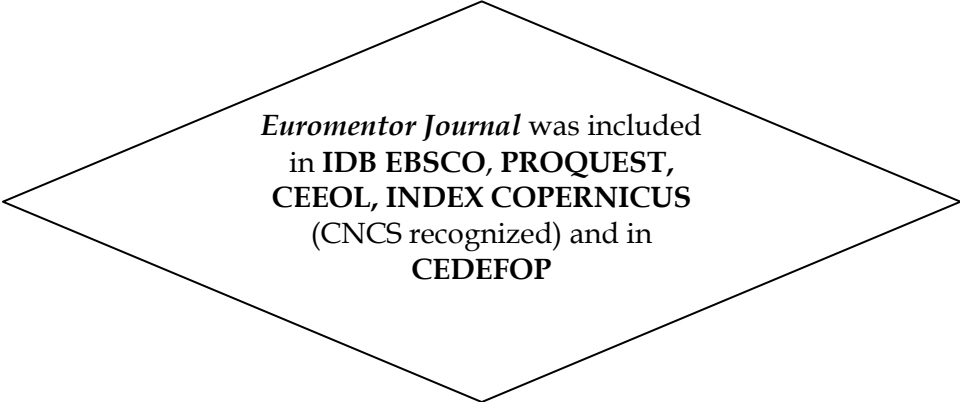


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Phone: (021) - 330.79.00, 330.79.11, 330.79.14
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NICOLETA DUȚĂ

DO WE NEED EMPATHY TODAY?

GABRIELA POHOAȚĂ,*

gabriela_pohoata@yahoo.com

IULIA WANIEK**

iawaniek@hotmail.com

Empathy is: „To see with the other person's eyes, to hear with another's ears, to feel with the heart of the Other.”

(Alfred Adler)

Abstract: *The present study touches on an issue which belongs not only to psychology, but also to philosophical anthropology, to philosophy in general, to history, art, etc.. Empathy has become today a theme of inter- and transdisciplinary research (Vestehen, understanding the other, comprehension), being present in experimental research involved in remodeling the human relations deteriorated by the mental maladies of our times. In our approach we are not concerned with the concept of empathy or its functions which are, nonetheless very interesting; there are many theories and points of view in the specialized literature. Analysing the relation between empathy and human nature, a question naturally arises: Do we need empathy today?! In order to live in a „decent society” we need to increase our empathic potential.*

Keywords: *empathy, compassion, sympathy, comprehension, human nature.*

Introduction

Empathy is distinguished and debated in the present body of knowledge as an inter- and transdisciplinary theme (*Vestehen, understanding the other, comprehension*), necessary for explaining the

* Prof. PhD. hab., Faculty of Law and Administration, “Dimitrie Cantemir” Christian University, Bucharest.

** Assoc. Prof. PhD., Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures, “Dimitrie Cantemir” Christian University, Bucharest.

problems confronting human nature. In philosophy, empathy has a history of conceptualizations beginning with saint Thomas Aquinas, continuing in the modern and contemporary periods with Hegel, Max Weber, Dilthey, Habermas, their conceptions foreshadowing the psychological theories of the present.

It is worth mentioning here that the intuition of the conception of empathy is very old, originating in the Buddhist doctrine. In Buddhism, empathy emerges from the fundamental concept of compassion.

Due to the fact that empathy elicited the interest of specialists in various fields, we now have a great diversity of perspectives from which it was defined, as a consequence of their authors' need to find the psychological motivations of empathy. In this context, the seeming confusion regarding the notion of empathy itself is not surprising. Each author tried to give his own explanation to this phenomenon of reliving through a transposition in another's perspective, and, quite naturally, these explanations have evolved in time. It was the researchers who engaged in clarifying the methodology and epistemology of historical knowledge, at the end of the 19-th century, that brought empathy to the forefront of their reflection. We can mention in this context Dilthey¹, who autonomized „understanding” (comprehension, *Verstehen*), which he equated with „empathy” (*Einfühlung*). Through this he understood putting oneself in another's situation and detecting his motives for action, starting from oneself, in the form of an „analogical syllogism”. Any form of empathy has as starting point one's own feelings - for example, „when it rains outside I look for my umbrella” - and aims to account for another's feelings - for example „Eugene looked for his umbrella because it rains outside” - and it takes the form of the „analogical syllogism”. Max Weber was to go farther into the wider field of social sciences, considering that the empathic understanding is the only one that can explain the beginning of a historical series of events (for example the genesis of capitalism with the first entrepreneurs), the rest of events that follow being analysable with causal explanations. In his fundamental book, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*², the famous sociologist wrote that „sociology should be a science which understands (*verstehen*) social action by

¹ Dilthey, *Einleitung in die Geisteswissenschaften*, 1883, apud Andrei Marga, „Empatia - temă în expansiune (Empathy - an Expanding Theme)”, in *Contemporanul (The Contemporary)*, No. 9 (786), 2017, p. 28.

² Max Weber, *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*, apud *ibidem*.

interpretation (deuten) and aims to explain causally its effects”, and thus opened the way to the use of comprehension (Verstehen) in social sciences. Once the social sciences and Habermas’ philosophy came to the forefront, empathy (comprehension, Verstehen) gained once more importance. It was not just a method of historical knowledge or a form of explanation, but an integral part of action itself³. More exactly, a part of actions that imply „placing oneself in the other’s situation” and „assuming the other’s point of view”, and which are as much building blocks for society as the „rational actions in view of a purpose”, or „instrumental” or „strategic actions”. Thus the interest in researching empathy has augmented with its inclusion in the construction of the image about society⁴. A reference worth mentioning in this context is the contribution of American author J.D. Trout⁵, who maintains that „empathy is the capacity to accurately understand the others’ position, the feeling that ‘this could happen to me’”⁶. The American author somehow combines the connotation established by Thomas Aquinas – empathy is „the sympathy we feel with all the heart for the misfortunes that put the others in danger and make us to support them as much as we can” – and Adam Smith – „the emotion that we feel for the others’ misery, whether we see it or conceive of it in a very vivid manner”⁷.

Empathy and Human Nature: Are we born with the empathic instinct or do we acquire it through education?

J.D. Trout’s explanations regarding the phenomenon of empathy are not centred around historical or political realities, the author founding his arguments on anthropology, which allows him a complex approach, from an inter and multidisciplinary perspective. Anthropologically, we are beings reacting rationally, but also emotionally, and “a successful human response to the human needs is necessarily based on both reactions”⁸. Not everything can be based on empathy, and “empathy without reason is blind”, but we cannot fail to recognize that, if we approach reality

³ Habermas, *Zur Logik der Sozialwissenschaften*, 1970, apud ibidem.

⁴ A. Marga, *Filosofia lui Habermas (Habermas’ Philosophy)*, Bucharest, RAO Publishing House, 2017.

⁵ J. D. Trout, *Why Empathy Matters. Science and Psychology of Better Judgment*, Penguin Books, 2009.

⁶ Ibidem, p. 21.

⁷ Ibidem, p. 28

⁸ Ibidem, p. 6.

rationally, empathy “is central to our humanity”⁹. Other American researchers¹⁰ raised the question whether empathy is originating in human nature itself, just like other instincts. They mention a “revolution in the scientific understanding of human nature”, which consists of “discovering the deep roots of human kindness”¹¹.

Thus, the thesis that “good is as intrinsic to the nature of our species as evil. Empathy, gratitude, compassion, altruism, justice, trust and cooperation, once considered to be aberrations from the tooth-and-claw order of things, reveal themselves now as core characteristic of the evolution of primates”¹², is now gaining precedence. It is not about simplifying reality towards the opposite direction, of overbidding for empathy, but a reconstruction. Empathy is included in cognition, but is not reducible to it. The experiments that sustain this thesis are selected from research on harmony among primates, from neuroscience studies, the discovery of oxytocin, and of other hormones promoting trust and generosity, as well as from psychology research on gentleness. In short, experiments which prove that selfish interest is not everything, leaving space for dedication. For example, experiments at the University of Wisconsin (Jack Nitschke) involving parents’ reactions to children, attest that there exists a biological basis for compassion, which can be localized in a part of the brain, while experiments at Princeton University (Joshua Greene, Jonathan Cohen) have proved that in general, compassion has such a basis. The increase of oxytocin in the blood appears to be connected to compassionate behaviour. “Taken together, the proofs that we have suggest a deep insertion of compassion in human nature, and that there is a biological basis for it in the brain, and body.... And when stirred, compassion overwhelms selfish interest and motivates altruistic behaviour”¹³.

Studies on the primates support, in any case, the idea of an evolution of the forms of empathy, beginning with the parent-child relation and going up to higher standards dictated by culture. It is thus possible to have “a vision of human nature which encompasses all our tendencies:

⁹ Ibidem.

¹⁰ Dacher Keltner, Jason Marsh, and Jeremy Adam Smith (eds.), *The Compassionate Instinct*, New York, London: J.W. Norton Company, 2010.

¹¹ Ibidem, p. 5.

¹² Ibidem, p. 6.

¹³ Ibidem, p. 13.

good, evil and the ugly”¹⁴. A whole range of phenomena – the recourse to murder, domination, the availability for cooperation, forgiveness, trust, spiritual elevation, partnership, love, honour, gratitude, affinity, helping the other, social activism, heroism - are thus approached more profoundly. On such a basis one can conceive actions to stimulate behaviour dedicated to others.

Empathy is rooted in human nature, but it does not manifest itself in everybody’s behaviour. Its appearance in human relations is connected to education, and self-education. We cannot speak of manifested empathy in the persons predisposed to evil, dominated by selfishness, envy, jealousy, suspicion, who act surreptitiously and confiscate other people’s work, forgetting altogether the good they received, once, with generosity, from the persons against whom they act, infringing on personal rights and freedom. People with upright characters can interact on the basis of empathy. Thus, morality, as a form of applied ethics, is not only abiding by universal laws, but also includes something more, namely assuming another’s perspective and putting oneself in his place. The new pedagogy does not appeal explicitly to the exploration of empathy, but admits that it is not reduced solely to knowing the rules. Empathy is, doubtlessly, an important ability which allows us to assume the others’ psychology. It allows us to understand social relations, and it is practically the “glue” of society, enhancing pro-social behaviour, in the direction of helping others and inhibiting our own propensities for evil action.

To be capable of empathy means to a real human, to be capable of communication. Actually, empathy is the integrating part of communication, as it represents a link between the state of mind and thinking of the emitter and those of the receptor. Empathy is the ability to implicitly understand the of mind of another person: “I see what you feel”. The value of empathy is seen more clearly when the nature of two persons’ relationship is expressed. On the other hand, interpersonal communication is the medium where empathic ability develops. An inborn empathic ability develops experientially only in the conditions of a permanent exchange with social partners. Its development depends directly on the possibility of assuming roles, of creating rich social relationships, of living through diverse social situations, which allow one to establish intimate communicative relations, with a deep affective colouring, and to analyse the motives of one’s own, and others’ actions.

¹⁴ Ibidem, p. 24.

All these can only be achieved through interpersonal relationships. If there is no empathy, there can be no communication, as the other is non-existent for me, either as good, or bad, or as enemy. Empathy is not affected by the good or bad characteristics of the relation with the other, it precedes them, goes beyond them, contains them.

Certain dictionaries define empathy, not accidentally, as an implicit way of communication which does not replace explicit communication, but enhances it and completes it. Empathic communication unfolds an interactive relation, favouring a cooperative behaviour, of mutual understanding between partners, being able to trigger a harmony characteristic to social contacts. The functions of empathy – cognitive, communicative, anticipative, affective, performative – have an adaptive value, and a major role in maintaining interpersonal relations, with a tolerant and harmonizing attitude.

What is, actually, empathy? How do we differentiate empathy from sympathy, compassion, etc.?

The concept of empathy was launched by the German philosopher Robert Vischer¹⁵, who named the phenomenon, in his native tongue, *Einfühlung*, but it was C. Rogers¹⁶ who introduced the term in medical practice, defining it as being the accurate perception of the internal reference frame of another person, with all its emotional components and significance, which are appropriated “as if” one were the other person, without, however, losing the condition of “as if”.

Empathy is aided by the interaction between the emotional brain (the limbic system) and the cognitive brain (the cortex), thus being distinguished three types of empathy:

1. *Cognitive empathy* – when someone recognizes what another person feels;
2. *Emotional empathy* – when someone feels what another person feels;
3. *Compassionate empathy* – when someone wants to help the other.

Concluding on the definitions given for empathy, M. Stroe¹⁷ appreciates that the crucial point of the concept is the behaviour of

¹⁵ <http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empatia>.

¹⁶ Howard Kischenbaum, Valerie Land Henderson (eds.), *The Carl Rogers Reader*, Boston&New York, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1989.

¹⁷ M. Stroe, *Empatie și personalitate (Empathy and Personality)*, Bucharest, Albatros Publishing House, 1997.

reliving the states, thoughts, actions of the other, by oneself, through a process of substitutive transposition in the partner's psychology.

In the beginnings of scientific psychology, Th. Lipps and E. Tichner¹⁸, still under the influence of introspection and philosophical and aesthetic explanations, give an animist-solipsist explanation of the empathic phenomenon, based on another psychic phenomenon, namely projection. According to their theory, through empathy a person initially projects his own states of mind onto the object of empathy, only to relive subsequently these states, initially attributed to the model outside oneself.

We can remark that the end and the beginning of the 20-th century are characterized by contradictory visions concerning the interpretation of the empirical phenomenon of empathy, in the sense that, initially, empathy was considered a phenomenon of subjective projection, while subsequently it came to be seen as based on a mechanism of introjection-projection, determined both by the characteristics of the object to be empathized, as well as by the personal needs of the individual to enter in a communion with the others, a need which is experientially objective.

A clearer distinction between the two perspectives was achieved as the phenomenon of projection, whereby the ego imposes his own states to the other, absolutizing his own self-identity, was more clearly separated from empathy, whereby the ego is feeling in the other, to relive the other's states, thoughts, actions, without losing self-identity¹⁹.

This conceptual separation, was adopted by the scientific psychology, whereby projection is defined as the ego living in the other, and empathy as reliving by the self of the other's states, as if he were the other person, makes empathy an empirical way to know the other, and projection an exacerbation of one's own ego in relation to the world. Moreover, one can assert that, in a certain sense, empathy, in the modern vision, is opposed to projection.

Current research evidences two tendencies: one centered on the imaginative-ideatic transposition in the reference system of another, adopting the way of thinking, and of realizing the social role of the other, and another tendency which focusses on the action of activating an experience, of substituting oneself in the emotional states of the partner, by identifying oneself affectively with the other, and adopting his state of mind. The first direction, or tendency of research

¹⁸ <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/empathy>

¹⁹ D. Goleman, *Inteligenta emotionala (Emotional Intelligence)*, Bucharest, Curtea Veche Publishing House, 2012

is at the origin of the theory and method proposed by R. Hogan²⁰ (1969), and the second one belongs to the authors A. Mehrabian and N. Epstein²¹ (1972).

Subsequently there appears a synthetic point of view, belonging to M. H. Davis²² (1983), which gives a multidimensional interpretation of the empathic phenomenon, by combining the cognitive and the emotional direction, using as interpretive subscales: assuming the other's perspective, phantasy, empathic relation and stress. All these theoretical interpretations of the empathic phenomenon lead to the elaboration and validation of specific tests such as Hogan's Empathy Scale, Dymond's Empathy and Intuition Test, Mehrabian and Epstein's Questionnaire for Measuring Emotional Empathy as well as Davis' Index of Interpersonal Reactivity, which are the most frequently used empathy scales in current research.

