony and becomes exhausted in one of the following three alternatives:

a) the resumption of payment;

b) Termination of maintenance due to:-fulfillment by the beneficiary pension maintenance paid under the law of which do not benefit from such a pension; -Adoption of alimony recipient; -Death of the beneficiary of the maintenance; -Death of the one ordered to pay the pension;

c) by court conviction for non-payment under the framing of art. 378 par. 1 lit. c Criminal Code.

Each act of failing to pay the alimony enters the content of the same offense of family abandon which is unique and inseparable, and the moment when it ceases is, at the same time, the moment of exhaustion, which is equivalent to the time of its perpetration.

The depletion of the crime does not occur by the indictment of the defendant, not assigning autonomous character to the activity consumed until that time, the criminal cycle ending only by the pronunciation of the criminal judgment of conviction, or the fulfillment of the obligation. the maintenance obligation between parents and children is unique and also

divisible, both actively and passively, without differentiating if children are in the marriage, from different marriages or out of wedlock and that, consequently, always when the debtor in bad faith violates the maintenance obligation to his children from different marriages, but based on a single criminal resolution, he commits only one crime of family drop in continued form.

Setting the correct time of the offense of abandoning family shows special significance for the delimitation of its actual content when applied to acts of clemency such as pardon and amnesty, the penalties can be pardoned or an amnestied only if the committed facts stopped, if they had been committed until the entry into force of acts of clemency[11].

Thus, in practice it was held that the offense of family abandonment referred to in art. 378 par. (1). c) Criminal Code., is a continuing offense, the date of committing the offense in relation to which is established the scope of the amnesty laws is that of the offense depletion consisting either in alimony payment or in sentencing the defendant.[12]

On the other hand, with each installment not paid for 3 months not only does the crime amplify through its duration - what happens to each continue offense, but also through its actual size because each installment adds to the total outstanding amount; it is, therefore, a double progression, resulting from the amplification of the outcome by the duration itself and from its successive growth, with each outstanding installment, of the total outstanding amount; for these reasons we face a continuing successive offense.

2.5. ENFORCEMENT OF THE OFFENSE

Under article 378 of the Criminal Code, the crime of family abandonment is punishable by imprisonment from 6 months to 3 years or a fine. The criminal action is initiated upon prior complaint from the injured person. By law, if until the final decision of sentencing, the defendant meets his obligations, the court, as appropriate, defers the sentence or suspends sentence under supervision, even if the conditions provided by law for this case are not met.

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[11] O.A. Stoica - *Criminal Law, The Special part.* Didactic and Pedagogical Publishing House, Bucharest, 1976, p. 403.

[12] Ovidiu Predescu Hărăstăşanu Angele, *Criminal Law. Special Part. Examination comparative criminal law, The new penal code,* Legal Universe Publishing House, Bucharest, 2012, Pag.460.

In the conclusion of our study we consider appropriate criminalizing this act in the new penal code, since, on the one hand, ensuring increased protection for those entitled to maintenance from the offense, and, on the other hand, criminal liability of the blame for failure, in bad faith, to carry out these regular benefits, an aspect which, in our opinion, should discourage such behaviors from those targeted by the criminal law.[13]

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THE INFLUENCE OF MODERN COMMUNICATION ENVIRONMENT ON CHILDREN

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Abstract: *In today's world, where all the challenges, more or less real, have become regional, and later worldwide, the influence of the modern communication environment on children's development is overwhelming, and, in that context, necessity arises for a new type of responsibility, namely communicational responsibility. Even if responsibility as a moral value depends on our actions, children's education shouldn't leave out the correspondence between doing by speaking/communicating (in education, the context for this is provided by communication psycho-pedagogy).*

Watching TV for hours, playing computer games around the clock, accessing Internet programs for a long span of time have become more than mere trends, and now are a dangerous, chronic diseases, especially for children. It is possible for that type of activity to lead to attention disorders, to the weakening of mental capacities, of the power of judgment and of motivation, to the outbreak of a syndrome which will affect the development of children and youngster, from a physical, cognitive and affective point of view...

Keywords: *Mass media, multimedia, mass communication, technologically mediated communication, receiver, sender, message, code.*

I. Argument

More and more often, it is said that the cultural paradigm and the mass media are the driving forces of human becoming in the 3rd millennium. However, inconvenient questions arise, such as: *What are the effects of mass media on the human mind? How does multimedia influence the behavior of children?*

Nowadays, the TV, computer, and the Internet tend to replace books, magazines, sports, even playing games, for an ever-increasing number of children. What are the effects?

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At an individual level, multimedia influences on the long term the development of the nervous system and the sensorial organs of children: watching something for hours is the only circumstance in which, unfortunately, we keep the eye muscles completely still, also determining information processing from the perspective of passive reception (mention must be made that, in the process of active reception, reality is perceived with moving eyes, by attentively examining the details, and by involving all the other senses); the brain is stimulated towards a fragmented, associative use of thought, the fine nervous connections are difficult to structure, and consequently, the brain becomes less and less suited to a divergent, creative thinking.

The number of negative effects of the influence of multimedia on the psychosomatic development of children is large, among which we would like to mention: poorer results in school, an increase in aggressiveness, the appearance of nightmares, an increase in the consumption of unhealthy products; also, the lack of physical activity favors the onset of obesity, the limitation of friendships, the encouragement of alcohol, cigarettes and drugs consumption.

It is true that a number of pseudo-benefits also arise: we might think that children can learn fairly many words that they hear on TV, however, they do not learn how to use them correctly and pertinently; they can also learn useful things (from educational programs targeted at children), but the disadvantages accompanying those activities are many; the children who watch TV a lot meet with difficulties in establishing personal contacts, they often take pleasure in grimacing and avoid looking in the eye of their interlocutors, they have less power of concentration, they answer superficially, even stereotypically, they show no interest in reading, and the few books they prefer are comics and illustrated books. We mustn't forget that most often the images that children of every age see on TV leave a cartoonish imprint on their minds, and consequently they distance themselves from the real world. Through TV, the Internet and computer games, children "live" in a bi-dimensional, abstract world, before getting to know and assimilate the real one!

This approach aims at being a minimal analysis of mass media influences, especially multimedia, in shaping the personalities of children and youth.

II. Mass media

Today, it is certain that the existence of human society cannot be conceived outside communication, on which it depends.

In day-to-day language, but also in the language of experts, the syntagm *mass media* means the totality of means of mass information or even mass communication[1]. The joining the English word *mass* (mass of people) and the Latin word *media*, the plural of the noun *medium*, has led to an English *sui-generis* synthesis[2]. Nowadays, here and everywhere, there are, in the language of experts, linguistic constructions including the word "media", such as: *the new media, macromedia, media analysis,* and *mediation.*

Very often, questions arise, such as: Have people always been the slaves of the eagerness for information, of the thirst for exact/less exact, but fresh and detailed news? Are people left to believe that they are dependent on the mass media? The opinions coming from many specialists tend to answer those questions positively. People haven't always been inclined to hearing the news, but they have always needed them, because "the system of the means of mass communication ensures the circulation of information, interpretations and approaches deemed to have social significance, and it is a true information connection between various parties and social segments".[3]

II.1. Getting to know the mechanism of mass media communication

Mass media specialists bring to the foreground the following conceptual clarification: "Mediated communication includes two types of relations: *technologically mediated communication* (connecting smaller groups of people), and *mass communication* (connecting multiple social conglomerates)"[4].