Empathy is frequently mistaken for sympathy. From the perspective of moral philosophy, Adam Smith²³ defines sympathy as the experience whereby we co-feel, or feel together with the other, which we live as a response to the other's intense emotional states. Empathy signifies the act of feeling oneself into something objective, to know the partner through the process of transposition in the other person's psychology. It is somehow near the phenomenon of compassion.

Some researchers pointed out that psychology and neurology both move in the direction of putting compassion, caring for the other and prosocial behaviour in the center of welfare, mental health and harmonious relations with others, in the world in which we live²⁴. We should remark the fact that psychotherapy has at its center compassion, and the conception of compassion as deep consciousness of one's own suffering and of other sentient beings' suffering, coupled with the desire and the effort to free oneself from it.

Future research will be able to evidence how important is compassion

²⁰ R. Hogan, *Development of one scale*, *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 33, 1969, p. 307-316.

²¹ A. Mehrabian & N. Epstein, *A Measure of emotional empathy*, *Journal of Personality*, 1972, 40, p. 525-540.

²² M.H. Davis, *Measuring individual differences in empathy: Evidence for a multidimensional approach*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 1983, 44, p. 113-126.

²³ Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Indianapolis, Liberty Classics, 1759

²⁴ Paul Gilbert, *The Compassionate Mind. A New Approach to Life's Challenges*, New Harbinger, New York, 2009.

in the processes within the brain and in human behaviour.

Instead of Conclusions

The man of our times is dominated by technology, depending on the objects around him, turned into a robot. Living in a daily stress that grows every moment, nobody poses the question about how the other feels, because, absorbed by the external world, man lives “forgetting himself”, estranged from himself and the others. everything is mechanical, stereotypical, so that in inter-human relationships empathy does not manifest at the human level. Communication is merely on the surface, and inter-human relations are diminished and superficial. World economy has entered in a new century and political psychology is outdated. Empathy could revive it. “It cannot be the ultimate guide for eliminating human suffering. It can be a starting place, but not an arrival one.”²⁵ Empathy needs imagination, because some of the people in need are not in front of our eyes, in direct contact with us. “A healthy empathic system, well calibrated versus the social needs, approaches the poor people as worthy of assistance even if their situation is difficult to conceive for us.”²⁶ After all, one cannot be a citizen without empathy. The goal presented by Trout is a “decent society”, as he considers that “a good and empathic society can tolerate common and moderate inequality, but is incompatible with enormous differences in welfare, which are arbitrary.”²⁷

If we refer to current Romanian society, Trout’s theory remains a beautiful utopia. The deficit of rationality and morality, the exacerbated individualism, the arrogant indifference and selfishness, are aspects which make empathy in Romania an abstract concept. We need empathy today, in order to live in a decent society, in which normal people take care of their neighbours, of addressing them correctly and having the good options. The fact that empathy is despised impairs the pursuit of one’s own happiness and even more, the pursuit of others’ happiness. Therefore, we mean that, living in a decent society demands that we possess empathic ability, even more, that we increase our empathic potential. How can I expand my own empathic potential? Empathy is not just a way to extend the boundaries of our moral universe. According to

²⁵ J.D. Trout, *works cited*, p. 26

²⁶ *ibidem*, p. 31-32

²⁷ *ibidem*, p. 299

new research it's a habit we can cultivate to improve the quality of our own lives.

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SUGGERIMENTI PEDAGOGICHE DELLA TRADIZIONE NONVIOLENTA DI PENSIERO E DI AZIONE. NONVIOLENT EDUCATIONAL SUGGESTIONS FROM THE NONVIOLENT PHILOSOPHY AND MOVEMENT.

GABRIELLA FALCICCHIO*

gfalcicchio@hotmail.com

Abstract: *The essay aims at introducing the pedagogical vision of the nonviolent tradition. It focuses in particular on Aldo Capitini, the father of the Italian nonviolent movement. It also considers Thoreau, Tolstoj, Gandhi, Alexander Langer. The nonviolent philosophy and movement generated an extensive analysis on society and therefore on education. Education is an emanation of the advent of democracy and with the so-called "child-centric revolution" (Piaget, Dewey, Montessori), but it also carries some specific traits that identify it. The article will focus on these specific traits: the religious (and lay) perspective and the revolutionary tension towards liberation.*

Keywords: *Nonviolence; education; religion; revolution; liberation.*

In un breve testo del 1959, Aldo Capitini, padre della nonviolenza italiana, illustra in modo chiaro la propria *Weltanschauung*:

Possiamo esplicitamente definire la nonviolenza come unità amore verso tutte le persone nella loro individualità singola e distinta, persona da persona, con vivo interesse anche alla loro esistenza, in un atto di rispetto ed effetto senza interruzione, con la persuasione che nessuna persona è chiusa nel suo passato, e che è possibile dire un *tu* più affettuoso e stabilire un'unità più concreta con tutti. Come tale dunque, la nonviolenza è tutt'altro che passiva, anzi è attiva e inventiva, aperta ad una trasformazione della realtà e della società.¹

La visione nonviolenta, che esige sempre la profonda unità di pensiero e azione, ha al suo centro la categoria della trasformabilità del

* Lecturer, University of Bari – Italy.

¹ Aldo, Capitini, *Aspetti dell'educazione alla nonviolenza*, Pisa, Pacini Mariotti, 1959, p. 2.

reale e per questo si configura come visione squisitamente politica ed educativa. La trasformazione tuttavia a cui pensa Capitini non è mero riformismo, ma acquista i tratti espliciti della rivoluzione, cioè di un cambiamento strutturale e radicale della realtà. Questa rivoluzione, che sarà aperta, corale e totale², ha il potere di cambiare l'intima struttura (potremmo dire "ontologica") della realtà proprio perché si qualifica come nonviolenta, cioè capace di rifiutare i mezzi violenti finora prevalentemente utilizzati e di superare la legge della violenza e della guerra come unici motori del cambiamento. Per i padri, non si tratta di coltivare la vana illusione di un cambiamento rapido e completo, immediato, quanto di coltivare la profonda insoddisfazione verso la realtà, così come essa si configura oggi (che Capitini chiama *realtà-com'essa è*, oppure *realtà limitata*), dando vita nel presente alle azioni possibili, ma soprattutto cominciando con un cambiamento interiore profondo. Se al cuore dell'azione ci sono i tre punti cardinali della *nonuccisione*, *nonmenzogna* e *noncollaborazione* con il male (tutte e tre le parole sono intenzionalmente scritte senza spazio in mezzo, come *nonviolenza*), la domanda che riassume la tensione traformativa e l'appello rivolto a tutti è questa: "Abbiamo tentato di non dare la morte né col pensiero né con l'atto, per vedere se la realtà ci seguisse?"³.

In essa sono racchiusi i due volti della visione nonviolenta: il radicamento spirituale dell'orientamento pratico e la necessaria azione che consegue alla propria *conversione* interiore. Anche se esiste un filone di nonviolenza pragmatica, rappresentato soprattutto da Gene Sharp⁴ in USA, quelli che sono considerati i padri della nonviolenza, indipendentemente dall'adesione a una confessione religiosa, fondano l'azione in una dimensione spirituale, religiosa in un senso ampio.

Capitini, che entra in conflitto con la chiesa cattolica dopo il 1929, anno della firma del Concordato tra Stato fascista e Vaticano, giungerà a chiedere lo *sbattezzo*, ovvero la cancellazione dalla lista dei battezzati della sua diocesi e il suo libro *Religione aperta* del 1955⁵ verrà messo all'indice tra i libri proibiti. Tuttavia, egli non smette mai di definire la propria visione filosofica e pedagogica come *religiosa*. I due fondamenti, cioè *l'apertura al tu di Tutti* e *la teoria della compresenza*, hanno anzi un carattere

² Idem, *Rivoluzione aperta*, Milano, Parenti, 1956.

³ Ibidem, *Religione aperta*, Modena, Guanda, 1955, p. 547.

⁴ G. Sharp, *Politica dell'azione nonviolenta*, trad. it., Torino, Edizioni Gruppo Abele, 1985.

⁵ Aldo, Capitini, *Religione aperta*, Modena, Guanda, 1955, p. 547.

addirittura escatologico, cioè parlano del destino ultimo della realtà, del suo farsi estremo, in un *domani sperabile* che non vedremo ma che sarà l'esito compiuto della nonviolenza. Essa si pone infatti come *varco attuale della storia*, passaggio attraverso cui si rende possibile – sebbene non tutta e subito, ma pur sempre a cominciare da oggi – la *tramutazione* della realtà limitata in *realtà liberata*.

A fare la differenza è proprio la qualità dell'azione nonviolenta, che non mira ad agire “sulla realtà” alla maniera dell'*homo faber*, del costruttore, dell'ingegnere, il mito moderno del soggetto onnipotente e prometeico in grado di forgiare il mondo secondo i propri scopi e i propri desideri di autorealizzazione. No, non è quella l'azione che può tramutare la struttura intima della realtà. Quella può nella migliore delle ipotesi amministrare l'esistente; più di frequente essa si limita a riprodurne i limiti e le iniquità. L'azione nonviolenta è piuttosto l'azione dell'*homo religiosus*, che accarezza le cose con gratitudine e non distrugge, abitato dalla consapevolezza che con la silenziosa apertura quotidiana a tutti, il mondo cambia, la realtà si accende e inizia il suo cammino verso la liberazione.

Nella visione capitiniana, come in quella di Thoreau, di Tolstoj, di Gandhi, di King, c'è una vera rivoluzione antropologica, insieme alla critica verso la società attivistica che lavora puntando obiettivi (parola bellica...), si rivolge a target (parola bellica...), adotta strategie d'azione (parola bellica...), pianifica e misura i risultati. Anche se Aldo non si trova immerso nel linguaggio ingegneristico-funzionale-gestionale-finanziario che infetta la comunicazione e costruisce l'immaginario contemporaneo, egli conosceva bene l'ubriacatura industriale e bellica del periodo tra fine '800 fino al fascismo e sceglie di parlare con un altro linguaggio (pur non maturando, a differenza di Tolstoj e Gandhi alcuna nostalgia antimodernista e contraria al progresso tecnico).

Questo agire nonviolento richiede tempo, silenzio, raccoglimento, coltivazione nel profondo, e quindi lentezza, affinché l'azione disarmata e nonviolenta si incorpori nei tessuti interni, nella consapevolezza che il limite e il male hanno la funzione di rivelarci a noi stessi come bisognosi dell'altro, in una interdipendenza reciproca che oggi trova conferme nelle epistemologie ecologiche. L'idea di *compresenza*, infatti, cioè di cooperazione di tutti al bene in antitesi alla visione competitiva, rappresenta una interessante anticipazione di quella visione sistemica e complessa che verrà elaborata successivamente in fisica, in biologia, in filosofia. Capitini riesce ad anticipare l'idea di biofilia e di co-evoluzione,

che solo di recente, grazie allo studio dell'epigenetica e del microbiota umano, si sta affacciando con più chiarezza nel mondo scientifico.

Alcuni riferimenti servono a completare la brevissima introduzione prima di passare alla visione educativa. La profonda unione di spiritualità e azione si trova nella parola che Gandhi sceglie per indicare l'azione nonviolenta: *satyagraha*, che si può tradurre "permanere nella verità"⁶. La possibilità di permanere, cioè di rimanere profondamente ancorati, si radica nell'interiorità e questo è possibile se si opta per uno stile di vita certamente "attivissimo", cioè non inerte, non rimandante, ma che è agli antipodi dello stile di vita attuale. Questo - il nostro modo di vivere - è fondato sulla velocità, sul puntare in alto, sulla conquista di una maggiore forza e potere, secondo il detto olimpico *citius, altius, fortius*. Un altro grande padre di nonviolenza, Alexander Langer, vi oppone un modo di essere nel mondo molto diverso: *lentius, profundius, suavius*⁷. La nonviolenza cioè vuol essere più lenta, mentre fuori la pressione all'accelerazione sociale⁸ azzera i tempi della vita; vuol essere più profonda, mentre la pressione al consumismo ci vuole superficiali e attaccati ai desideri del momento; vuol essere più gentile, cioè capace di offrire cura.

Che tipo di pedagogia ha dunque proposto la tradizione nonviolenta? Non esiste una sola visione educativa definibile nonviolenta, perché ognuno dei padri - che mai si è posto come "guru" - ha elaborato una propria concezione, legata anche al contesto storico del tempo. Allo stesso modo ci sono ampi movimenti pedagogici che portano con sé semi e aperture nonviolente, pur non utilizzando questo aggettivo.

Tra '800 e '900, dopo l'avvio di una riflessione più sistematica sull'infanzia grazie a Rousseau, emergono varie figure che concorrono a quella che è stata chiamata "rivoluzione puerocentrica". Finalmente nasce il bambino e, almeno nelle teorizzazioni di questi uomini e donne dalla vista lunga, si cominciano a focalizzare i bisogni (quelli che poi sono stati chiamati "diritti") dei bambini. In campo pedagogico, l'attivismo, la cooperazione educativa, insieme alle scoperte della psicologia dello sviluppo e l'opera della grande Maria Montessori restituiscono del

⁶ M.K. Gandhi, *Teoria e pratica della nonviolenza*, trad. it., a cura di G. Pontara, Torino, Einaudi, 1996.

⁷ A. Langer, *Il viaggiatore leggero. Scritti 1961-1995*, a cura di E. Rabini e A. Sofri, Palermo, Sellerio, 2015.

⁸ H. Rosa, *Accelerazione e alienazione. Per una teoria critica del tempo nella tarda modernità*, Torino, Einaudi, 2015.

bambino un'immagine attiva, propositiva, capace e desiderosa di agire nella realtà e di incidere su di essa con il proprio contributo. Non più passivi recettori di saperi che il maestro versa come in un contenitore (una visione che in Italia ha avuto con il fascismo la consacrazione nella riforma gentiliana), i bambini e i ragazzi diventano attivi costruttori della realtà, cittadini, potenziali riformatori nel dibattito democratico della collettività.

Questo approccio è fortemente valorizzato anche da Aldo Capitini, che porterà sempre ai suoi studenti universitari i punti di vista di Piaget, di Dewey e di Montessori. Tuttavia per Capitini c'è bisogno di un ulteriore passo in avanti affinché l'educazione porti a un radicale cambiamento della realtà. C'è bisogno del dramma vissuto profondamente dal maestro e donato ai piccoli, il dramma che nasce dalla consapevolezza tragica che la realtà di oggi (del passato-presente) è affetta dal limite, naturale e morale, e che porta all'azione:

L'atto religioso, abbiamo visto, non è atto liberato, ma è atto aperto alla realtà liberata: è atto che stipa in un attimo tutto il dramma del passato, e tutta la possibilità dell'avvenire. Ed è proprio questo squilibrio o iato interno all'atto che gli assicura la sua apertura; perché se l'atto fosse liberato, se io fossi liberato, intenderei l'incontro col fanciullo non come incontro con un inizio nuovo, ma come ripetizione della mia liberazione. [...] Egli [l'educatore] ha percorso il sapere per accertare il dramma umano di coscienza dei limiti e di ansia alla liberazione, dramma che ha mille aspetti; ha visto gli uomini dibattersi nell'attuazione di fini semplicemente vitali e mondani, e tuttavia in questo travaglio andare anche oltre e realizzare valore di bellezza, di bontà, di sacrificio, di ricerca del vero; ha visto tanti esseri viventi sopraffatti dalla morte, e ha sofferto ancora per quell'arresto della vita di singoli essere individuati, ed anche per trovarsi nella compagnia dei viventi, usurpanti il posto dei morti, che furono talvolta anche migliori: questo sapere, e tutto in un vivo appassionamento, è la premessa della sua apertura alla realtà liberata. Ma egli non potrà dirsi liberato; sarà perciò umile e aperto [...]

L'educatore religioso vivendo il dramma della liberazione per tutti (e tale lo ha appreso nello studio del passato e nell'esperienza)

si è trovato a sentire sempre più vivamente la compresenza di tutti nel suo proprio intimo⁹.

L'educazione dunque è educazione alla lotta e lotta essa stessa. Il suo fondamento è la tensione tra il passato-presente e il futuro di liberazione di cui i fanciulli sono i portatori:

Sarebbe un errore educare i fanciulli alla conoscenza della realtà e della società attuali come perfette, e non avviare – corrispondendo del resto ad una intima loro esigenza – che esse possano trasformarsi in meglio, ad un migliore servizio verso la realtà di tutti¹⁰.

Se si vuole riassumere i tratti principali della pedagogia capitiniana, ecco che incontriamo una visione avanguardista, per non dire profetica: l'apertura a tutti, nessuno escluso, con una cura tutta particolare per i soggetti più fragili e marginali (quella che noi oggi chiameremmo empatia ed inclusione) nella convinzione che tutti, anche i più inerti, concorrono a creare il valore (la compresenza, oggi vicina alla coevoluzione); la caratterizzazione interculturale e la "convivialità delle differenze" (l'espressione è di Antonio Bello, un altro grande testimone della nonviolenza); il rispetto dei viventi anche non umani, gli animali, i vegetali, la natura (oggi in linea con l'idea di biofilia, di cui Capitini può ben dirsi un antesignano¹¹); la cooperazione invece che la competizione; la partecipazione attiva ai processi decisionali anche dei piccoli.

In tutte le visioni dei padri, non solo quella capitiniana, emergono anche spunti pedagogici interessantissimi, che oggi ritroviamo nei movimenti di critica allo stile di vita contemporaneo occidentale: dalla ricerca della lentezza al consumo critico, dall'accoglienza delle differenze agli stili di vita alternativi come la decrescita felice, dall'ecologia e il vegetarianismo alla riscoperta della dimensione "festiva".

Su questa ultima dimensione, occorre soffermarsi. Abbiamo infatti citato il dramma e la tensione tragica come il volto inquieto della nonviolenza, che si fonda sulla non accettazione della realtà. Sarebbe un errore però arrestarsi nella zona d'ombra: esiste il lato luminoso della

⁹ A. Capitini, *Il fanciullo nella liberazione dell'uomo*, Pisa, Nistri Lischi, 1953, pp. 23-25.

¹⁰ Idem, *Aspetti dell'educazione alla nonviolenza*, *op.cit.*, pp. 2-8

¹¹ G. Falcicchio, Barbiero, *Loving openness towards Nature: Aldo Capitini and the moral value of biophilia*, *Visions for Sustainability*, n. 3, 2015, pp. 5-15.

scelta nonviolenta ed è rappresentato proprio dall'abbraccio festivo che gioisce di aprirsi al tu, che vede nello spazio di incontro con l'altro un luogo di gioia, anche quando si entra in conflitto. Ci si apre alla dimensione dell'allegria e del piacere.

L'educazione è stata troppo a lungo intristita dall'ideologia del sacrificio e della sofferenza (espiatoria e ascetica) che hanno riempito di mortificazione anche l'idea di impegno. Basti pensare all'unità modulare omologata, costrittiva e immobilizzante del banco, via via più rigido e scomodo man mano che si va dalle scuole dell'infanzia alle scuole secondarie e all'università (almeno in Italia). Negli spazi educativi istituzionali tutto comunica controllo e disciplinamento. E mentre il corpo è immobile, si pretendono menti dinamiche; mentre il corpo è reso rigido, si pretendono personalità flessibili; mentre si vive troppe ore di troppi anni in luoghi chiusi, si pretendono menti aperte; corpi omologati e menti capaci di accogliere le differenze...

Chi si ribella oggi viene facilmente etichettato come patologico, bisognoso di diagnosi e trattamento, una modalità dilagante di trasformare in etichette medicalizzate quelli che ieri erano i soggetti indisciplinati, fastidiosi, intemperanti rispetto alle regole di mortificazione dell'educazione.

Dopo una stagione di fermento, negli anni '60 e '70, possiamo dichiarare senza remore che molto è peggiorato. Chi fa l'educazione è più che mai privo di chiavi di lettura innovative. La nonviolenza è una di queste, forse l'unica in grado di scrivere ex novo il lessico dell'educazione, ma, come si è visto, necessita di conversione interiore, del dramma e anche dell'esperienza della festa. Essa è la dimensione che si spalanca quando

si può sentire un'unità elevata con tutti, una comprensione più amorevole e anche perdonante, e si va vicino a chi soffre per stabilire un'unità più profonda, si va anche nei cimiteri con la persuasione che in quel giorno i morti ci sono più vicini. La festa è, dunque, il preannuncio o il maggior avvicinamento possibile finora, alla realtà della compresenza dei vivi e dei morti: sentiamo una solenne presenza che è compresenza. La luce festiva è sacra per questo, perché di là da ogni cerimonia che divida credenti e non credenti, ci sembra che unisca tutti, nessuno escluso. E il

fanciullo è il figlio della festa, perché con la sua fiducia e la sua apertura, ci preannuncia una realtà liberata dai limiti del passato.¹²

Quello che è mancato anche alla riflessione nonviolenta dei padri tuttavia e che può rappresentare una pista di ricerca interessante, soprattutto nell'educazione, è stato connettere la lotta con il piacere dell'avvicinamento alla liberazione, un piacere che passa inevitabilmente dal benessere del corpo. Se Aldo ha l'intuizione centrale, la festa, egli stesso non coglie il potere liberante del corpo e si muove nei limiti di un ascetismo (molto più marcato in Gandhi, ad esempio) che non riconosce al corpo tutta la sua bellezza creativa e creatrice, anche di liberazione. Molto più aperto e da riscoprire in tal senso, è l'affascinante contributo di Thoreau a una riscoperta del corpo come punto di contatto con la natura e come "luogo" di libertà in cui coltivare come dimensione prettamente umana e umanistica e da cui partire per capovolgere l'educazione¹³.

Oggi abbiamo tutti gli strumenti scientifici per raccogliere gli spunti dei padri e restituire al corpo l'ascolto e l'abbraccio che merita, liberando le sue componenti selvatiche che, anch'esse, muovono verso la liberazione. Ignorare questi aspetti significa indebolire tanto l'intenzione nonviolenta quanto le possibilità realmente emancipatorie dell'educazione. Approfondirli significa scoprire, dopo secoli di dualismi e scissioni che ci hanno abbruttiti trasformandoci in macchine da guerra, che il corpo non è nemico ma collaboratore nella scrittura di un nuovo lessico educativo, che, prima e oltre qualsivoglia obiettivo, è fatto del godere insieme del cammino.

Senza il giusto riconoscimento della corporeità, nel contesto di ipertecnologizzazione di oggi, rischieremmo di non riconoscere la violenza che ancora pervade le modalità di accudimento e di educazione dei piccoli. I primi momenti di vita degli umani sono vissuti all'insegna di una cattiva nascita, segnata dalla violenza ostetrica e dall'interferenza della medicina nella relazione madre-neonato¹⁴. Quello che verrà dopo è coerente con questo benvenuto, che depriva delle relazioni calde, corporee, significative per sostituirle con la disperata solitudine dei bambini consumatori.

¹² Aldo, Capitini, *Educazione aperta*, vol. I, Firenze, La Nuova Italia, 1967, p. 3.

¹³ H. D. Thoreau, *Camminare*, trad. it., Mondadori, Milano, 2009.

¹⁴ AA. VV., *Il primo sguardo. Prime ore di vita, cure prossimali e affettività*, a cura di G. Falcicchio, Bari, Fasi di Luna.

La violenza in educazione non è solo quella dei lividi che affiorano sulla carne. Di invisibile violenza – parola impronunciabile avvolta dal tabù – è costellata la quotidianità dei bambini che non sanno cosa significa correre in un campo di fiori, coltivare un albero, giocare a perdifiato, sudare, camminare senza meta e senza un programma prestabilito (dagli adulti), respirare l'aria. Siamo ancora troppo poco coscienti dei danni immensi dell'educazione, con le file ordinate dei piccoli nei corridoi; i banchi allineati a cui i più grandi sono inchiodati per ore nelle aule; l'obbligo di chiedere il permesso per ogni movimento; una didattica omologante e standardizzata che emargina chi non ce la fa con l'arma della diagnosi; modalità di apprendimento individualistiche e competitive che azzerano la creatività e annientano l'identità personale. I bambini saranno per anni ammaestrati a divenire tanti bei “soldatini obbedienti”, come diceva durante il fascismo Aldo Capitini.

La nonviolenza offre un'occasione di riflessione per ripensare l'educazione non solo introducendo temi e argomenti, né solo modalità operative, ma chiamando innanzitutto alla trasformazione radicale dei contesti di apprendimento e di relazione, affinché diventino luoghi adatti ad accogliere l'istanza di radicale liberazione insita in ogni bambino, e con lui o lei, nell'intera comunità umana.

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MORALITY PERCEPTION AMONG ROMANIAN STUDENTS

ANDREEA BOBB*

andreeabobb@yahoo.com

Abstract: *“Socialpsychological research has shown that people have a tendency to overemphasize their morality relative to others. The aims of this study were: 1) testing for the Muhammad-Ali effect and better-than-average effect among Romanian college students; 2) testing the hypothesis that better-than-average effect will be lower or even canceled by comparison with specific individuals; 3) testing a possible difference in the manifestation of the two effects according to faculty profiles. The results of the research did not support the Muhammad-Ali effect, but partially supported the other two objectives. Research data revealed the students’ tendency to rate themselves more moral than their colleagues, but at the same time less moral than their closest colleague. The students’ tendency to consider themselves more moral than their colleagues, was much stronger among those at the Faculty of Communication and Public Relations than among students at the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work”.*

Keywords: *the Muhammad-Ali effect; better-than-average effect; morality; intelligence.*

As far as we know, the first research that revealed that we tend to think we are more moral than others, was published in 1985. A total of 78 students from the University of California had ten minutes to list as many moral and immoral behaviors performed by themselves and by other people. The students were instructed by the experimenter to begin the phrase with the personal pronoun “I” if they estimated they performed the behavior more often than others, and with the pronoun “They” if they estimated that others would perform more often the behavior. This simple experiment revealed that participants believed they perform more moral behaviors, while other perform more immoral behaviors¹. Applying the

*Assistant PhD., Faculty of Sociology and Social Work, University of Bucharest.

¹ D.M. Messick, S. Bloom, J.P. Boldizar, C.D. Samuelson, Why are we fairer than others? *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 21, 1985, pp. 480-500.

same experimental design, Liebrand, Messick and Wolters (1986) proved that Dutch students also believed to be more moral than others. Allison, Messick and Goethals (1989) wondered if this egocentric bias also occurred in the evaluation of intelligence. They performed a series of experiments on American students that once again have demonstrated the students' tendency to overstate their own level of morality, but not their intelligence. Inspired by the statement of the great American boxing champion Cassius Clay (aka Muhammad Ali)², Allison et al. (1989) called this egocentric tendency the Muhammad Ali effect. The explanation advanced by the three authors is that intelligence, unlike morality, is easily observed and measured by observers and so we can not afford to overstate it. Van Lange and Sedikides (1998) discuss in more detail the three explanations of the Muhammad Ali effect: that of social desirability, controllability, and verifiability. The authors argue that morality is socially more desirable than intelligence, and that is why there is a tendency to overstate this feature. It is true that the latest psychosocial studies support the centrality of morality in person perception (Wojciszke et al., 1998, 2005; De Bruin and Van Lange, 2000; Brambilla et al., 2011; Pagliaro et al., 2012; Goodwin et al., 2014; Goodwin, 2015; Brambilla et al., 2016). On the other hand, Chelcea and his colleagues (2000) conducted a research on a group of 412 students from different faculties in Bucharest, showing the existence of the Muhammad Ali effect among students, but also the fact that they considered that intelligence was more desirable than morality. Thus, the social desirability of morality and intelligence may vary according to the wider social context. Concerning the other two explanations of the Muhammad Ali effect, morality is considered to be an easier to control feature than intelligence and the overestimation tendency is manifested especially in controllable features³. As far as verifiability is concerned, it is considered that morality is harder to prove than intelligence, because we often judge moral or less moral behavior according to the intentions of the person, and these are not always so visible. At the same time, we have the impression that we, compared to

² Asked if he deliberately performed poorly in an intelligence test to avoid enlisting in the army, Cassius Clay replied: "I just said I'm the best, not the smartest", cited in S.T. Allison, D.M. Messick, G.R. Goethals, *On being better but not smarter than others: the Muhammad Ali effect*, *Social Cognition*, 7(3), 1989, p. 275.

³ P.A.M Van Lange, *Being better but not smarter than others: the Muhammad Ali effect at work in interpersonal situations*, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17(6), 1991, p. 692.

others, always have only good intentions.

Van Lange and Sedikides (1998) demonstrated the existence of Muhammad Ali effect among Dutch students. They used honesty as an indicator of morality and tried to identify respondents' impressions of desirability, verifiability and controllability of honesty and intelligence. They used in their study questions such as ("How desirable/undesirable is honesty/intelligence?"; "To what extent can a person change his/her honesty/intelligence in the way she wishes?"; How easy or difficult is it to judge the honesty/intelligence of a person based on her behavior?"). The results supported the Muhammad Ali effect, proving that the Dutch students considered themselves more honest than intelligent, compared to their colleagues. In addition, the effect was stronger among those considering honesty as more desirable than intelligence. Most students also felt that honesty is much easier to control than intelligence, but harder to check than the latter⁴.

It hasn't been proved yet if this tendency to think we are morally superior than others is universally valid. Studies conducted in Europe and Asia seems to support the opposite. For example, in 2003, the Muhammad Ali effect was also demonstrated among high school students in Germany, but only among those who did not consider themselves good students. Those who had a good view of their academic performance rate themselves as smarter than their colleagues, but not morally superior. This research has also shown that Muhammad Ali effect increases after an academic failure⁵. Another study conducted in Ukraine revealed that Ukrainian respondents value equally morality and intelligence⁶. However, some psychologists as Jongtaek (2012) support the universality of this tendency, but thinks that the way we were socialized tones the expression of this need. The author found that the greatest differences between the two populations studied - Americans and Koreans - occurred in the case of negative attributes. Korean students rate themselves just as lazy, irresponsible and irrational as their colleagues. Moreover, they considered themselves worse than their peers. The

⁴ P.A.M. Van Lange, C. Sedikides, Being more honest but not necessarily more intelligent than others: generality and explanations for the Muhammad Ali effect, *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 28, 1998, pp. 679-680.

⁵ Möller, K. Savyon, Not very smart, thus moral: dimensional comparisons between academic self-concept and honesty, *Social Psychology of Education*, 6, 2003, pp. 95-106.

⁶ M. Kimmelmeier, O. Malanchuk, Greater self-enhancement in Western than Eastern Ukraine, but failure to replicate the Muhammad Ali effect, *International Journal of Psychology*, 51(1), 2016, pp. 78-82.