The first category, *technologically mediated communication* (the one connecting smaller groups of people), is daily formed of: teleconferences, videoconferences, e-mail dialogue; the main forms of communication existing at that level are: from a person or small group to another person or group.

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[1] Dorin, Popa, *Mass Media Today,* the European Institute, Iasi, 2002, p.5.

[2] Ibidem, p.5.

[3] Paul Dobrescu, Alina Bargaoanu, *Mass Media and Society,* Comunicare.ro Publishing House, Bucharest, 2003, p.15.

[4] Mihai Coman, *Introduction to the Mass Media System,* Polirom Publishing House, Iasi, 2007, p.16.

From the perspective of *mass communication* (connecting multiple social conglomerates), the most frequent forms can be met within the following type: "a group of professional senders (transmitters) sends messages to a very large number of receivers, and between the message producers and their beneficiaries come technical installations (satellites, TV sets), and other institutions such as: printing houses, book stores, radio stations, TV stations, advertising companies"[5], etc.

The notions: "mass communication", "mass media", "means of mass communication", although they belong to the same series of synonyms, are not complete synonyms, and sometimes, their use can create confusion among the population.

Jean Cazeneuve, (1972), one of the most prestigious French thinkers in this field, comes with conceptual delimitations regarding the media, such as: "The media means, in principle, the mediation processes, the means of communication, and is generally translated by the syntagm *mass communications*. It results that *media* = means of information (communication), and *mass media* = means of communication for a larger public, means invented and used by the modern civilizations […]. Without discussion, the following belong to that category: the radio, television, movie theaters, the written press, books, speeches, advertising posters, etc.[6]

Mass communication is the totality of techniques by which the information of the larger public/population is achieved. That type of communication, in order to become efficient and effective, requires professional communicators, specialized in sending messages. One of the best-known schemes of analysis of mass communication is the one proposed by Harold D. Lasswell in *The Structure and Function of Communication in Society,* 1948. This establishes five directions of analysis, arising from five fundamental questions concerning the communicational process*: Who says it?, What do they say?, On what?, To whom?, To what effect?[7]

By analyzing each element of the act of communication from the perspective of the five fundamental questions, we can reach the following clarifications:

- *Who? (the sender)* It is aimed at the control analysis, i.e. the study of the sender, since it controls and initiates this process of communication.

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[5] Ibidem, p.16.

[6] Jean, Cazeneuve, *La société de l'ubicuité,* Paris, Ed. Denoel-Gonthier, 1972, p.10, apud Dorin Popa, *op.cit.,* p.6.

[7] Catalin, Zamfir, Lazar, Vlasceanu (Coord.); *A Dictionary of Sociology,* Babel Publishing House, Bucharest, 1993, p.339.

- *What? (the message)* It stands for the content analysis of communication.

- *How? (the code) Through what? (channel)* Here, we analyze the communication channels, for instance: the written press, the movie theaters, the radio, the television, etc.

- *To whom? (the receiver)* It aims at the audience, at the method of reception of the sent messages.

- *What for? To what? (effect)* It refers to the efficiency of communication; what the purpose of those messages was.

In 1949, C. Shannon and W. Weaver[8] proposed another model (fig. 1), which has become very well-known and has been resumed in many of the subsequent researches on the phenomenon of communication; consequently, it has undergone a series of adaptations; an example in that sense being the increase in the role and importance of feedback.
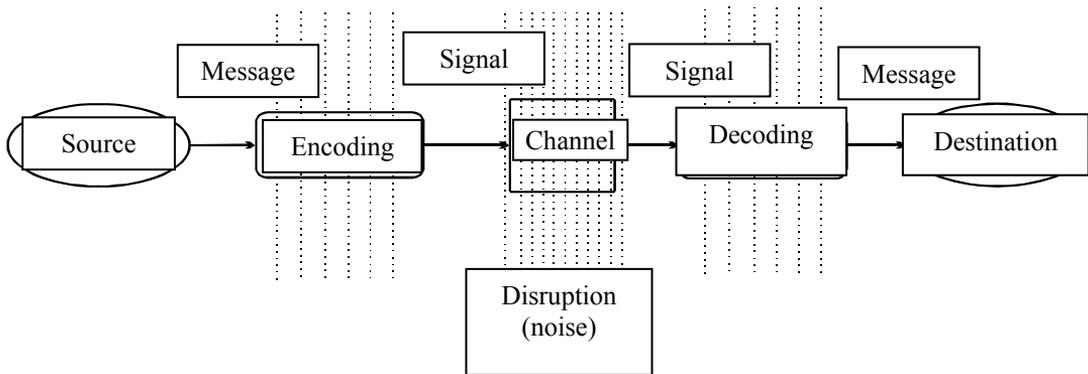

Fig. 1: *The process of communication. Adaptation after the model of Shannon and Weaver*

Mention must be made that the essential benefit of the above model is given by the simplicity of the process and, consequently, of a more direct functionality of the procedural dimensions for the various sciences using communication in a way which is adapted to their own needs.

From the perspective of the theory of information, the model created by Shannon has known a huge success, since communication can be defined as the sending of a message from one place to another. In that

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[8] apud Ion-Ovidiu Panisoara, *Efficient Communication*, Polirom Publishing House, Iasi, 2006, p.18.

sense, the process of communication is based on establishing a relation between a sender and a receiver.

The sender, in this case, is the mass media, which aims at providing a piece of information, and will have to translate it into a language which is accessible to the addressee and compatible with the employed means of communication: that is *the encoding*; once created, the message is sent and spread thanks to a material support: *the communication channel.* It will then reach the addressee – *the receiver* – who, by a *decoding* activity, will appropriate it and understand it. In order to be truly efficient, the system involves a method of control, of regulation and of correction of mistakes: that is *the feedback*, in other words, the feedback loop from the receiver to the sender. *Synthetically, the effects of communication are the following: the reception of the message, understanding the message, accepting the intentions of the sender, the change produced in the receiver*.

As it happens in life, the context plays a special part in communication; the relation established between the message and the context in which the communication occurs is a direct one, with serious contributions to the success or failure thereof. Thus, în1988, Joseph A. DeVito highlighted that the context is "sometimes subtle and non-constructive, seeming so natural that it is ignored, and some other times, the context imposes itself directly and obviously, by the methods in which it favors or restricts communication"[9].