Japanese psychologist explains these results in terms of the so-called “norm of modesty”, that it is present in Asian culture⁷.

Better-than-average effect

More intensely studied than Muhammad Ali effect is another effect with a broader range of coverage, named better-than-average effect. It denotes the tendency of many of us to consider ourselves superior to the average person of the in-group. Suls and collaborators (2002) define the better-than-average effect as: “the tendency of people to place themselves above the average on positive attributes and below the average on negative attributes”⁸. Krizan and Suls (2008) offer a more focused definition, referring to “one of the most robust and widely replicated social psychological phenomena – the above-average effect, whereby people rate themselves more favorably than their peers”⁹. Studies on better-than-average effect have shown that most people believe they are more a) virtuous, honorable, and moral than others; b) capable, competent, and talented than others; c) compassionate, understanding, and sympathetic than others (Brown, 2012)¹⁰.

Zell and Alicke (2011)¹¹ present some other factors that mediate better-than-average effect. The effect is stronger when people compare to others on a single scale (direct method) than when evaluation is made on two scales (indirect method). Also, the effect is stronger on subjective dimensions than on objective dimensions, as well as on dimensions that are more controllable than uncontrollable. Brown (2012) also points out situations that reduce this egocentric tendency: when people believe they must justify their claims to an audience (Sedikides, Herbst, Hardin and Dardis, 2002) and when a self-other comparison involves a specific individual rather than aggregate represented by the term *most other people* (Alicke, Klotz, Breitenbecher, Yurakand Vredenburg, 1995; Klarand Giladi, 1997)¹².

⁷ L. Jongtaek, Trait desirability and cultural difference in the better-than-average effect, *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 15, 2012, p. 264.

⁸ J. Suls, K. Lemos, L.H. Stewart, Self-esteem, construal, and comparison with the self, friends, and peers, *Personality Processes and Individual Differences*, 82(2), 2002, p. 252.

⁹ Z. Krizan, J. Suls, Losing sight of oneself in the above-average effect: when egocentrism, focalism, and group diffuseness collide, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 44(4), 2008, p. 929.

¹⁰ J.D. Brown, Understanding the better than average effect: motives (still) matter, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 38(2), 2012, p. 209.

¹¹ E. Zell, M.D. Alicke, Age and the better-than-average effect, *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 41(5), 2011, p. 1176.

¹² J.D. Brown, *ibidem*.

Social psychologists have identified two major sources for better-than-average effect. One that pertains to cognitive mechanisms employed when comparison with others is made and the other being closely related to the motivational factors, namely the need to have a good image about oneself. The cognitive explanation refers to the greater amount of information we have about ourselves, compared to the information we have about the generalized other. There is also a tendency to focus on the self, even if we are asked to think about the other. Some authors have argued that when we are asked to compare ourselves with the average colleague, in fact we don't think at anyone. Other factors such as naïve realism (the tendency to assume that the way we perceive the world is just a reflection of the world as it is in reality), egocentrism (the tendency to attach greater importance to one's own vision) may also intervene. There are authors, such as Krueger (1999), Krizan and Suls (2008), who argue that the effect can arise only due to these cognitive factors. On the other hand, Brown (2012) argues, based on his experiments, that the better-than-average effect is caused mainly by the desire to have a positive self-image. Brown's most interesting results are related to the importance of the attributes on which subjects evaluate themselves. For example, when subjects were induced to think that the attribute it is not so important, the better-than-average effect did not occur. On the contrary, the same attribute, which was presented to another group of subjects as highly appreciated by most people, led to an increase in the better-than-average effect.

A highly relevant research for our study has been conducted by Alicke and collaborators (1995). Researchers have guessed that the better-than-average effect will be diminished when people compare to a real person. Indeed, the results obtained from 121 subjects showed that "despite the fact that they did not have any specific information about the person next to them they look at for a few seconds, the mere presence of a real person with whom they had minimal social contact was sufficient to mitigate the effect"¹³. The better-than-average effect fully manifested in the group that compared with the average student in 38 of the 40 tested features, while in the group comparing with the person who stood next to them the effect manifested in the case of 31 of traits.

One important question is whether the better-than-average effect

¹³ M.D. Alicke et al., Personal contact, individuation, and the better-than-average effect, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 68(5), 1995, p. 806.

appears as a result of the good opinion we usually have about oneself or because of worse opinion on average colleague. The answer is not clear. On the one hand, the results obtained by Alicke revealed that the expression “average colleague” does not have a negative connotation in the minds of participants, since for all eight traits they tested, the average student was evaluated above the midpoint of the scale. On the other hand, a recent research (Kim et al., 2017)¹⁴ attempted to show that when subjects hear the expression “the average colleague”, they think of a person less well-equipped than themselves. It is as if the average colleague expression has a pejorative connotation in the minds of respondents.

Recently, the better-than-average effect was also demonstrated in the case of attitudes, not only personality traits and abilities. Stavrova et al. (2016)¹⁵ asked 153 German students to fill in a questionnaire asking how much they supported or rejected different social issues such as organ donation, same-sex marriage, tax evasion, abortion. They were also asked to say to what extent most of their colleagues agree on these issues. The results showed a great difference between personal opinions and inferred attitudes of others in the case of 14 out of the 18 social issues addressed. For example, students believed that they are more in agreement with euthanasia than their peers and to a lesser degree agree with the violence in computer games¹⁶.

It is worth mentioning that social psychologists have also identified *below-the-average effect*. Krueger (1999)¹⁷ applied a questionnaire to a group of 37 students at Cornell University, where eight skills, more or less difficult, were presented (for example, driving a car, saving money, playing chess, programming a computer). The results showed that subjects rate themselves below their peers on difficult skills. Moore and Small (2007)¹⁸ have shown that people think they are less likely than

¹⁴ Y-H. Kim, H. Kwon, C-Y. Chiu, The Better-Than-Average Effect Is Observed Because “Average” Is Often Construed as Below-Median Ability, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 2017, doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2017.00898.

¹⁵ O. Stavrova, V. Köneke, Th. Schlösser, Overfulfilling the Norm. The Better-Than-Average Effect in Judgments of Attitudes, *Social Psychology*, 47(5), 2016, pp. 288-293.

¹⁶ Idem, p. 289.

¹⁷ J. Krueger, Lake Wobegonebe gone! The “below average effect” and the egocentric nature of comparative ability judgments, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 77(2), 1999, pp. 221-232.

¹⁸ D.A. Moore, D.H. Small, Error and bias in comparative judgment: on being both better and worse than we think we are, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 92(6), 2007, pp. 972-989.

others to live more than one hundred years or cope with the loss of a loved one.

Both Krueger (1999) and Zell and Alicke (2011) consider that the hypothesis of egocentrism is the best explanation of the better-than-average effect, but also of the below-the-average effect. More specifically, egocentrism requires an increased attention to its own skills, doubled by ignoring the skills of others. When people think they have special skills in a field, the better-than-average effect occurs precisely because people do not take into account that others have similar skills. Similarly, when people think they do not have certain skills, they rate themselves below average because they do not realize that others are in a similar situation. This logic explains why elderly people evaluate themselves below the elderly average when it comes to aspects such as technology skills, health, physical attractiveness (Zell and Alicke, 2011)¹⁹.

Religiosity is another factor that decreases the better-than-average effect, at least for Christians. Eriksson and Funcke (2014) applied a questionnaire to 790 people and found that more religious people rate themselves below the average regarding the “warm” side of their personality. Humility is a virtue among Christians and the data showed that the more faithful a person is, the more he will refrain from feeling better than others, especially when others are also believers (Eriksson and Funcke, 2014)²⁰.

Research design

The main objectives of the research were: 1) probing the Muhammad Ali effect and the better-than-average effect on a group of Romanian college students; 2) testing the hypothesis that the better-than-average effect will be lowered or even canceled by the comparison with specific individuals (best friend and closest colleague); 3) testing a possible difference in the manifestation of the two effects according to faculty profiles.

The questionnaire was applied through the *isondaje.ro* site. A number of 33 students from the Faculty of Sociology and Social Work of the University of Bucharest and 27 students from the Faculty of Communication and Public Relations, SNSPA, completed the questionnaire between 24-31 August 2017. The questionnaire contained

¹⁹ E. Zell, M.D. Alicke, *op.cit.*, p. 1185.

²⁰ K. Eriksson, Al. Funcke, *Humble Self-Enhancement: Religiosity and the Better-Than-Average Effect*, *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 5(1), 2014, p. 82.

ten closed questions and one open question. The respondents average age was 21,8 years, the age range being 19-38 years. Given the reduced number of male students (n=8), we did not perform statistical analysis based on the gender variable. Data analysis was done using SPSS 20.

Results

Morality is a central feature in our self-concept. For most of us, it is the most important trait according to which we evaluate ourselves and others. The majority of students (43.3%) that participated in our study opted for morality when asked to say “What is most important for you personally: to be a moral person or a competent person?”. A procent of 31.7% declared that for them is more important to be a competent person and 15% couldn’t decide between morality and competence.

We were interested to see what personality traits students associate with a “moral person”. The first three personality traits most often associated with a moral person were: fairness (N=23); sincerity (N=17), honor (N=8), and honesty (N=8). Answers to the questions regarding the morality/competence of professors and colleagues are interesting. If, in the case of teachers, only one respondent opted for morality, in the case of colleagues, morality is a much more desirable feature (see Table 1). It is very likely that the morality/immorality of colleagues affects students to a greater extent than the teachers’ morality/immorality. This is, in fact, the main explanation advanced by social psychologists in trying to decipher the primacy of morality in person perception: we are interested in quickly assessing those around us according to the criterion of morality to know whether we must avoid them or not.

Table no 1. Morality vs competence in professor/colleague evaluation

	What do you appreciate most about a teacher: his morality or competence?	What do you appreciate most about your colleagues: their morality or competence?	TOTAL
Morality	1 (1.7%)	22 (36.7%)	23 (19.2%)
Competence	7 (11.7%)	3 (5%)	10 (8.3%)
Both moralityand competence	52 (8.7%)	34 (56.7%)	86 (71.6%)
Prefer not to answer		1 (1.7%)	1 (0.8%)
TOTAL	60 (100%)	60 (100%)	120 (100%)

The data revealed that students rate themselves as slightly more intelligent ($m=5.40$) than moral ($m=5.30$), so the Muhammad Ali effect was not present in our sample. Social psychologists consider that the better-than-average effect appears if the average of answers to the question/s related to the peer comparison exceeds the midpoint of the scale. It can be seen from the graph below (see Figure 1) that all our respondents' ratings exceeded number 5. Although it did not reach the statistical significance threshold, the t test for paired sample shows the students' tendency to consider themselves more moral than their colleagues ($m=5.30$ vs $m=5.45$).

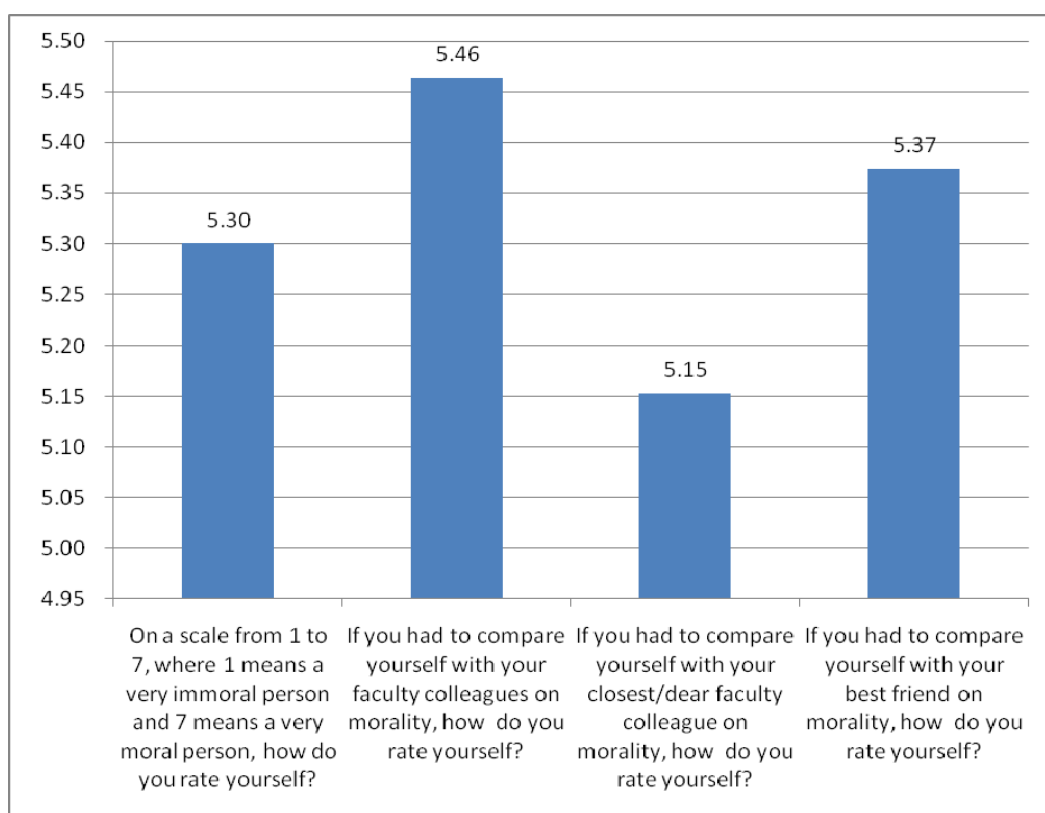


Figure 1. Evaluating personal morality according to different target comparison

We can also observe that the better-than-average effect is canceled when respondents compare with their closest colleague, but only on the morality dimension. Regarding the intelligence dimension, there is no difference between individual assessment of intelligence and individual assessment of intelligence in comparison with faculty colleagues. In both cases the mean

was 5.40. Regarding the comparative judgment related to the best friend, there was a decrease in the level of self-attributed intelligence ($m=5.40$ vs $m=5.18$). To our best knowledge, a comparison between best friend and best colleague hasn't been made so far, but it is interesting to note that our participants rated themselves less moral than their closest colleague but not to their best friend. Perhaps we can talk about an assimilation effect of best friend to the self, in the sense that the best friend is perceived as very similar to the person making the comparative judgment. As it can be seen from the graph, there was almost no difference between the evaluation of personal morality ($m=5.30$) and the assessment of personal morality as compared to the best friend ($m=5.35$).

How can we explain this tendency to consider us as morally superior in comparison with the average student, but at the same time less moral than our dearest colleague? Social psychologists have advanced the idea that when we are asked to compare ourselves with the average student, we tend to think of an abstract entity and we automatically employ the better-than-average heuristic.

The comparative analysis on the two groups of students revealed that the students at the Faculty of Communication and Public Relations, SNSPA, perceive themselves to be more moral than students at the Faculty of Sociology and Social Assistance. In all four conditions (individual evaluation, comparison with colleagues, best colleague and best friend), the students at the Faculty of Communication and Public Relations rate themselves to be more moral, in comparison with the students at the Faculty of Sociology and Social Assistance (see table no. 2).

Tabel no 2. Differences between the two groups of students, on morality dimension

On a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means a very immoral person, and 7 means a very moral person, how do you rate yourself?		If you had to compare yourself with your faculty colleagues on morality, how do you rate yourself?		If you had to compare yourself with your closest/dear colleague on morality, how do you rate yourself?		If you had to compare yourself with your best friend on morality, how do you rate yourself?	
Sociology	Communication	Sociology	Communication	Sociology	Communication	Sociology	Communication
5,21	5,41	5,27	5,67	4,85	5,48	5,03	5,74

The difference between the students of the two faculties regarding the comparison with the best friend is statistically significant ($t = -2.22$, $p < 0.05$). Also, the difference between the two groups of students regarding their self-ratings in comparison with their closest colleague almost reached the threshold of statistical significance.