Ion-Ovidiu Pânişoară (2006) emphasizes at least three dimensions of the context, that we'd like to introduce synthetically: the *physical* dimension, which is defined as the totality of elements from the surrounding environment, which will have a positive or negative contribution to the process of communication; the *psychosocial* dimension of the context, including the elements of social culture, mentalities, membership to certain groups; and the *temporal* dimension, which includes both daytime, and the historical time[10]; all those dimensions of the context are inter-correlated (fig. 2); for instance: a physical group defined by elements which are austere and poor in significance can induce the perception of an unfriendly, even hostile environment, little suited to communication. Also, the dimensions (the shown diagram - fig. 2) are not only inter-related, but also intertwined; in that sense, it is not only about a

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[9] Joseph A.DeVito, *Human Communication, The Basic Course,* Harper and Row, Inc., New York, 1988, p. 4, apud Ion-Ovidiu Panisoara, *op.cit., p.67.*

[10] Ion-Ovidiu Panisoara, *op.cit.*, p. 67.

simple historical time, or of a time of that day, but also about a personal time, belonging both to the temporal, and the psychosocial dimension. However, the communication procedures have to be perceived and understood by the manner in which they explain the conditions in which: the messages reach the addressees; the messages are understood by the addressees; there is an agreement on the content of communication; feedback mechanisms; activities subsequent to the message.
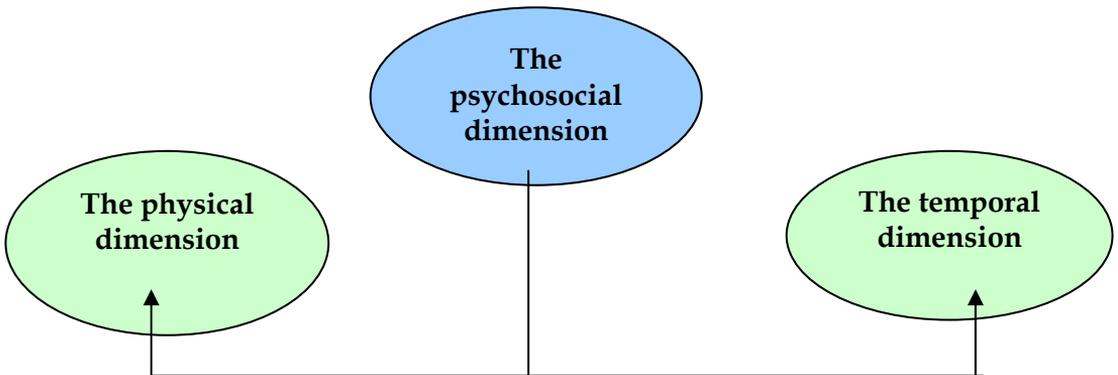

Fig. 2: *The dimensions of context*

A holistic approach of mass media requires a taxonomy of the types of communication. Synthetically, the correlation between the criteria and types of communication can be introduced as follows (figure no. 3):

Criterion	Type of communication
Type of language employed	verbal nonverbal para-verbal
The number of individuals participating to the process of de communication	intrapersonal communication (communication with the self) interpersonal communication (communication with others) group communication mass communication (through specialized institutions, with general addressability)
The spatial and temporal context of the messages	direct (face to face) indirect (mediated)
Intentionality of communication	intentional unintentional

Objectives of communication	incidental communication (without a well-established purpose)
	consuming communication (consequence of emotional states)
	instrumental communication (when a precise purpose is followed)
The hierarchic position in the organization	ascending communication (with the superiors)
	descending communication (with the inferiors)
	horizontal communication (the sender and the receiver occupy equal positions)

Fig. 3: *Types of communication*

II.2. The Basic Functions of Mass Media

The human society should be seen holistically, as a group in which each party has the role of fulfilling a certain activity. Those activities can answer individual and collective needs for continuity, for instance: leadership, adaptation, integration, etc. From such a "functionalist" perspective[11], mass media achieve a multitude of functions, among which we would like to mention: *the communication function, the cultural and educational function, the entertainment and advertisement function, the information function*, etc.

II.2.1. The Communication Function (the "connecting" function)

That function refers to the direct possibility that media channels have or facilitate, so that masses of people can be connected at the same time to a certain event. Communication is the fundamental characteristic of that process, and that is why the mass media are deemed essential agents of socialization. And rightfully so, since due to mass communication, to the impressive audience, to the permanent consumption of media products, probably the most consistent consumption of our times, people are in a permanent relation, they are "in connection" to one another, even if they do now know each other; consequently, the communication function is, essentially, a connecting function.

II.2.2. The Cultural and Educational Function

Since they are small, children are always modeled/formed by the social environment, so that they gradually and permanently assimilate and acquire norms of behavior, symbolic representations and categories of

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[11] Mihai Coman, *op.cit.,* p. 109.

thinking specific to their collectivities. With the development of the mass media, a large part of the activities of transmission of the cultural models and values, of formation of the behavior and even of the thinking of children, has been taken over by them. In that context, it is required that the three dimensions of education (formal, non-formal, and informal) to inter-relate in order to reach inter-correlation.

Today, more than ever, the time given by children to the consumption of mass media has increased amazingly. By the contents distributed permanently by the mass media, general behavior norms are fixed, which become even unanimously accepted. It is deemed that mass media messages have the function of strengthening the principles of a society, even when they exhibit norms which violate the current order of things. From that perspective, P. Lazarsfeld and R.K. Merton assert that "in the mass society, the function of publicly exposing a fact is institutionalized by the mass media. The press, radio and television show the public special antisocial deeds and, generally, that leads to a certain public action against what, maybe, would have been well tolerated individually"[12]. In that context, it is necessary that non-formal and informal education acquire new positive educational dimensions, which can be defined by durability indicators which are inter-correlated with the formal education provided by schools.

By permanently promoting certain behavior patterns (that we hope to be general and positive), the mass media provide, at the same time, a certain type of vocabulary, and the public has the choice to accept or reject what they are being transmitted. Lately, there is a more and more obvious trend of the mass media to "aggressively bow to introducing certain phenomena under the name of cultural or media events".

II.2.3 The Entertainment and Advertisement Function

Hundreds of million people listen to/watch their favorite shows, talk-shows, music charts, movies, because all those mass media products answer their need for rest, for escaping their daily cares, for entertainment, etc.

The industry of media events, since it attracts the public, and therefore publicity, has imposed itself all over the world through its

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[12] Paul Lazarsfeld, Robert K. Merton, *Mass Communication, Popular Taste and Organized Social Action,* Mass Communication, Clive Bingley Publ., Londra, apud Mihai Coman, *op.cit.,* p.121.

"aggressiveness" and permanence. In that area, the television ranks first for now, thanks to its possibilities to create the most complete entertainment "brands", which are also the most tasted by the public. The Internet is also in a serious upward trend.

In publicity, music, or rather the soundtrack of commercials has an extremely important role on our psychic. Music brings value to a commercial, and if rhythm makes the music, then it is certain that music makes the commercial. More precisely, if there is a hit, then that's all it takes. And as an adequate example, we have the commercials made a few years ago for Carlsberg, in which tunes such as *Can't Take My Eyes Off You* and *Love of My Life* have ensured worldwide success.

II.2.4 The Information Function

Mass media, through its traditional forms, spread information which can be structured diversely, depending on: its immediate utility; the speed of its spreading; the meanings that it can have in the informational "complex" of contemporary society. The permanent informational bombardment of the means of communication no longer leaves any time for reflection, for verification or critical analysis on the provided versions.