Limitations

Studies on the Muhammad Ali effect and on the better-than-average effect usually employed 'honesty' as an indicator of morality. Being a concept with a narrower conceptual significance compared to 'morality', the tendency of respondents is to rate themselves more favorably on the honesty dimension. If we had used honesty, perhaps we would have demonstrated the existence of both effects. But we have opted for morality to test precisely if people really think they are moral than others, not just more honest than others. Another limit of this research is the relatively small number of participants. A larger number of respondents probably would have ensured the statistical confirmation of the tendencies we observed. The administration of questionnaire in a more controlled environment would have brought extra scientific rigor to this study.

Conclusions and recommendations

The present study tested the existence of the Muhammad Ali and better-than-average effects on a group of Romanian students. Specifically, we wanted to see if the students included in this study would rate themselves more moral than intelligent and also if they are prone to exaggerate their level of morality and intelligence in comparison with their colleagues. The results obtained did not support the first hypothesis, students' self-ratings of morality and intelligence being very similar. It is good to know that Romanian students have a favorable self-image giving the fact that the scores we obtained exceeded the midpoint of the scale. Neither the better-than-average effect was sustained by our data, although there was a tendency for self-attributed morality to increase in the comparison with colleagues' condition. In line with international studies, Romanian students also rate themselves less moral in comparison with a concrete colleague. The third hypothesis regarding the profile faculty influence on the two effects received partially empirical support. We found a significant difference between the students of the Faculty of Communication and Public Relations who consider themselves more

moral than their best friend, unlike the students at the Faculty of Sociology and Social Assistance. As mentioned above, compared to the Sociology students, the students at the SNSPA rate themselves more favorably in all three situations (in comparison with their colleagues, the closest colleague and their best friend). So, the present study reveals another variable that influences the occurrence of the two effects - the profile of the faculty, in the case of students. We may reason that students at the Faculty of Theology and students at humanities in general, may be less prone to these egocentric biases. As this study has shown, Romanian students associate morality with correctness. A future study that would use correctness instead of morality most probably would demonstrate the existence of better-than-average effect on this trait. One possible explanation for our failure to demonstrate Muhammad Ali effect and better-than average effect is that Romanian students, like students from Ukraine, as well as Asian students, evaluate themselves more objectively on the morality and intelligence dimensions. It has been proven that the values related to the individualism-holism dimension influence personal identity and the way we perceive and relate to others. Testing for the Muhammad Ali effect and better-than-average effect on a larger number of students from different faculties would allow for secure conclusions about these egocentric biases.

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ENGLISH WORDS IN THE ROMANIAN MEDICAL VOCABULARY: AN OPTION OR A MUST?

LILIANA FLORINA ANDRONACHE*,

andronache.liliana@yahoo.com

CRISTINA VERONICA ANDREESCU**

cristinaandreescu@yahoo.com

Abstract: *The present paper focuses on the use of English words in the field of medicine, adapted or not to the Romanian morphological system. It is widely known and acknowledged that English has got the necessary tools and it is very close to becoming a language studied and spoken by most people worldwide. It is precisely the starting point of our discussion: English – a “spring” of words and phrases for languages in need. Therefore, does the Romanian medical vocabulary need to borrow words from English in order for people to make themselves better and more easily understood or is it only a matter of personal choice?*

Keywords: *medicine, vocabulary, need, English, Romanian.*

English is nowadays very close to becoming a *lingua franca*, the follower of Latin somehow, and nevertheless the choice of many people in terms of communication. It is mainly due to its simplicity and ability to briefly express what in other languages could be said in much longer and more complicated phrases or even sentences.

In time, people have come in contact with one another and eventually mutually borrowed words from other languages into their own. English was both a recipient and a donor language, i.e. it borrowed words from other languages and it was also the linguistic “spring” of many other languages whom it greatly influenced. In turn, English has acquired words from Italian (mainly names of food: *pizza, pasta, prosciutto, mozzarella* or music), Latin (scientific and technological words), Greek (scientific and medical terminology), French (legal, military and political

* “Carol Davila” University of Medicine and Pharmacy.

** “Carol Davila” University of Medicine and Pharmacy.

terminology), Spanish (words related to warfare, science and culture), German, Arabic (words related to trades) etc.

The topic of the present paper is concerned with the English influence and impact on Romanian in the medical field. It is not one of the domains that exhibit a massive invasion of English words (such as fashion, sports, IT etc.), but it ranges among the most important fields that need to be approached.

It is of a crucial importance for physicians to be aware of the changing needs of their patients and to keep up with the new discoveries and progress made in medicine, as it is very important for them to use the most appropriate vocabulary depending on each situation: when talking to a patient, when asking for a colleague's opinion, when attending conferences or when simply reading or writing journals.

The current paper lists and discusses the borrowed terminology that should be known and used correctly since the recipient language (Romanian in this case) does not possess nor can translate some words and it therefore borrows them from English and it gradually introduces them into the Romanian vocabulary.

In the second part of the paper we discuss the possibility of introducing English terms in one's personal discourse (according to one's deliberate volition) despite the existence of another or other means of expressing ideas, which is by using Romanian words and phrases as the equivalent of what is said in English.

Mandatory terminology due to the absence of an equivalent phrase or word in the recipient language

Bypass is a surgical term used to describe the surgical deviation of an artery in order to restore the circulation of blood. It is registered in most Romanian dictionaries¹ under forms like *bypass*, *by-pass* or even *baipas*, the latter being registered in *Dicționar ortografic al limbii române (The Orthographical Dictionary of the Romanian Language)* (2002) close to the English pronunciation, which is preserved in Romanian. It is also adapted to the Romanian morphological system, since it was attributed a gender (neuter), being thus counted: *un bypass*, *două bypassuri*, *un by-pass*, *două by-passuri* or *un baipas*, *două baipasuri*.

"In medicine, a *stent* is a metal or plastic tube inserted into the lumen of an anatomic vessel or duct to keep the passageway open, and *stenting* is

¹ See DEX 98, DOOM2 and www.dexonline.ro.

the placement of a stent²". Since the most common use of stents is on the heart, the frequent phrase used in Romanian in surgery is *stent coronarian* or *stent cardiac*. It is also easily counted due to the adaptable form of the word into the Romanian vocabulary: *un stent, două stenturi*.

Screening or "mass" examination (*test de prevenție*) is the initial examination done on the whole population and it consists of several procedures and techniques meant to tentatively identify a disease, anomaly or risk factors. It is used in phrases like: *teste screening, screening prenatal, screening pentru cancerul la sân* etc. It is attributed the neutral gender, but dictionaries do not provide any plural form of the noun: *un screening, screeningul*.

Very useful, not only in medicine but in all domains of activity, is the word *tester*, which refers to any device, machine or instrument used for testing.

It is worth mentioning other medical terms necessary in the field of surgery and not only which represent the adapted forms of the English words. There are words that only change the suffix (ending) according to the governing rules of each language. However, the most prolific endings seem to be those related to surgery: *-ectomie* (indicating the removal of), *-plastie* (plastic reconstruction by means of surgery), *-centeză* (puncture), *-otomie* (cuting), *-rexie* (rupture), *-pexie* (fixation) etc. Moreover, few derivatives with the suffix *-patie* < Engl. *-pathy* (whose meaning indicate the presence of a disease or an affliction) are borrowed from English and their form is adapted to Romanian: *cardiomiopatie* < E. *cardiomyopathy* (any affliction of the cardiac muscle). Other nonsurgical endings: *-penie* (low number or amount of), *-itate, -ație, -fobie, -geneză, -iatrie* etc.

Romanian	English
-itate	-ity
absorbabilitate	absorbability (capacity of being absorbed)
hipermotilitate	hypermotility
dizabilitate	disability
-ație	-ation
hipoventilație	hypoventilation
hiperinflație	hyperinflation
-ectomie	-ectomy
acetabulectomie	acetabulectomy (excision of an acetabulum)
-otomie	-otomy

² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stent>.

osteotrotomie	osteothrotomy (the cutting into the extreme articulation of a bone)
periosteotomie	periosteotomy
venotomie	venotomy (surgical sectioning of a vein)
-centeză	-centesis
Abdominocenteză	abdominocentesis
-plastie	-plasty
anevrismoplastie	aneurysmoplasty (surgical operation of an aneurysm)
angioplastie	angioplasty (repair of a blood vessel by means of surgery)
arterioplastie	arterioplasty (surgical repair of the arterial wall)
coreoplastie	coreoplasty (surgical repair of the pupil)
glosoplastie	glossoplasty (plastic surgery of the tongue)
neuroplastie	neuroplasty
osteoplastie	osteoplasty
scleroplastie	scleroplasty (surgical repair of the sclera of the eye)
-rexi	-rrhexis
angiorexi	angiorrhesis (rupture of a blood vessel)
-patie	-pathy
glosopatie	glossopathy (any disease of the tongue)
neuromielopatie	neuromyelopathy
rinopatie	rhinopathy
-penie	-penia
glicopenie	glicopenia (hypoglycemia)
-pexie	-pexy (fixation)
salpingopexie	salpingopexy (fixation of the fallopian tubes into nearby organs)
-fobie	-phobia
hipnofobie	hipnophobia (fear of sleep)
-geneză	-genesis
hipnogeneză	hipnogenesis (production of sleep)
-iatrie	-iatry
podiatrie	podiatry (specialty dealing with the treatment of the feet)

We should also speak of words that slightly change by adapting their form to the phonetic and phonological rules of the Romanian language, (a) by removing a consonant in a group of consonants, (b) by replacing inexistent or difficult to pronounce (groups of) sounds or (c) both.

a)

Romanian	English
abranhial	abran ch ial (respiration which is not possible through the bronchi)
antipatogen	antipath o gen
ecocardiograf	echocardi o graph (machine for echocardiography)
glosoplastie	glossoplast y (plastic surgery of the tongue)
mamograf	mamm o graph
Stress	stress
Stressor	stressor (stressing agent)
intratraheal	intratrach e al

b)

Romanian	English
acardiotrofie	acardiotro ph y (atrophy of the heart)
adipozuria	adiposuria (the occurrence of fats in the urine)
intravezical	intraves i cal
antihemolitic	antihemoly t ic
antihipnotic	antihyp n otic
bacteriofobie	bacteri o phobia
dermatografie	dermatograp h y (anatomical description of the skin)
anevrismoplastie	aneurysmoplast y (surgical operation of an aneurysm)
intracefalic	intrace p halic
șunt	sh unt (pathological deviation of the bloodstream)

c)

Romanian	English
acefalobrahie	ace p halobr a chia (congenital absence of the head and arms)
acusticofobia	acoust i c o ph o bia
antitifoid	antity p h o id

There are also words that change their prefix, by adapting their form to the norms of Romanian phonetics and morphology: *hiper-* (Rom.) < *hyper-* (Engl.), *hipo-* (Rom.) < *hypo-* (Engl.), *poli-* (Rom.) < *poly-* (Engl.) etc.

Romanian	English
hiper-	hyper-
hiperacid	hyperacid
hiperadrenalism	hyperadrenalism (increased activity of the adrenal glands)

hipergonadism	hypergonadism (increased activity of the gonads)
hipo-	hypo-
hipomotilitate	hypomotility
hipoacid	hypoacid
hipobranhial	hypobranhial
hipoventilație	hypoventilation
poli-	poly-
polimolecular	polymolecular

Very important are also those words that shorten their form in Romanian, usually by removing the final vowel:

Romanian	English
adipofibrom	adipofibroma
adipom	adipoma
multinucleat	multinucleate
nonvolatil	nonvolatile
normotensiv	normotensive
vaginoscop	vaginoscope (a device used to examine the vagina)

Another important aspect is that of English words which preserve their form in Romanian and are registered in dictionaries with a restricted meaning, although in everyday speech they are very frequent with a wider meaning. One such example is *lifting*, which is explained in MDN in its most restricted meaning: “esthetic surgery for the removal of wrinkles”. However, in the field of esthetic and cosmetic surgery, very often we speak of *lifting facial*, *lifting mamar* or even *lifting fesier*. *Lifting* preserves the meaning that it has in English, i.e. *rising*.

The easiest possibility is to borrow the exact spelling of an English word and adapt it to the Romanian pronunciation. It is very frequent in the case of adjectives: *antenatal*, *anticarcinogen*, *antiviral*, *interseptal*, *intraabdominal*, *intraspinal*, *intravertebral*, *juxtaarticular* (next to an articulation), *monoaxial*, *multimolecular*, *neurovascular*, *nonvirulent*, *peroneal*, *subcostal*, *subcuticular*, *subscapular*, *trifacial* (trigeminal).

It is interesting to notice that sometimes adjectives are borrowed from English and their corresponding nouns enter Romanian via French.

Romanian adjective	English adjective	Romanian noun	French noun
iatrogen(ic)	iatrogenic	iatrogenie	iatrogénie

Many abbreviations of English origin are currently used in Romanian along with the Romanian translations. Among the most frequent ones, we could mention *HIV* (*virusul imunodeficienței umane* < E. *human immunodeficiency virus*), *CT* (*computer tomograf* < E. *computed tomography*). *EKG* (*electrocardiogramă* or *electrocardiograf*) is another very useful abbreviation in Romanian used in the field of cardiology. It was easily adapted to the neutral gender, being counted as *un EKG*, *două EKG-uri*. Romanian seems to be even more tolerant to this form, by replacing *K* with *C*, thus resulting *ECG*. Among the most useful acronyms, *laser* (*light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation*) is one that is worth mentioning.

When approaching the idea of loanwords, we should not forget about the partial or total rendering or translation of the meaning of a word or phrase from English into Romanian, which we know under the name of calques.

Very few examples of calques encountered in the absence of a Romanian equivalent for all the English words that are worth mentioning are:

✓ **Partial calques**

(Rom.) *celule stem* < (after Engl.) *stem cells*

(Rom.) *test dublu-orb* < (after Engl.) *double-blind test*

(Rom.) *subclinic* < (after Engl.) *subclinical* (referring to diseases without obvious clinical signs)

(Rom.) *supraspinal* < (after Engl.) *superspinal* (above the vertebral column)

✓ **Total calques**

(Rom.) *celulă gazdă* < (after Engl.) *host cell*

(Rom.) *termocoagulare* < (after Engl.) *thermocoagulation* (surgical method of blood coagulation by heat)

Elective terminology based on the choice of the speaker, given the occurrence of a valid alternative in the recipient language

Test, a loanword with a double etymology in Romanian – English and French – is currently used in medicine, as well, sometimes replacing the very familiar phrases: *analize de sânge* or *analize de laborator* with *teste de sânge* or *teste de laborator* < Engl. *blood tests* and *laboratory tests*, thus translating the original English structures.

Pacemaker, also known as *stimulator cardiac*, is an electrical device used to stimulate the activity of the heart. The former term tends to gradually replace the latter, given its shortness compared to the Romanian phrase, thus granting velocity to communication. *Pacemaker* was adapted to the Romanian morphological system and therefore assigned the neutral gender: *un pacemaker, două pacemakere*.

Check-up ranks among those words or phrases used mainly by youngsters with good knowledge of English, whose aim is to show off and be fashionable. They prefer *check-up* to *control (medical)* or *examen medical complet*. MDN registers the word, assigns it the neutral gender, but does not provide any plural form.

Some other words and phrases that do not find their complete usefulness in Romanian are *blister(e) de medicamente*, although used along with its Romanian equivalent *folie (folii) de medicamente, monitoring (supraveghere, monitorizare)*, *peeling facial, mapping* which has almost replaced *cartografiere* (rare at present), *stroke* (although restricted in use at present, despite its registration in MDN) will probably replace the very familiar *AVC (accident vascular cerebral)* etc.

There are also cases when the meaning in use of a loanword in the recipient language is slightly different from the meaning in use of the English word. It is the case of *integument*, which in English is used with the meaning of *skin*, while in Romanian it defines *the covering of some organs* and it is used in biology.

Due to the large number of words borrowed from English, not only in the medical field, but in all domains, the result is sometimes amazing through the occurrence of awkward forms adapted to the Romanian vocabulary. *Nursă* is one such example. It is adapted after the English form *nurse*, and in Romanian it is rarely used with the meaning of *nurse's aide* or *nanny*. Related to it is the word *nurserie*, which refers to the hospital ward dedicated to newborns (Engl. *nursery*). *Nursing* belongs to the same lexical family and it is used in Romanian with reference to the caring of sick people: *nursingul bolnavilor*, which sounds rather strange compared to *îngrijirea bolnavilor*.

Another remark that should be made is that most medical words in English and Romanian are similar in form due to their common origin: Latin. Both languages borrowed them and subsequently adapted them in form and pronunciation to the specificity of each language. There are cases among the words listed below that in Romanian have double or

multiple etymologies, but it is not the aim of the present paper to insist on such matters.

Romanian	English	Latin
fractură	fracture	fractura
orificiu	orifice	orificium
pacient	patient	patiens
a suferi	to suffer	sufferire
temperatură	temperature	temperature
plasture	plaster	plastrum
vaccin	vaccine	vaccinus

There are also useless adjectives borrowed from English whose form is preserved in Romanian. The main reason for such borrowing is again the length of the word: *prevalent* replaced the longer *predominant*, for example.

In terms of abbreviations, the Romanian *RMN* (*rezonanță magnetică nucleară*) tends to be replaced by *IRM* (*imagistică prin rezonanță magnetică* – a calque after the English *MRI = magnetic resonance imaging*).

CONCLUSIONS

The examples mentioned in the present paper clearly indicate that there is a need for English terms in the medical vocabulary of any language, Romanian included, given the progression towards the internalization of vocabulary worldwide. It is also obvious that it is the choice of the speaker how much and how often he/ she will use words of English origin when there is already a valid equivalent of the English loanword in the recipient language.

Some of the examples discussed in the present paper could be included in more than one category, but we decided to include them in the most suitable and illustrative category for the purpose of the paper.

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RETENTION MATTERS -WAYS TO IMPROVE RETENTION IN JAPANESE LANGUAGE DEPARTMENTS IN ROMANIAN UNIVERSITIES

IULIA WANIEK*

iawaniek@hotmail.com

Abstract: *Retention matters, say higher education officials recently, and this study will highlight some stages in the development of this concept, and explore the possible ways to improve retention in teaching Japanese in Romania, a difficult field where drop out rates are high. We analyse data from the activity of the Japanese Department of "Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University, which prove that, although Japanese is a very attractive subject, the motivation of students decreases during their studies, many of them dropping out or turning to other languages, due to the intrinsic difficulty of the language and lack of opportunities to use it professionally and socially. Finding strategies for improving their motivation is subject for future research.*

Keywords: *student retention, Japanese language education, higher education.*

Various ways may be used to look at the reasons why students stay or drop out of university. There is a negative-looking approach that uses terms like failure, dropout, attrition, and a positive one, which talks about retention and persistence. The problem has been studied and theoretical models offered since the 1970-ies¹. There was an assumption that widening the access to higher education may lead to a higher dropout rate. Indeed, as more and more young people attended universities in the economically advanced countries of Europe and North America in the mid-1980ies, many of them changed course, especially in the humanities or combined studies (medicine having the highest retention rate of 98% in

* Assoc. Prof. PhD., Faculty of Foreign Languages and Literatures, "Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University, Bucharest.

¹ for example, V. Tinto's model of student retention, as in Tinto, V., "Dropout from Higher Education: A Theoretical Synthesis of Recent Research" *Review of Educational Research* vol.45, 1975, pp.89-125.

the UK in the 1990ies)². However, such an assumption was contradicted by recent evidence, as studies on retention increased in frequency and scope.

Higher education institutions across the world define and measure the student retention rate in different ways and to different degrees. The preoccupation with monitoring student retention is of relatively recent date, with several serious research projects in the UK beginning with 2001-2002³. UK retention research is complemented by the large body of US work in this area - for example the studies by Pascarella and Terenzini 1991 and 2005; Astin, 1984; Berger & Braxton, 1998; Vincent Tinto, 1993. Australia (McInnis 2001) and Ireland (Morgan et al 2001) have also undergone relevant research⁴.

An important turning point was the 2005 report⁵ by Quinn, Thomas, Slack, Casey, Thexton, and Noble, which used qualitative methods and international studies to explore the implications of leaving higher education early for students from lower socio-economic groups and first generation entrants. For many of those students dropping out is a significant decision and is not taken lightly. The reasons for withdrawal included being on the wrong course, academic challenges, or a lack of institutional belonging, but most students declared an intention to return to higher education.

A 2007 study conducted on 7000 British students attempted to find out what aspects of the students' experience may affect their decision to withdraw from university and found that the more students know about

² Jones, R., *Student retention and success - a synthesis of research*, available 2008, at www.heacademy.ac.uk/evidencenet

³ Dodgson, R. and Bolam, H., (2002), *Student retention, support and widening participation in the north east of England*. Sunderland: Universities for the North East; Thomas, L., Quinn, J., Slack, K. and Casey, L., (2002), *Student Services: Effective Approaches to Retaining Students in Higher Education*. Full Research Report. Stoke on Trent: Institute for Access Studies, Staffordshire University; Action on Access (2003) *Student Success in Higher Education*. Bradford, Action on Access

⁴ Jones, R., *Student retention and success - a synthesis of research*, available 2008, at www.heacademy.ac.uk/evidencenet

⁵ Quinn, J., Thomas, L., Slack, K., Casey, L., Thexton, W. and Noble, J., *From Life Crisis to Lifelong Learning. rethinking working class 'drop out' from higher education*. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2005.

their institutions and courses before enrolling, the less likely they are to consider withdrawal⁶.

Another important report was the 2007 *RAND Education Report*, by Christian van Stolk, Jan Tiessen, Jack Clift, and Ruth Levitt⁷, which compared student retention from an international perspective, with data from four selected countries: Australia, Ireland, the Netherlands and the United States. While all these countries measure the HE (higher education) completion rates in different ways, only Australia and the Netherlands have captured retention rates systematically⁸.

The Report says that “In Ireland and the United States, there are no agreed definitions of retention. Where retention is measured, the data measurement is mostly course-specific, however, there are some common definitions of completion in these countries. Completion rates are compiled for students on financial assistance in the US. Completion refers to the number of students who graduate within 150 percent of the normal course time (six years). Ireland differentiates between students who graduate on time and students who graduate late. In Australia and the Netherlands, there are more systematic definitions that inform data collection. In the Netherlands, graduation is defined as ‘yield’ and refers to the number of students who graduate on time. The Netherlands captures retention as students who stay in HE after the first two years of study.”

As it is difficult “to make comparisons between retention rates of countries given the differences in how retention and completion rates are defined and calculated”, the study has used Organisation of Economic Development (OECD) data and available national data in order to build some comparisons⁹.

According to the study, the OECD “defines completion rates as the number of degrees awarded per 100 students enrolled in a given year. Graduation rates refer to the ratio of tertiary graduates to the population at the typical age of graduation, multiplied by 100. Survival rate indicates

⁶ Yorke, M. and Longden, B., *The first-year experience in higher education in the UK*. Report on Phase 1 of a project funded by the Higher Education Academy. York, The Higher Education Academy, 2007.

⁷ van Stolk, C., Tiessen, J., Clift, J. and Levitt, R., ‘Student retention in higher education courses. International comparison.’ Report prepared for the National Audit Office. Cambridge: RAND Corporation, 2007.

⁸ van Stolk, C., Tiessen, J., Clift, J. and Levitt, R. (2007), p. xi

⁹ van Stolk, C., Tiessen, J., Clift, J. and Levitt, R. (2007), p. xii

the number of graduates divided by the number of new entrants in the typical year of entrance (tracking of a cohort)”¹⁰.

From the study it appears that the UK is one of the better performers in terms of student completion and survival rates where comparable data is available, however, one of the conclusions of the study was that “differences in the national and institutional organisation of HE need to be taken into account when comparing retention rates between countries and in considering the transferability of instruments/policies aimed at improving retention in HE systems.”¹¹ However, some of the most successful measures taken to improve retention were **peer mentoring** to help first year students to adjust to university life, tailoring **academic programmes to different cultural contexts and needs**, or student-centred approaches that aimed to **help students individually**. For example, in Vanderbilt University, “the Psychological and Counseling Center (PCC) sent letters to each freshman student 4-6 weeks in to their first year at Vanderbilt, directly asking whether the student was considering leaving the university, and, if so, whether he/she would be interested in discussing the decision with somebody. Students who indicated interest were given an initial interview to determine their needs, and were then referred to one of a myriad of service providers ... [which] included internal PCC counselling services; other psychological/medical professionals; financial aid officers; academic advisors; and leaders of student clubs and organizations.”¹²

Beyond all the theoretical models related to students’ persistence and academic success, or the various institutional approaches to improving engagement and retention of students in higher education, retention and completion rates are important **measures of the performance of institutions and higher education systems**. Understanding the causes of student non-completion is vital for an institution seeking to increase the chances of student success.

One of the pioneers of student retention studies was V. Tinto, who stressed the importance of social integration for students, but expanded his theory in a 1993 book¹³, incorporating research and policy reports on why students leave higher education, giving new emphasis to the **central**

¹⁰ ibidem

¹¹ Jones, R., *Student retention and success – a synthesis of research*, 2008.

¹² van Stolk, C., Tiessen, J., Clift, J. and Levitt, R. (2007), p. 61

¹³Tinto, V., *Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993.

importance of the classroom experience and to the role of multiple college communities.

Several measures that can improve retention and student satisfaction and achievement stand out from all the interviews with students conducted by the studies mentioned above:

- Staff "empathy" - the personal tutor type of relationship;
- Getting students to work together, thus achieving the desired social integration;
- Working together on subject content, achieving academic integration;
- More feedback on learning: it should tell students how well they are really doing (rather than correct detailed task performance), thus allowing students to self-regulate their effort. In PBL (problem-based learning) students often complain that the staff don't tell them how they are doing, yet they enjoy it - working in groups gives them good and frequent feedback on how well they understand the material as compared to fellow students, and as judged by how well they can contribute to their group, even though it doesn't directly tell them how well they will do in exams.

Since the economic crisis of 2008-2009, student retention rate dropped significantly in North America¹⁴, especially in the small liberal arts colleges (that is the private sector). "Out of approximately 2.8 million first-year college students each year, more than 450,000 do not return to the college or university they started with for their second year, according to 2008 statistics. In other words, 25 percent of first-year students do not return to the institution where they began their college career. What other industry do we know that successfully recruits 25 percent new clients each year, plans for an average loss of 25 percent of those new clients, and accepts this as business as usual?", said Bryan Matthews in 2009, proposing that the only solution is to look within the system and improve retention. The situation is similar in Romania as well, or even worse, with a drop of 40% of high school graduation rate in recent years. The solution is at hand - "Significant improvement in the retention of current clients is the low-hanging fruit of revenue increases for colleges and universities.",

¹⁴ Matthews, Bryan (2009), Retention Matters, *Inside Higher Ed*, retrieved from <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2009/11/02/retention-matters>, Sept. 25, 2017

says the article mentioned above, but how many universities in Romania really did address it properly?

A few data from my field of activity – teaching Japanese at a private university in Romania – will highlight the trends. Our department of Japanese was founded in the year 2000, and the number of students enrolled each year was more or less around 20 until 2005, with a higher loss of students in the cohort of 2001-2005, when only 5 persons graduated, but no more than 2 students per cohort in the other years. 2005 saw the introduction of the Bologna system of 3 years undergraduate, 2 years master and 3 years doctoral study, but also a doubling of the number of students enrolled in Japanese: in the fall of 2006 there were 40 students enrolled and since 2008 the number of first year students doubled to 80-82 every year, as the study of Japanese became a boom with young people worldwide.

The new *Law of Education* of 2011 imposed fixed admission quotas to faculties, which until then had enrolled large numbers of students. For comparison, if in 2010 there were 400 freshmen in the Foreign Languages Department of Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University, of which 80 were enrolled in the Japanese class, in 2011 the number of first year students was restricted to 250, of which only 50 were in the Japanese class. The following table presents the completion and survival rates for the Japanese language section over a period of four years, when exact data were available. As Japanese is an important language which attracts many students in Romanian Departments of Foreign Languages, these rates are symptomatic of phenomena that should be taken seriously when considering measures for improving education.

Number of students enrolled in the first year	Number of graduates after the normal three years term	Graduates from the cohort within the 2 following years	Completion and survival rates
2010: 80 students enrolled in Japanese	2013: 15 graduates with diploma of Japanese	2014: 3 graduates from the 2010 cohort 2015: 3 graduates from the 2010 cohort	26.25% 18.75%
2011: 50 students enrolled in Japanese	2014: 7 graduates with diploma of Japanese	2015: 3 graduates from the 2011 cohort	20% 14%

2012: 34 students enrolled in Japanese	2015: 10 graduates with diploma of Japanese	2016: 1 graduate from the 2012 cohort	32.35% 29.41%
2013: 24 students enrolled in Japanese	2016: 9 graduates with diploma of Japanese	2017: 2 graduates from the 2013 cohort	45.83% 37.5%

Comments

Students interviewed at Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University concerning their problems in learning Japanese declared that the lack of textbooks and course manuals in Romanian (which is the language of instruction in this case) is a major factor, beside the feeling of disappointment with the difficulties of the language itself.

Portfolios are a tool that teachers use in Departments of Japanese at several Romanian universities in order to enhance independent work – they include vocabulary exercises, lists of characters and translations or essays done by the students as homework. Interviewed about the efficiency of the Portfolio students at the University of Bucharest, for example, expressed satisfaction with the outcomes, but also dissatisfaction with the belated feedback that they receive on their essays and translations from the teachers, as deadlines for feedback and correction are not very tightly kept. Students interviewed at Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University also claimed that proper feedback on their work, especially essays and translations was the best tool for boosting their learning, even better than repeated exercises in class.

A very sensitive issue is how you choose to teach a language that is so different from that of the learners, and on top of that has a cumbersome writing system. Using direct methods, conversation and situational approaches is efficient, but only takes one to a superficial level of proficiency. Numbers show that the massive drop out occurs between the first and second year, precisely when one needs to go from this conversational, introductory level, to the higher one, of written text comprehension and correct self-expression in the written language.

Recent theories on teaching difficult languages suggest to minimize the learning of grammar to 25% of the learning time and to put vocabulary boosting and acquisition of sentence patterns through real language interaction to the forefront. Regarding the acquisition of new vocabulary they also suggest that this should be selected according to the

students' interests, because meaningfulness is an important factor for memorizing.