At the beginning of the 3rd millennium, based on the information received through the mass media, people evaluate the importance of events that can affect them, anticipate certain trends of life, and can make certain informed decisions. The information received can be: general, instrumental – such as: the weather, cultural or sports events, the traffic, etc. – or preventive information, such as: natural disasters, accidents, crises[13];

II.3. Television and Audio-visual Communication in Romanian school

Televisual communication, says J. Thompson, creates that discontinuous spatial and temporal decoupling. It seems that the things seen on TV do not happen in the same space and time as the ones we live in: "People who watch TV have to suspend their spatial and temporal frameworks of their everyday life, and orient toward a different set of time and space coordinates; thus, they become travelers through space and time"[14].

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[13] Mihai Coman, *op.cit.*, p. 112.
[14] J. Thompson, *Media and Modernity – a Social Theory of Mass Media*, translation by Miruna Tataru-Cazaban, Antet Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000, p. 91.

On TV, we see both things which have happened in another time and space than those we live in, but also other deeds created and occurring especially to be filmed and broadcasted to the public. I.e., they are invented and exist only to be seen, and not the other way around. So, the television world does not surround us, like the world of any daily experience, but it is us who project ourselves mentally, though vision and imagination, within it. Without a doubt, today, in the entire world, the small screen or the big silver screen provide us with positive behavior patterns, but also with negative patterns, most often seen in commercial movies, made to earn as much profit as possible from selling them. We should remember that their influence is stronger on the young spectators and, at the same time, it determines an increase in the level of aggressiveness of those watching such movies or even that kind of shows. Stimulated by marketing, the images shown on TV have become a show meant to attract as many people as possible. Information, most often, shock us by suspense, the alert rhythm, the way in which they are broadcast so that they do not bore the viewers, but make them "not to take their eyes off the TV". Thus, the choice of images and of the musical background, as well as the building of the speech, are essential in achieving the aimed purpose, of having an audience as large as possible.

Close-ups of scenes with victims filmed on their hospital beds, or the eyes filled with tears of some old people who have lost their homes due to natural disasters, all these have the role to strengthen the impact and proximity/closeness, and to amplify the emotional dimension, the empathy. Mass media overload us with information, so that most often we no longer question them. Psychologists name that phenomenon "the syndrome of the bad world"[15]; daily, the news give priority to crimes, rapes, accidents, natural disasters, strikes, diseases, which shape a world negative representation of the world. *This is how manipulation appears*. Behavioral manipulation involves the influencing of subjects in order to make them commit some deeds which are in dissonance with their own interests, without them even being aware of the difference between their own purposes and the interests of those who influence them[16]. Within that type of communication, there is a high speed of words, which is

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[15] Sebastian Bohler, *150 Experiments to Understand Media Manipulation*, transl. Dana Maria Cimpoi, Polirom Publishing House, Iasi, 2009, p. 20.

[16] Stefan Stanciu, Mihaela Alexandra Ionescu, *Organizational Culture and Behavior*, Comunicare.ro Publishing House, Bucharest, 2005, p. 128.

characteristic to certain means of media, in a logic based on the principle "faster and faster". That principle departs from the idea that the public frequently associates rapid speech with a speech which is as believable as possible. The speed of speech is also usually associated with a status of social domination. It has been also noticed that there is a certain inclination towards deeming much more credible those people who speak fast. Many psychology studies have shown that the main instrument of persuasion between the speaker and the listeners is the similarity between the speeds of speech. Actually, the speed of speech and of the broadcasted information can deceive in many ways. In a first instance, there is a tendency to associate the speed of speech with a trustworthy person, since the brain cannot follow the speed of the speech, and especially doubt the value of its content. On TV, the rhythm of images dictates things, and it is usually very fast, in order to maintain an increased, even uttermost attention, for commercial reasons. Consequently, words have to keep up with the rhythm of images, and thus, everything happens much too quickly to be able to make a pertinent and rational analysis anymore. In order to energize the public as much as possible, and to keep them attentive, the voice needs to alternate low and high sounds, on a range as large as possible of voice intonations and modulations. We should remember that the melodics and inflexions of the voice transmit affective involvement, attitude; they also express firmness, power, and domination.

II.4 Computers and the Virtual World

A hundred of years ago, no one could have foreseen that cars and planes will become something common, specific to daily life. Fifty years ago, it would have been hard to imagine how important television would be in our lives, first the black and white, then the color TV, the cable and satellite television. And at the end of the 2nd millennium, and then at the start of the 3rd millennium, (actually, the last fifteen years), it would have been hard to imagine that the most important means of communication would be computers/the Internet and cordless phones /mobile phones.

Peter A. Andersen, PhD, mentioned in 2006 that the future is always hard to anticipate and perceive, "but what can be seen in the not so distant future is a world very different from the one we live in, with new urban landscapes, the acceleration of technology and the continuation of a trend which has already begun, namely, the virtual person."[17] Now we can say

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[17] Peter A. Andersen, *Body Language,* transl. Liana Stan, Teora Publishing House, Bucharest, 2006, p. 343.

that humanity has already entered the era of virtual reality, i.e. "virtual reality means using technology in order to create artificial environments impossible to tell from habitual reality"[18].

Nowadays, personal computers and laptops have an extremely large processing capacity, progresses in animation and digital reproductions allow creating virtual worlds, which seem even closer to reality. The significant increase in the bandwidth, as well as the use of fiber optic, have contributed to all these, by sending the enormous quantities of information required in order to sustain virtual environments. All those remarkable progresses have turned virtual reality into an almost uncontestable reality.

From an educational perspective, it is true that now computers seem to facilitate learning, provide information, create conditions for the development of intelligence, can even help forming a better endowed generation, prepared to meet the future, whichever that may be. In the spirit of those convictions, exorbitant amounts of money have been invested and are being all the time allocated worldwide in programs for the education, learning and information through computers. Computers have become always present in the laboratories and classrooms of schools in the entire civilized world, Romania included. In that sense, parents have gotten used to teach their children, at a tender age, to use these means of communication, and consequently, to benefit from the offer of those learning programs. Nowadays, computers have become best "friends" with students in the Romanian primary and secondary schools, and in high schools. *Is the world right to grant the modern communication environment so much trust, so soon?*

Virgiliu Gheorghe, (2008), when attempting to answer the question "*what age a child should be when starting to use the computer*", makes a comparison with using go-carts for small children. Go-carts shouldn't be used, since all the healthy children will learn to walk when their muscles are sufficiently developed and when their motor coordinates have matured; the author names computers "mental go-carts", which should only be used when they can no longer affect the development of children, the ideal age being 16-17 years old.[19] *However, in a world so dynamic, and where the volume of knowledge doubles every 10-15 years, that age has to be greatly lowered.* Unfortunately,

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[18] *Ibidem*.

[19] Virgiliu Gheorghe, *The Effects of Television on the Human Mind*, Evanghelismos Publishing House, Bucharest, 2008, p. 420.

nowadays, children's access to the Internet is unrestricted, and parents don't see that as a bad thing, thinking that they should learn to use those methods as soon as possible; however, for the education of children, computers are often bad, since they favor the lack of discipline, an important characteristic of education. Since they are not enough developed, children do not possess the capacity to refrain themselves from accessing non-educational programs, and thus they become dependent on everything; children with access to that "libertine education", which allows them to do what they want, when they want, will reject later on the classic methods toward which they are being guided by their parents and teachers, regarding what they should read and learn.[20]

The effects of these realities have started to become obvious even in the best of schools. Thus, teachers have been forced to lower the level of workload for writing and reading, as well as their expectations concerning mathematical thinking. However, in spite of the obvious efforts made by the teachers of schools and high schools in order to improve the curricula, students failed to show visible improvements.[21] It is unconceivable to think that most teachers have become so weak. Many of them declare with certainty that the methods employed successfully in education so far, therefore tested, today no longer have the same effects. The following question, which remains open, can be asked: *What is the role of the TV, computer, the Internet in the appearance of this phenomenon?*

II.5. The Educative Aspect of the Magazines Preferred by Children

Today and everywhere, mass media, in their crazy, unscrupulous race for bigger and bigger sales, have ended up promoting everything they shouldn't; not to mention the pictures from the intimate, frivolous life of many celebrities. The press, the publications, and especially the tabloids, are invaded by photographs with pornographic messages and various insinuating titles. Those types of magazines and newspapers which are not at all suitable should be put on the top shelf; however, they are being generously placed in the windows of newsstands, so that their great pictures can be admired not only by naïve adolescents, but also by small children. All these are topped off by commercials for massage parlors, and for certain so-called "escort" services, unavoidably accompanied by

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[20] *Ibidem*, p. 21.

[21] Jane M. Healy, *Endangered Minds*, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1990, p.16, Apud *Ibidem*., p. 27.

insidious slogans. Even in the TV supplements of some newspapers there are all sorts of commercials through written messages, but also in the shape of mobile phone displays of a pornographic nature. The effects of the access to pornography and to materials with such connotations are multiple and hard to imagine for children/the youth.

Beside those issues, there is a certain type of magazines, dedicated to pre-teens and children, with the role of "educating" them by using a "trendy" language. For instance: "Andreea Bălan, much too sexy for Romania![22]". At first sight, the information seems beneficial, but the message encouraging children to imitate the role-models from those publications shouldn't be insinuated in any way. *Suggestion becomes the strongest weapon aimed at children/the youth.*

On the other hand, the message sent by the favorite magazines of boys is violence. For instance, *Power Rangers* features a short story about spirits and monsters, and the graphic representations are absolutely horrifying, teaching children to become violent and use unsuitable language elements. To demonstrate, we quote: "The Monster Room, awesome! You can spread your venom both in the water, and on land."[23]

This is even more serious and more dangerous, since "pre-teens are in that stage when character develops, a series of character features being consolidated at that point, while the tendency for independence accentuates[24], and the magazines which they read are contributing to a certain extent to the formation of some traits of personality unwanted in a peaceful and civilized world.

III. Instead of Conclusions

The problems of contemporary world obstinately require communicational responsibility. That type of need is felt at "all the levels of human life", since the mass media, and especially multimedia, form personalities, influence the minds of people, and even manipulate the population.

At the educational level, today's school has become more and more technological, since the educational process is under the aegis of computers, the Internet, television, and the other electronic means. We're not saying that the school doesn't need multimedia/electronic media, but

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[22] *Bravo* magazine, first page appearance.
[23] Power Rangers.
[24] Tinca Cretu, *A Psychology of Ages,* Polirom Publishing House, Iasi, 2009, p. 268.

education means: intense cortical activity, active thinking, and creativity that is beneficial for the humankind, spiritual power, strong human feelings, active behavior, adequate perception of values and anti-values, truth, respect, freedom of expression, spirit of competition, heroism, and patriotism.

The experts say that computers, the Internet, and video games, since they use the pictures on the monitor screen, "are pushing the brain in an alpha-like electric state, undermining the beta cerebral rhythm, specific to the processes of logical and analytic thinking, generally, the active thinking"; the screen inhibits the activity of the left hemisphere, blocks the involvement of the prefrontal cortex, weakens the communication between the hemispheres; also, the Internet addiction can be compared to the one induced by drugs, since the "consumers" (children, the youth) spend dozens of hours in front of the monitors, forgetting all other activities, as well as normal life. Video games stimulate "challenge feelings" in players; reactions are usually automated, turning players into robots; consequently, children/youth become machines reacting in a limited, mechanical manner, with their fingers, to certain visual impulses, while lacking the context (players are treated the same way, even if they are different). The use of the Internet shouldn't lack certain restrictions (the appearance of filters for certain locations), since the children need a minimal guidance, even if it reduces their creativity. Synthetically, the role plaid by the electronic media is as follows[25]:

	Thinking	Feeling	Will (actions)
TV	Reduced	Stimulated, but from the outside, unreal	Automate, mechanic
Electronic games	Eliminated	Stimulated, but especially the competitive and challenging feelings	Stimulated, but the will to surpass a challenge
Computers	Stimulated, but the logical and symbolic thinking, machine-like	Stimulated, but the feeling of a challenge	Making moves mechanic, focus on machine-like thinking

[25] Gheorghe, V., *The Effects of Television on the Human Mind*, 2006, Prodromos Publishing House, Bucharest.

In the process of education, we believe there is also room for electronic media, but that the teaching and learning should not be reduced to audio-visual programs. TV should be seen as a crossroads between an educational environment, an informative environment, and a conditioning environment, with an emphasis on the latter. Even if computers are time-consuming, their use leads to the training of algorithmic, and even logical and symbolical thinking, but the major problem is the appropriate age for the effective use thereof. Computers and the Internet have revolutionized the world, their role as machines created by imitation of the human mind being great, since they annul distances, bring worlds and cultures closer, and almost enable us to speak in real time and to get to know everything, or almost everything, about anything; those very aspects speed up the physical and psychical maturing, and even the burning of some stages in the individual development of children. *Specialists are against that "burning of stages"*.

Researches on the use and the effects of the electronic means on the development of children in today's world show that schools are embracing technology. The effects of television, computers, the Internet and of electronic games are not always beneficial, since the children do not use the electronic media at the right time and in contexts that are favorable to the development of their personality. We believe the school of the future should first of all be a humanistic school, and only then a technical school. In that context, human beings would dominate technology, and not the other way around.

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MULTILINGUALISM AND MULTICULTURAL TEACHING IN ROMANIA: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE INSIGHTS

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Abstract: *Romania is a country with 18 officially recognized ethnic communities, the greatest being that of the Magyars which represents 6.5% of the country's population. The Romanian Ministry of Education has started to get seriously involved and to take a lot of measures to introduce the multicultural education in schools, in partnership with many non-governmental associations such as: The Ethno-cultural Diversity Resource Centre, The Roma Community Resource Centre, The Department for Interethnic Relations of the Romanian Government or the Intercultural Institute of Timişoara. It has also provided training for the teaching staff in their teaching language, which is the language of the respective minority.*

Keywords: *multilingualism, multicultural teaching, foreign/second language acquisition/early childhood, ethnic minority.*

Introduction
Multilingualism, in its broadest definition, would be the individual's ability of communicating in more than one language, be it active (through speaking and writing) or passive (through listening and reading). It could be also defined as "being *native-like* in two or more languages" or as "being *less than native-like* but still able to communicate in two or more languages" (Wikipedia).[1]

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[1] www.wikipedia.org

Although multilingualism has been part of the EU policy ever since the Treaty of Rome, the promotion of language learning and of individual multilingualism combined with an emphasis on linguistic diversity has become a real concern of the EU's educational policy only following the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. Mr. José Manuel Barroso was the one who made multilingualism a separate portfolio which was assigned to one of the new Commissioners, Mr. Leonardo Orban. So, starting with the 1st January 2007 the policy towards foreign languages learning and teaching has gained considerable importance.