From all the interviews and analysis of available data, one can conclude that giving the students a greater freedom in choosing the contents of learning, and making them responsible for their learning outcome, as well as giving them the certainty that you care for their evolution and career, are sure methods for increasing retention.

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DER FREMDSPRACHENUNTERRICHT AUS DER PERSPEKTIVE DER MEHRSPRACHIGKEIT

FLORENTINA ALEXANDRU*

florentinaalexandru@yahoo.com

Abstract: *In the globalized world, which is characterized by language and cultural contacts, the relevance of multilingualism is steadily increasing. The European Commission's demand that every European citizen should master two other foreign languages besides the mother tongue has now become a firm goal of school education in all EU countries. Nowadays, foreign languages are no longer part of an elite group, they are part of the everyday life of many people, they are compulsory in many school systems, they are applied in education and profession and their position in education is more and more in line with the principle: the more languages, the more opportunities. Despite the increasing personal mobility, the linguistic and cultural heterogeneity of the student body is not at all characteristic in some EU countries, including Romania. This article examines the intercultural competence of foreign language teaching students, despite their linguistic and cultural homogeneity, and the extent to which cross-language networking is possible so that multilingualism can lead to productive competence in several languages.*

Keywords: *foreign language teaching, multilingualism, interlinked foreign language learning, intercultural competence, didactics of multilingualism.*

Zusammenfassung: *In der globalisierten Welt, die durch Sprach- und Kulturkontakte geprägt wird, nimmt die Relevanz der Mehrsprachigkeit stetig zu. Die schon von der Europäischen Kommission geäußerte Forderung, dass jeder europäische Bürger neben der Muttersprache zwei weitere Fremdsprachen beherrschen sollte, ist mittlerweile ein festes Ziel schulischer Bildung in allen EU-Ländern geworden. Fremdsprachen gehören heutzutage nicht mehr zu einer Elite-Gruppe, sondern zum Alltag vieler Menschen, sie sind Pflichtfach in vielen Schulsystemen, sie werden in Ausbildung und Beruf angewendet und ihre Stellung in der Bildung entspricht immer mehr dem Prinzip: Je mehr Sprachen, desto mehr Chancen. Trotz der wachsender Personenmobilität ist die sprachlich-*

* Doz. Dr. Christliche Universität „Dimitrie Cantemir“ Bukarest.

kulturelle Heterogenität der Schülerschaft in manchen EU-Ländern, darunter auch Rumänien, gar nicht kennzeichnend. Der vorliegende Artikel untersucht eben, ob diese Schüler trotz sprachlich-kultureller Homogenität durch den Fremdsprachenunterricht interkulturell kompetent werden können, und inwieweit eine sprachen-übergreifende Vernetzung möglich ist, sodass die Mehrsprachigkeit zu einer produktiven Kompetenz in mehreren Sprachen führen kann.

Schlagwörter: *Fremdsprachenunterricht, Mehrsprachigkeit, vernetztes Fremdsprachenlernen, interkulturelle Kompetenz, Mehrsprachigkeitsdidaktik.*

1. Mehrsprachigkeit: Herausforderung, Chance oder Überforderung?

Der heutige europäische Raum, der einerseits von einer Verflüssigung der zwischen-staatlichen Grenzen und andererseits von fast demselben Multikulturalismus und derselben Mehrsprachigkeit wie im Laufe seiner tausendjährigen Geschichte geprägt ist, unterliegt einem ständigen wirtschaftlichen und sozialen Wandel. Im Jahre 2000 hat der Europäische Rat durch seine Bildungsfachleute die in wissensbasierten Gesellschaft nötigen Grundkompetenzen festgelegt. Darunter befindet sich auch die *fremdsprachliche/mehrsprachige Kompetenz*.

Die Sprachenpolitik ist ein grundlegender Faktor bei der Aufrechterhaltung der sprachlichen und kulturellen Vielfalt, und die Mehrsprachigkeit bzw. Vielsprachigkeit/individuelle Mehrsprachigkeit¹ könnten zu einer fremdsprachlichen Kompetenz, die in dem mehrsprachigen Europa gewünscht und nicht auferlegt sein sollte, führen. Jede beliebige Sprache erleichtert eigentlich den Weg zur Toleranz und Offenheit gegenüber anderen Kulturen. Um diesen Herausforderungen gerecht zu werden, sind die sprachpolitischen Empfehlungen der EU ganz deutlich: Jeder europäische Bürger solle neben der Muttersprache zwei weitere europäische Fremdsprachen beherrschen, der Fremdsprachenunterricht soll schon im Kindergarten beginnen und die Fremdsprachen sollen so viel wie möglich im Unterricht verwendet werden.

¹ Ausgehend von einem sprachlich-kulturell homogenen Kontext betrachte ich Mehr- und Vielsprachigkeit nicht als Synonyme. Ich unterscheide zwischen der Vielsprachigkeit als Kompetenz eines Individuums mehrere Sprachen zu beherrschen und der Mehrsprachigkeit als Spracherfahrung in einem multikulturellen Kontext.

Der berufliche Werdegang bedeutet heutzutage in erster Linie Professionalisierung durch komplexe Qualifikationen (Wissen, Fähigkeiten, Fertigkeiten, Kompetenzen), die in einer Ausbildung erworben und die durch Berufsausübung und Erfahrung gefestigt und ausgebaut werden können. Die Profilbildung umfasst sowohl eine akademisch-theoretische als auch eine beruflich-praktische Bildung. Dazu kommt aber auch eine Sprachausbildung hinzu, die vor allem für die Entwicklung der interkulturellen Kommunikationskompetenz zuständig sein sollte. Die europäischen Bürger sollen daher dessen bewusst sein, dass sie durch die Beherrschung mehrerer Fremdsprachen weitere berufliche und persönliche Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten haben.

Auch der *Gemeinsame europäische Referenzrahmen für Sprachen* legt ein wichtiges Lehrziel fest, und zwar die Ausbildung des kompetenten interkulturellen Sprachbenutzers. Dieses Ziel bezieht sich nicht nur auf die Fähigkeit, eine Fremdsprache grammatisch richtig zu benutzen, sondern auch auf die Kompetenz, angemessen und effektiv in einem multikulturellen Kontext zu kommunizieren und zu handeln und die wegen der kulturellen Unterschiede entstandenen Missverständnisse zu bewältigen. Im Fremdsprachenunterricht findet also eine Akzentverschiebung statt. Aus dieser Perspektive ist der Sprachenerwerb keine Überforderung, sondern die Chance geistig flexibler und leistungsfähiger in der Wahrnehmung zu werden. Das Erlernen von Fremdsprachen bedeutet die Vorbereitung auf interkulturelle Kommunikation.

Der Begriff *mehrsprachige und plurikulturelle Kompetenz* bezeichnet die Fähigkeit, Sprachen zum Zweck der Kommunikation zu benutzen und sich an interkultureller Interaktion zu beteiligen, wobei ein Mensch als gesellschaftlich Handelnder verstanden wird, der über – graduell unterschiedliche – Kompetenzen in mehreren Sprachen und über Erfahrungen mit mehreren Kulturen verfügt².

Die Begegnung mit Sprachen ist also die beste Möglichkeit, den Umgang mit Vielfalt zu erlernen. Die Mehrsprachigkeit gehört schon sowohl zum Alltag als auch zum Berufsleben, sie ist gleichzeitig Notwendigkeit und Chance. Die Fremdsprachen, die bis vor Kurzem als ein statisches, geschlossenes, elitäres, fakultatives Fach betrachtet worden

² Europarat, *Gemeinsamer europäischer Referenzrahmen für Sprachen: lernen, lehren, beurteilen*. Berlin: Langenscheidt, 2001, S. 163.

sind, sind jetzt zu einem Knotenpunkt der Bildungssysteme geworden. Die Beherrschung von Fremdsprachen gewährt den Individuen im weitesten Sinne den Zugang zu den multikulturellen Gesellschaften und den Erfolg im Berufsleben. Sowohl die soziale Integration wie auch der berufliche Erfolg hängen aber nicht nur von den Sprachkenntnissen, sondern auch von einem Bündel von kommunikativen und soziokulturellen Kompetenzen ab. Diese Kompetenzen schaffen eigentlich die Voraussetzungen einerseits für die Wahrnehmung, die Beurteilung und das Verstehen fremder Welten und andererseits für die Entwicklung des interkulturellen Dialogs.

2. Sprachkompetenz und interkulturelle Kompetenz

Die Fähigkeit, mit kultureller Vielfalt und mit unterschiedlichen Wertesystemen umzugehen, war bis vor Kurzem eine Schlüsselqualifikation der Manager, die in internationalen Unternehmen tätig waren. Inzwischen ist diese Kompetenz schon ein Hauptziel der Ausbildung und der Persönlichkeitsentwicklung des modernen Menschen geworden. Der Schlüssel des Zusammenlebens, der Kooperation und der Steuerung von interkulturellen Kommunikationsprozessen ist in einer mehr und mehr globalisierten Welt die *interkulturelle Kompetenz*, eine Kompetenz, die sich nicht radikal von der *kommunikativen Kompetenz* unterscheidet. Vergleicht man die Definitionen und vor allem die Ziele der beiden Kompetenzen, fällt schon beim ersten Blick auf, dass sie dieselben Fähigkeiten und Fertigkeiten umfassen. *Kommunikativ und interkulturell* sind Qualifikatoren, die dasselbe Bezugswort – Kompetenz – haben, und sie heben eine bestimmte Fähigkeit hervor. Wie Sprache und Kultur nicht voneinander getrennt werden können, so ist es auch mit kommunikativ und interkulturell, die mit dem vorher genannten Oberbegriff zusammenhängen. Der Schwerpunkt liegt nicht mehr nur auf dem Kommunikationsprozess und auf der Verständigung (kommunikative Kompetenz), der soziokulturelle Kontext der Interaktanten wird jetzt als ebenso wichtig betrachtet (interkulturelle Kompetenz). Im Fremdsprachenunterricht führt das manchmal sogar zu einem Herunterspielen der sprachlichen Bestandteile und der Betonung der verhaltens- und affektorientierten Ziele.

Lehr- und Lernziele im Fremdsprachenunterricht werden traditionell in drei Bestandteile gegliedert: Wissen, Haltungen/Einstellungen und sprachpraktische Fertigkeiten, d.h. in eine kognitive, eine affektive und eine skillspezifische Domäne. Die ‚mainstream‘-Konzeption interkultureller Kompetenz im FU ist

nun, , einseitig auf die affektive Domäne kapriziert (Empathie, Verstehen, Toleranz und so weiter) zum Nachteil und Schaden der anderen beiden Domänen³.

Das Zusammenfügen der beiden Bestandteile – kommunikativ und interkulturell – würde mehr den Anforderungen der modernen Welt entsprechen. Das erklärt auch die Bezeichnung: *interkulturelle kommunikative Kompetenz oder interkulturelle Kommunikationskompetenz*.

Michael Byram's Unterscheidung zwischen *interkultureller Kompetenz* und *interkultureller kommunikativer Kompetenz* weist darauf hin, dass diese zwei Kompetenzen aufs engste miteinander verknüpft sind. Aus seiner Sicht baut die interkulturelle kommunikative Kompetenz auf der kommunikativen Kompetenz auf. Ein Individuum, das fähig ist, mit Personen aus anderen Sprach- und Kulturräumen in seiner Muttersprache zu kommunizieren, besitzt eine kommunikative Kompetenz, die weiter zu einer Kommunikationskompetenz in einer Fremdsprache entwickelt werden kann. In diesem Sinne kann man die letztgenannte Kompetenz als eine Erweiterung der ersten betrachten. Ähnlicherweise unterscheidet Byram auch zwischen *interkulturellem Lernen*, das sich vor allem auf die multikulturellen Unterrichtskontexte bezieht, wo sich die Schüler vor allem mit Migrationshintergrund mit anderen Kulturen auseinandersetzen und wo sie diese fremden Kulturen besser kennen und verstehen lernen, und dem *interkulturellen Fremdsprachenunterricht*, der die Ausbildung eines „*intercultural speaker*“⁴ anstrebt (vgl. Kramsch 1998). Der interkulturelle Sprachbenutzer ist

(...) someone who has a competence different from that of the native speaker, someone who is able to see and establish relationships between languages and cultures, rather than someone who tries, and usually fails, to imitate a native speaker. The competence of an intercultural speaker is also difficult to acquire and most language learners will fall short to the ideal, but they will nevertheless acquire a degree of such competence (...)⁵.

³ House, J., Zum Erwerb interkultureller Kompetenz im Unterricht des Deutschen als Fremdsprache. In: *Zeitschrift für interkulturellen Fremdsprachenunterricht*, 1997, S. 3.

⁴ Byram, M., *Teaching and Assessing Intercultural Communicative Competence*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1997, S. 38.

⁵ Idem., Developing the intercultural speaker for international communication. In: Chambers/Baoill (ed.): *Intercultural Communication and Language Learning*. Dublin, 1999, S. 364.

Die interkulturelle kommunikative Kompetenz erwirbt man nicht nur während des Lern-prozesses und/oder durch Selbsterfahrung. Bei näherer Betrachtung der aufgeführten Teil-kompetenzen wird deutlich, dass weder die Beherrschung einer Fremdsprache noch das explizite Wissen über die Merkmale eines als unterschiedlich wahrgenommenen Kulturraums einem Individuum diejenige für die Bewältigung der interkulturellen Kommunikationssituationen benötigte Kompetenz gewährleistet. Grundlegend für die interkulturelle kommunikative Kompetenz ist eben die Anpassungsfähigkeit jedes Einzelnen an eine bestimmte Kommunika-tionssituation, d.h. inwieweit jemand offen, flexibel, kreativ, unterschiedlich auf die Herausforderungen eines fremden Sprach- und Kulturraums antworten kann. In einem weiteren Sinne umfasst diese Kompetenz folgende Aspekte:

- die Wahrnehmung, das Erkennen, die Akzeptanz und das Verständnis von fremden Sprach- und Kulturräumen
- flexibles und situativ angemessenes Verhalten
- sprachliches und kulturelles Bewusstsein
- situationsgerechte fremdsprachliche Handlungsfähigkeit.

Zusammenfassend ergibt sich aus den oben dargestellten Aspekte, dass die interkulturelle kommunikative Kompetenz „*the cognitive, affective and operational adaptability of an individual's internal system in all intercultural communication systems*“⁶ voraussetzt.

Der handlungsorientierte Fremdsprachenunterricht, der als Leitziel die interkulturelle kommunikative Kompetenz hat, sollte eigentlich auf einem integrativen, mehrdimensionalen Kompetenzsystem beruhen. Ein solches System stellt vielmehr einen Bezugsrahmen für die im Fremdsprachenunterricht vier grundlegenden Komponente der interkulturellen kommunikativen Kompetenz – die kognitive Dimension, die affektive Dimension, die handlungsorientierte Dimension und die Sprachkompetenz – dar. So könnten Sprachenlernende interkulturelle Sprachbenutzer werden:

Der ‚interkulturelle Sprecher/Hörer‘ verfügt über die Fähigkeit, mit Menschen aus anderen Kulturen, die als

⁶ Kim, Y.Y., Intercultural Communication Competence: A Systemtheoretic View. In: Ting-Toomey, S. / Korzenny, F. (Hrsg.): *Cross-Cultural/Interpersonal Communication*, Newbury Park, 1991, S. 259.259-275

unterschiedlich von der eigenen wahrgenommen werden, zu kommunizieren. Das erfordert die Fähigkeit, unterschiedliche kulturelle Wertesysteme in Beziehung zu setzen (vergleichen, nicht gleichsetzen), andere soziale Erscheinungen innerhalb des fremden kulturellen Systems ohne ethnozentristische Wertung zu interpretieren sowie mit Missverständnissen, Brüchen und Widersprüchen, wie sie für die interkulturelle Kommunikation charakteristisch sind, umgehen zu können⁷.