Multicultural classroom and multicultural teaching in Romania

Learning a second or foreign language does not have only an intrinsic linguistic value. It also has an intercultural one, helping people to open their minds and souls towards other cultures and attitudes but also to raise their awareness concerning their own cultural values.

While it is true that within the globalization process English is gaining ground in the European Union as lingua franca, it also true that we are faced with a revival of regional and minority languages belonging to smaller communities striving to preserve their identity.

Our country also faces this twofold process: people become bilingual to cope with international requirements, so there is a wide and vivid interest in learning and teaching foreign languages - especially English, as well as the languages of the ethnic minority groups who, in their turn, speak Romanian as their second language.

Romania is a country with 18 officially recognized ethnic communities, the greatest being that of the Magyars which represents 6.5% of the country's population. Therefore, a first argument for promoting diversity through education in contemporary Romania is the structure of the population itself. According to the data provided by the National Institute of Statistics, the number of inhabitants amounts to 2,091,963 million people (2011) out of which 88.6% are Romanians and the other inhabitants belong to other ethnic groups. These figures show the necessity of ensuring equal chances in quality education for all children and teenagers irrespective of their nationality.

As we have mentioned above, in Romania we can speak about two types of ethnic minorities: historical or national minorities and immigrants that settled in Romania especially after 1989. The total number of Romanian citizens who have come from outside Europe amounts to 10.743. The larger communities are the Chinese and the Arabic ones.

Table 1. The Nationalities of Romania's Population (according to the 2011 Census)

Nationality	No. of persons	Percentage of the population
Romanians	16,869. 816	88,6%
Magyars (Hungarians)	1,227,623	6,5%
Rroma	621,573	3,29%
Ukrainians	50,920	0,27%
Germans	36,042	0,19%
Russians	23,487	0,12%
Turks	27,698	0,15%
Tartars	20,282	0,11%
Serbs	18,076	0,10%
Slovaks	13,654	0,07%
Bulgarians	7,336	0.04%
Croatians	5,408	0.03%
Greeks	3,668	0.02%
Jews	3,271	0.02%
Czechs	2,477	0.01%
Poles	2,543	0.01%
Italians	3,203	0.02%
Chinese	2,017	0.01%
Armenians	1,361	>0.01%
Csango	1,536	>0.01%
Others	18,524	0.10%
Total	2,091,963	11.08%

Within this context, the sensitivity towards a multicultural education has started to develop becoming a social competence that is crucial for a real mutual understanding among people. The Romanian Ministry of Education has started to get seriously involved and take a lot of measures to introduce the multicultural education in schools, in partnership with

many non-governmental associations such as The Ethno-cultural Diversity Resource Centre, The Roma Community Resource Centre, the Department for Interethnic Relations of the Romanian Government or the Intercultural Institute of Timişoara.

In order to improve the inter-ethnic relationships and to establish a peaceful intercultural climate, starting with 2000, many projects have been carried out focusing on: training teachers of Romanian language and literature that work in schools where the language of instruction is a national minority language; designing Romanian language and literature, history and geography textbooks for schools with instruction in minority languages; establishing partnerships between schools with instruction in the language of minorities and schools with instructions in Romania.

During the programme "Multicultural Education in Schools" which lasted for two years (2004-2006) a curriculum was developed and methodological materials elaborated for an optional course of multicultural education to be taught to 3rd grade and 4th grade children. Another programme "Multicultural education for teachers and students" that offered training for teachers and some textbook evaluations, also made recommendations for the Ministry of National Education as to including elements of diversity in teaching literature, geography and history in primary schools, making a lot reference to European practices and presenting concrete facts and methodology as well as practical exercises.

Table 2. The System of Pre-university Education in Romania by Teaching Languages

Teaching Language	Pre-school Education	Primary and Middle School Education	High School Education	Vocational Education	Post-High School Education
Total pupils	715,514	2,532,169	757,673	288,221	45,321
Romanian	658,340	1,393,312	723,871	281,928	44,337
Magyar	47,754	124,167	30,055	6,293	862
German	7,373	11,526	2,060	-	122
Serbian	389	461	172	-	-
Ukrainian	383	273	162	-	-
Slovak	295	903	136	-	-
Czech	75	188	-	-	-
Bulgarian	148	-	-	-	-

| Turkish | 153 | - | - | - | - |
| Greek | 25 | - | - | - | - |

(Source: the National Institute of Statistics, 2001)

In this general context we have to mention the financial and conceptual efforts made for updating the foreign language learning system in Romania, having in view a reorientation and compatibility with the exigencies of a united, multicultural and multi-linguistic Europe. Thus, our national policy on foreign language acquisition is developing in the spirit of respect for the diversity of languages and cultures in our continent. Growing attention is paid to the theoretical and practical levels, to concepts such as "language awareness", "language across the curriculum" and "intercultural values in Europe". Increasing references have been made to these issues lately, as they have been approached in recent curricular researches and in-service teacher training.

During the last years the tradition of bilingual schooling has been gaining more importance in our country. Thus, there are good high schools with sections teaching intensive courses in a modern language, as well as a number of high schools with most subject-matters taught in English, German, Spanish or Hungarian (e.g. the English High School, the German High School, "Cervantes" High School, etc.). Nowadays the Romanian teachers involved in bilingual and multilingual high school and university education have focused their attention and professional commitment on developing the content and language integrated learning, which can better meet the students' personal needs and career expectations.

In spring 2007 a research was launched to investigate aspects of the teaching and learning processes in bilingual and multilingual classrooms in Transilvania. The data already collected showed that working in two languages can enhance the pupils' learning. Many of the interviewed pupils expressed the desire to use their mother tongue and also the Romanian in school, in order to fully develop their skills and identities as bilingual learners. The results of these data analysis will be used in order to promote inclusive language policies to further multilingualism and multiculturalism in our country.

The whole framework of learning experiences a child must undergo in the educational system – the school curriculum – comprises a series of components that will result in a better representation of the ethnic

diversity in formal education and it is based on the multicultural competences which we illustrate in the following table:

Table 3 – Multicultural competences

Knowledge	Abilities/Skills	Values and attitudes
Cultural identity Information on ethnic groups **Demographic changes in the geographic area taken into consideration** Socio-economic context of the geographic area taken into consideration Historical context of the geographic area taken into consideration	Efficient intercultural communication Cooperative learning and teamwork Active listening Critical thinking Bias sources awareness related to the personal cultural identity Problem solving	Respect for diversity Flexibility mpathy Thinking autonomy Social Responsibility Civic Responsibility Social Cohesion Freedom

At the level of school curriculum there are two areas in which the respect for ethnic diversity can be educated: the core curriculum that is compulsory and the curriculum at school decision that includes optional courses. Thus, the infusion of multilingualism and multicultural education will be achieved at classroom level by enriching the existing themes and introducing new ones according to the curricular area such as:

❖ Romanian writers of other ethnic groups (Romania language and literature);
❖ Writers belonging to other ethnic groups living in Romania at present;
❖ Translating Romanian texts into the ethnic groups' languages (Romania language and literature);
❖ Stories and legends which teach small children to appreciate diversity (4th/5th grade);
❖ The history of ethnic minorities in Romania (History);
❖ The map of the Romanian population ethnic diversity (Social studies);
❖ Ceremonies and religious rituals of the ethnic groups from Romania (The history of religions);
❖ The music of ethnic groups in Romania (Musical education);

❖ Physical beauty – its meaning from various ethnic perspectives (Physical Education).

In the actual classroom practice all these above mentioned multicultural competences are carried out based on a series of modern methods which enable the students to fully express their opinions and shape a multicultural personality with many advantages for their future lives. The most commonly used methods are:

❖ **Debate** which helps the students express and sustain their **o**pinions, identify their arguments and come out with proofs in order to sustain their opinions carrying out a polite conversation, without hurting other people's feelings. It also offers the opportunity of horizontal communication from student to student and provides them with various alternatives, developing their decision-taking ability. It is a great opportunity of practicing their skills so as they may be able to reaching a consensus peacefully.

❖ **Jigsaw** which helps the students establish communication and develops the ability of cooperating with various colleagues in order to solve some learning tasks, as well as their positive interdependence. It also offers the opportunity of horizontal communication from student to student, helping them improve their teamwork abilities and analytical skills.

❖ **Brainstorming** which develops problem-solving abilities and helps the students develop their creative thinking. At the same time it stimulates the active use of already acquired knowledge to find out solutions for various problems and develops active listening.

❖ **Case study** focuses on developing the students' analytical skills as they are required to find out solutions for complex problems making use of their problem solving abilities. The main advantage of using this method is that it helps them develop their critical thinking.

❖ **Role play** helps students develop empathy as they are required to experience a situation from different perspectives. Equally, it makes them practise different communication styles which lead to improving their abilities of searching and processing information.

❖ **Project work** teaches the students to carry out in-depth research of the subject, developing the capacity of cooperation among colleagues in order to solve a learning task. Mainly, it helps the students make use of their cross-cultural knowledge.

Instead of conclusions

Over the last few years, a special attention has been attached to the Roma community whose integration is not a very easy one. Between 2005-2007 a project called "The success in school of Roma children" was developed together with Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Moldova, Slovakia, Slovenia. But, besides the problems of the ethnic minorities which have already been dealt with, another aspect that should be taken into account by the Romanian Ministry of Education is that of immigrants or the refugees' minor children who must get integrated into the Romanian school system. In collaboration with some humanitarian organizations such as "Save the children", the Ministry is trying to ensure some free preparatory courses for these children so that they may enroll in the national school system. In our opinion, a special attention should also be attached to their linguistic and cultural integration as they have to acquire a new linguistic paradigm and new social and cultural competences.

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THE INFLUENCE OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE ACQUISITION
IN EARLY CHILDHOOD ON THE COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PERSONALITY

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Abstract: *This article examines how memories that are acquired by learning a foreign/second language during early childhood are latently retrieved in adult age and influence the further cognitive development. It describes a study of adult learners who had spoken a foreign/second language besides their native language before the age of five, at basic level only, and who resumed learning that language after the age of eighteen or even later. The findings of this research show that these persons outperformed in a short period of time those who started the study of another language in adulthood both in terms of grammar and vocabulary. The conclusions point out the fact that early language acquisition can be accessed in adulthood upon a re-learning phenomenon and also influences other cognitive skill acquisitions.*

Keywords: *foreign/second language, cognitive development, early childhood, language acquisition, re-learning.*

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to examine the relationship between early language learning and cognitive development and show the extent to which this assumption relates to language learning and also to Romanian learners who have been submitted to the influence of a foreign language since early childhood. We can start from the fact that the

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language acquisition implies the child's exposure to some linguistic data and many specialists argue that the language is learnt by the strength of the context generalization. The Swiss scholar Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) believes that "all language items are essentially interlinked."[1] He argues that "language was like a game of chess, a system in which each item is defined by its relationship to all the others…language is a carefully built structure of interwoven elements."[2]

Foreign language teachers have long been facing a string of psycho-linguistic theories. One approach is the traditional method to second/foreign language teaching and learning. This comprises both the grammar translation method which developed at the end of the eighteenth century and the direct method that developed in the late nineteenth century as a reaction against the grammar-translation method. Prior to the time of Chomsky, "little was known about the process of second language acquisition, and thus (traditional approaches) were grounded in the linguistic, psychological, and pedagogical theories of their day."[3] The communicative approach of our days has laid the emphasis on learning a new language as a means of communication and has started to take into account the learners' interests and life experience. That is why we consider speaking and listening as integrative skills, we can no longer take them separately.

The impact of the cultural environment on the relationship between language and thought

The language used by a person determines his/her perception of the world, the representation of space, time and emotions. Thus, the grammatical and semantic categories of each language are not just tools to communicate thoughts, but give form to our ideas and shape our mental activity. There are many researchers and specialists who equate thought with language, as a superior assertion level of the special quality of human intelligence. Language, as support of thought, develops, is valued and becomes a determining factor in the learning process. That is why people with different mother tongues can have different thinking perspectives, different ways of understanding and decoding the world around them. The language reflects the specificity of the cognitive cultural environment

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[1] Aitchison, J., *Linguistics*, Hodder Headline, London, 1992, (p.24).

[2] Ibid.

[3] Pica, T.P. *Communicative Language Teaching: "An aid to second language acquisition? Some insights from classroom research."* English Quarterly, Vol.21, No.2, 1988, (p.70).

of different peoples and social realities, providing "labels" in order to memorize and store this information. Every language comprises things that are handed down from one generation to another, and this reflects the way of thinking of a certain people, what they think it is right. For example, the Britons were people who preferred working on vast areas and the fact that they lived on an island and they had to resist foreign invasions made them a community which was, probably, closer than others, more self-centered, which gave rise to a special set of skills and behaviors, to a certain outlook on life. And this is also reflected in their language, which abounds in verbs, different from French, for instance, which abounds in nouns.

When we are required to specify certain information in our mother tongue, we are implicitly receptive to certain details and experiences which are irrelevant for the speakers of another language. If these linguistic peculiarities are cultivated from an early age, they significantly influence our experiences, perceptions, feelings and memories, and the way in which we make associations and interpret our life environment. For example, the language of the Hopi Indians of North America does not contain any grammatical forms, words or special verbal constructions to express the time. This aspect points out the fact that Indians have a different perception of time than we (Europeans). Likewise, their language contains no distinct words for insect, plane and pilot – and we can conclude that they do not differentiate these words. The Eskimos have lots of words for snow, giving different names to the one which most suitable for the construction of an igloo or for sledding. Worf[4] argues that this demonstrates the complexity of their thinking about snow compared to ours. Equally, the speakers of a language which has several distinct colours can remember better and more accurately the names of the colours than speakers who do not have so many words to define colors. Another relevant example could be the fact the children of Navajo Indians develop, typically, the ability to recognize objects in the following order: size, color, and only after that form. If Whorf and Sapir's theory[5] is true, we can assume that Navajo children (who speak Navajo) will recognize the shape of objects at younger ages than children living in other cultural

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[4] Lee, Penny, "The Logic and Development of the Linguistic Relativity Principle", *The Whorf Theory Complex: A Critical Reconstruction*, John Benjamins Publishing, 1996.

[5] Sapir, Edward, David G. Mandelbaum, ed., *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir in Language, Culture, and Personality*, University of California Press, 1983.

environments. We are speaking here about linguistic deter–minism - the idea that language and its structures limit and determine human knowledge or thought, as well as thinking processes such as categorization, memory, and perception. The term implies that people of different languages have different thinking processes.

In fact, one can easily see it in art. For example, it is not difficult to see that, most of the time, German artists give 'Death' the appearance of a man because the German word "death" is masculine. The fact that even for the smallest things like objects gender or the lack of words to describe several shades of the same colors we are influenced by the way in which we perceive the world shows that language plays a basic role in shaping human experience. Similarly, grammatical categories (like verb tenses, gender, etc.) affect significantly the perception and significance of the environment. Not only do languages such as Spanish, French, German, Russian and Romanian force us to think of a person gender when we talk about him/her, but also of the objects gender. By assigning genders to all the objects around us, we begin to personify them and talk about them as if they were people.

The difficulty of the linguistic relativity theory resides precisely in the fact that it fails to argue what has the decisive role – the language or the environment. Whorf and Sapir[6] support language as a priority factor in perceiving the environment. But the other view may also be valid - as the multitude of words for 'camel' in Arabic or the 92 words used by the tribe Hanuxoo in the Philippines to name 'rice' etc., may reflect the specificity of the environment in which they live. An important aspect to note is that of the flexibility of language. Language is not a static category, but a dynamic one, which is continuously enriched with new words corresponding to scientific and technical progress. Language flexibility acts positively on the creativity factors and hence on the thinking operations which, in their turn, influence the level of language development.

Thus, the cognitive processes are influenced differently by distinct languages; this does not occur because the language induces our way of thinking, but it "constrains" us what to think of. What we can notice is the significant impact of this process on the significance memory that develops and nuances depending on the specific cultural context. Children do not simply learn a language, but appropriate the whole cultural context in which they operate.

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[6] Ibid.

The importance of learning a foreign/second language in early childhood

Recent specialized research illustrated that the child understands the language in context and then begins to distinguish and understand the words in a message. Learning a language takes place in a social context, through interaction with other speakers of that language, and by exploring and experiencing different forms of communication. Thus, the adults who update the linguistic knowledge acquired in childhood also remember the names of objects, people and the whole environment of their first years of life. The importance of acquiring basic language structures in early childhood is revealed by Chomsky[7] in his theory on the initial stage of learning to speak a language as a previous experience to any linguistic acquisitions made later in life.

The research on updating the information acquired in early childhood is insufficiently valued in terms of the learning process. For example, the study of a language that was learnt in early childhood enables the adult to reactivate the knowledge acquired at that stage of development. If there are measurable differences from a cognitive point of view between those who update their knowledge and those who learn for the first time, then we can say that early childhood acquisitions influence long-term cognitive development.

The process of learning a foreign language affects particularly the memory development – the superior cognitive mental process that enables imprinting, fixing and updating the information. The children who learnt a foreign language concurrently/simultaneously with their mother tongue by the age of five and then resumed learning it in adulthood, remember the knowledge acquired in their early childhood and reach a higher level than who have never studied the respective language. Similarly, the persons who resume learning a language they spoke in infancy have a fast progress and, in a short time, they are able to reach a very good level of knowledge of the foreign language studied previously.

Experts in the field claim that the memories of the child until the age of three years are beginning to erase from their memory around the age of seven. Young children tend to forget more quickly than adults because "they lack these strong neural processes necessary to assemble all the information that reach the complex autobiographical memory," explains P. Bauer.

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[7] Chomsky, N., *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1965.

This process of erasing the memory related to experiences lived up to age of three is called "infantile amnesia" and could be associated with the process of neurogenesis at the level of the hippocampus, where neurons are generated (according to researchers at the Children's Hospital in Toronto.) In this respect it is very difficult to assess whether these early childhood memories are authentic or images based on the accounts given by the other family members.

There are, however, specialized studies stating that adults can recall events occurred as early as the age of 2-3. Thus, Lucy[8] described the experience of a child who was born in Sweden and spoke Swedish. When he was 5 years old, his parents divorced, and he emigrated with his mother in the U.S., where he spoke only English. Around the age of 18, he said he could not remember even one word in Swedish. When regressed under hypnosis at the age of 5, he responded to questions in Swedish, was able to count to 10, to name a few items and say some simple sentences. He also remembered a lullaby that his grandmother used to sing for him before going to sleep. This study demonstrates that language acquisitions in early childhood can last for many years, even if for their recovery is required a drastic intervention, such as hypnosis. This kind of studies have been challenged under the ground that were reported by psychoanalysts who were particular interested in demonstrating that early childhood memory remains intact and can be reactivated under hypnosis.

Another series of studies have revealed that information from early childhood can be "accessed" without resorting to hypnosis. A good example in this respect is the case of some children from Transylvania coming from mixed families who spoke German with their grandparents until the age of 5 years. Separated from the extended family environment, after moving to other regions, these children lost contact with the German language, but resumed it at different ages and under different circumstances.

For example, one of them, as a result of an immersion opportunity in the context of the German language found in a very short time (only a few weeks) that he could not only understands what they said around him, but that he was even able to use complex linguistic constructions. Another began studying German as a new foreign language regularly and soon found out that he was progressing much faster than his peers who had never had any contact with this language.

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[8] Lucy, John A., "Linguistic Relativity", Annual Review of Anthropology, 1997.

These studies, together with those concerning linguistic deprivation, are designed to reveal the importance of early childhood learning. Learning a foreign language simultaneously with the mother language in early childhood means the interaction with diverse linguistic structures, enabling the transfer of processes and enhancing the imaginative resources necessary to solve particular problems, stimulating the development of thought, imagination and creativity, thus improving the cognitive side of the human personality development.

The process of learning a foreign language (which was taught in early childhood) opens new perspectives on the relationship between language and the cognitive development of the personality.

Concluding remarks

Research into the re-learning of long-disused childhood languages has much to offer. It provides relatively objective evidence for access to early childhood memory in adulthood. It complements linguistic deprivation research to highlight the special status of childhood language experience. It suggests a strategy to salvage seemingly forgotten childhood languages, which are often also heritage languages. Re-learning childhood languages may well open a window into how language affects cognitive development not only during, but also well beyond, the childhood years.

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