3. Sprachenerwerb im sprachlich-kulturell homogenen Kontext

Geht man von dem Aspekt der Multikulturalität aus, dann kann man die Schule als einen Ort der gegenseitigen Beeinflussung der Kulturen und der kulturellen Interferenzen betrachten, wo Individuen verschiedener sprachlich-kultureller Herkunft, verschiedenen Altersstufen und mit unterschiedlichen Erwartungen und Zielen unter der Anleitung professioneller Lehrkräfte lernen, zusammenzuleben und ihre kulturellen Differenzen zu akzeptieren. Die interkulturelle Begegnung setzt gemeinsames Handeln, Dialog und Verständigung voraus.

Die Frage, wie man das Verstehen einer fremden Kultur und des Fremden in einem sprachlich-kulturellen homogenen Unterrichtskontext, in dem die Erfahrung mit der sprachlichen und kulturellen Vielfalt nur selten oder gar nicht möglich ist, lehren und lernen kann, beantwortet man ganz einfach: Mithilfe der Fremdsprachen, die *per definitionem* die Begegnung zwischen Ausgangs- und Zielkultur, zwischen Eigenem und Fremdem ermöglichen. Der Fremdsprachenunterricht sollte vor allem in sprachlich-kulturellen homogenen Vermittlungskontexten eben das Interesse für andere Kulturen erwecken, so dass die Ausgangs- und Zielkultur zu einer neuen Einheit verbunden werden können. Eine fremde Sprache eröffnet den Zugang zu anderen Welten und dadurch kann neues Weltwissen erworben werden. Das Verstehen einer Fremdkultur bedeutet also die Anerkennung und die Übernahme von anderen Perspektiven, die die Folge einer konstruktiven Auseinandersetzung mit der anderen und der eigenen Kultur sind.

⁷ Krumm, H.J., Sprachenpolitik und Mehrsprachigkeit. In: Hufeisen, B. / Neuner, G.: *Mehrsprachigkeitskonzept – tertiärsprachenlernen – Deutsch nach Englisch*. Council of Europe Publishing, 2003a, S. 141.

Ein relativ weniger erforschter Aspekt ist der Unterricht der modernen Sprachen aus interkulturellen Perspektive in sprachlich-kulturell homogenen Kontexten, wie der Fall in fast allen rumänischen Bildungseinrichtungen – abgesehen von den Gebieten mit kompakt siedelnden nationalen Minderheiten – ist. Laut der letzten Volkszählung von 2011 sind die Rumänen mit 88,9% ganz deutlich die größte Bevölkerungsgruppe des Landes. Daneben existieren aber noch weitere 18 anerkannte nationale Minderheiten, die 11,1% der Bevölkerung Rumäniens ausmachen und seit Jahrhunderten mit der rumänischen Mehrheit zusammenleben. Mit 6,5% sind die Ungarn die größte Minderheit. Sie besiedeln bestimmte Regionen im Südosten und in der Mitte Siebenbürgens, sowie im Grenzgebiet zu Ungarn, wo sie eigentlich auch eine Mehrheitsgruppe bilden. Alle anderen Minderheiten – Roma, Ukrainer, Deutsche, Türken, Russisch-Lipowaner, Tataren, Serben, Slowaken, Tschechen, Bulgaren, Griechen, Italiener, Albaner, Juden, Polen, Armenier und Kroaten – sind nur kleine Gruppen, die nirgends im Land eine Mehrheitsgruppe bilden. Aus der Perspektive der Migration ist Rumänien ein traditionelles Auswanderungsland. Der Zuwanderungsprozess nach Rumänien ist im Vergleich zu der Auswanderung schwach. Von den ungefähr 100 000 registrierten Ausländern (Stand: 01.07.2012) sind 42 953 aus den EU-Ländern und 57 259 außerhalb der EU. Die ersten drei Positionen sind von Italienern (9546), Deutschen (6919) und Franzosen (5319) bzw. von Moldawiern (14323), Türken (9080) und Chinesen (6765) belegt. Die meisten Ausländer wohnen und arbeiten in Bukarest (37,8%) und in den Kreisen: Cluj, Timiș, Arad, Ilfov, Bihor, Sibiu, Constanța, Prahova und Brașov (Stand: 01.07.2012). Laut focus-migration sind 82% der Ausländer Männer (Stand: 2006) und sie sind in erster Linie Unternehmer, Investoren oder Leiter von Niederlassungen verschiedener ausländischer Firmen.

Die territoriale Verteilung der nationalen Minderheiten und der neuen Zuwanderer erklärt auch den hohen Homogenitätsgrad in den rumänischen Schulen bzw. Universitäten. Die nationalen Minderheiten dürfen gemäß der Verfassung dort, wo sie auch kompakte ethnische Gruppen bilden, Schulen mit muttersprachlichem Unterricht besuchen. In solchen Fällen kommen die schulpflichtigen Kinder der Minderheitsgruppe nicht mit ihren gleichaltrigen Kollegen aus der

Mehrheitsgruppe in demselben Unterrichtskontext⁸ zusammen, so dass keine sprachlich-kulturelle heterogenen Klassen zustandekommen können. Die meisten Kinder der in dem letzten Jahrzehnt in Rumänien registrierten Ausländer besuchen internationale Schulen, die *per se* heterogen sind. Die aus Mischehen stammenden Kinder haben in den meisten Fällen Rumänisch als Muttersprache und sie werden nach den Werten der rumänischen Kultur erzogen. Sie besuchen rumänische Schulen, aber als Einzelfälle können sie den Homogenitätsgrad einer Klasse nicht beeinflussen.

4. Umgekehrte Sprachenfolge als Modell des Mehrsprachenerwerbs

Die Arbeitsmigration der letzten Jahrzehnte, die immer deutlicher einen anhaltenden und einen stabileren Charakter aufweist, gibt ein erster Anstoß zur Erforschung des Fremdsprachenunterrichts aus interkultureller Perspektive. Ausgehend von dem tatsächlichen Bedarf der Schulen und der Gesellschaften, vor allem der westeuropäischen und nordamerikanischen Einwanderungsländer, wie Deutschland, Frankreich, Italien, Österreich, der Schweiz, Spanien, Vereinigten Königreichs, Kanada und der USA, sind die *Förderung des Zweitsprach(en)erwerbs bzw. der Zweitsprachigkeit* und des *bilingualen Unterrichts* durch die Aufwertung von Migrantensprachen zum Hauptziele der Forschung geworden. Tourismus und vor allem internationale Personalentsendung bzw. professionelle Mobilität ins Ausland als Ausdrucksformen des freien Personenverkehrs haben zu weiteren Forschungsrichtungen im Fremdsprachenunterricht geführt, u.zw. *Tertiärspracherwerb* (Fremdsprachen als Pflichtfach) und *frühem Erlernen von Fremdsprachen*.

Der Ausgangspunkt des vorgeschlagenen Mehrsprachenerwerbsmodells ist eine umfangreiche empirische Untersuchung zum Thema „*Die interkulturelle Dimension im Fremdsprachenunterricht*“, die ich im Zeitraum von Januar bis Juni 2009 durchgeführt habe. Meine Analyse beruht auf einer Befragung von 650 Personen, die in einem fremdsprachlichen Lehr- und Lernprozess und in einem sprachlich-kulturell homogenen Unterrichtskontext tätig sind. Die Stichprobe besteht aus 50 Hochschullehrern, 200 Lehrern, 200 Studenten und 200 Schülern und sie ist mittels eines standardisierten Fragebogens befragt worden. Für den vorliegenden Aufsatz sind nur diejenigen von den Schülern gewonnenen

⁸ Das geschieht heutzutage eigentlich nur mit der ungarischen Minderheit, die in manchen Gebieten Rumäniens kompakte Mehrheitsgruppen bildet.

Daten, die für die Mehrsprachigkeit relevant sind, berücksichtigt worden. Die befragten Schüler besuchten die Klassenstufen 9, 10, 11 und 12 eines allgemeinbildenden Lyzeums aus der Stadt Târgoviște. Die Schüler sind der Meinung⁹, dass die *Mehrsprachigkeit* (1,26), die *Interaktionskompetenz* (1,40) und die *interkulturelle Kommunikationskompetenz* (1,72) für ihr soziales Leben und ihren beruflichen Werdegang von sehr großer bzw. großer Wichtigkeit sind und dass diese Kompetenzen in einem sehr hohen bzw. einem hohen Maße im Fremdsprachenunterricht ausgebildet und entwickelt werden können¹⁰. Es ist offensichtlich, dass der Akzent auf Interaktion, im Allgemeinen, und auf die Kommunikation in wenigstens einer Fremdsprache, im Besonderen, fällt. Die Rangliste der ausgewählten Kompetenzen zeigt, dass die 15 bis 19-jährigen Schüler auch dessen bewusst sind, wie diese Kompetenzen ausgebildet und entwickelt werden. Und das wissen sie zum Beispiel für die Mehrsprachigkeit aus ihrer direkten Erfahrung mit verschiedenen Sprachen. Sie beginnen schon im Kindergarten mit dem Erlernen einer Wahlfremdsprache oder in der Grundschule ab Klasse 3 mit der ersten Pflichtfremdsprache, dann setzen sie ab Klasse 5 mit der zweiten Pflicht-fremdsprache und in manchen Fällen sogar mit einer dritten Fremdsprache als Wahlfach ab Klasse 9 fort, und so entwickelt sich schon die Mehrsprachigkeit. Für sie ist es auch sehr klar, dass Interaktion und interkulturelle Kommunikation auch von dem Niveau der Zielsprachkenntnisse abhängig sind. Deswegen ist in dieser Phase das Erlernen wenigstens einer Fremdsprache sehr wichtig.

Die erhaltenen Daten hinsichtlich der von den befragten Schülern erlernten Fremdsprachen entsprechen der Schulsprachenpolitik in Rumänien: Englisch als erste Pflichtfremdsprache belegt den ersten Platz mit 35,97%, dann folgen Französisch mit 29,14% und Deutsch mit 17,45% als zweite Pflichtfremdsprache. Zwei weitere Sprachen sind Italienisch als

⁹ Die Frage lautet: Inwieweit betrachten Sie folgende Kompetenzen sowohl für den Alltag als auch für das berufliche Leben als notwendig? Die Varianten sind: Interaktionskompetenz, Anpassung an andere Kulturen und Mentalitäten, interkulturelle Kommunikationskompetenz, Akzeptanz der sprachlichen und kulturellen Vielfalt, soziokulturelle und linguistische Reflexion, Wahrnehmung/Verständnis der kulturellen Unterschiede. Die Befragten haben die Bedeutung der angegebenen Kompetenzen auf einer fünfstufigen Likertskala von (1) „*sehr wichtig*“ bis (5) „*gar nicht wichtig*“ eingeschätzt.

¹⁰ Das wird auch von den Daten des Berichts der Europäischen Kommission – Die europäischen Bürger und ihre Sprachen 2012 – bestätigt. 58% der befragten Rumänen haben Sprachunterricht in der Schule gehabt, was die am weitesten verbreiteten Art Fremdsprachen zu lernen in Europa ist. (Spezial Eurobarometer 386, 2012:121)

dritte Wahlfremdsprache (12,95%) und Latein (4,49%). Die Prozentsätze beziehen sich auf die Fremdsprache sowohl als Pflichtfach (erste und zweite Fremdsprache) als auch als Wahlfach (dritte Fremdsprache). Die einzige Ausnahme ist das Latein, das Pflichtfach nur für die Fachrichtung Fremdsprachen ist. Vergleicht man die Ergebnisse meiner Umfrage aus dem Jahre 2009 mit denjenigen der Europäischen Kommission aus dem Jahre 2012 bezüglich der Bedeutung der erlernten Sprachen für die Zukunft von Kindern¹¹, kann man leicht feststellen, dass sie fast ähnlich sind. Laut dem letzten Bericht der Europäischen Kommission halten die Rumänen jetzt Deutsch (+6 Prozentpunkte im Vergleich zu den Ergebnissen der Umfrage im Jahre 2005)¹² für wichtiger als Französisch (-7 Prozentpunkte im Vergleich zu den Ergebnissen derselben Umfrage)¹³ für die persönliche und berufliche Entwicklung. Trotz des großen Rückgangs des Französischen und im Vergleich auch zu der 2005 von der Europäischen Kommission durchgeführten Umfrage gibt es keine Veränderung der Liste mit den ersten fünf Fremdsprachen, die sowohl von den Befragten als nützlich bewertet als auch von der Sprachenpolitik im Fremdsprachenunterricht in Rumänien gefördert werden, u.zw. Englisch (68%), Französisch (36%), Deutsch (23%), Italienisch (8%) und Spanisch (4%) (Spezial Eurobarometer 386, 2012:91).

Beherrscht ein Individuum zwei oder mehr Fremdsprachen (L2, L3, ... Ln) neben seiner Muttersprache (L1), wird es als mehrsprachig betrachtet. Die Mehrsprachigkeit und vor allem der Tertiärsprachenunterricht gewannen in den letzten zwei Jahrzehnten, wie schon gezeigt, zunehmend an Bedeutung. Ihr Hauptziel ist eben die Befähigung der Lernenden zur individuellen Mehrsprachigkeit/Plurilingualität. Die Mehrsprachigkeitsdidaktik bietet die Grundlage dafür, indem sie *„als eine Transversaldidaktik die einzelsprachlichen Didaktiken ... miteinander vernetzen und ergänzen soll“*¹⁴. Es geht nicht mehr um einen additiv-

¹¹ Englisch 67%, Deutsch 17%, Französisch 16%, Spanisch 14%, Chinesisch 6%, Italienisch 5%, Russisch 4% (Spezial Eurobarometer 386, 2012:78). Die Rangliste entspricht den Einschätzungen aller Bürger aus der Europäischen Union.

¹² Europäische Kommission (2012): Spezial Eurobarometer – Die europäischen Bürger und ihre Sprachen.

www.ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_386.de.pdf, S. 87.

¹³ Europäische Kommission (2012): Spezial Eurobarometer – Die europäischen Bürger und ihre Sprachen.

www.ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_386.de.pdf, S. 25.

¹⁴ Meißner, F. J. (2004): EuroComprehension und Mehrsprachigkeitsdidaktik. Zwei einander ergänzende Konzepte und ihre Terminologie. In: Rutke, D. / Weber, P. J.

linearen Fremdsprachenunterricht, der die Sprachen nacheinander und isoliert vermittelt, sondern um ein kreatives Lernen und ein synergetisches Erkennen, die auf interlinguaalem Transfer beruhen. Der positive Transfer ist ein kognitiver Prozess des Inferierens, wobei deklaratives und prozedurales Vorwissen das Erlernen weiteren Fremdsprachen erleichtert bzw. verbessert. Die Verwandtschaftsbeziehungen zwischen Sprachen ermöglichen auch ein rezeptives Verstehen der Zielsprache, „ohne diese zuvor formal erlernt zu haben oder ... auf natürliche Weise erworben zu haben“¹⁵. In diesem Falle spricht man von Interkomprehension, die sich nicht auf die produktive Verwendung der Zielsprache, sondern auf die Ausbildung einer rezeptiven Kompetenz bezieht. Das Ziel der Mehrsprachigkeitsdidaktik ist also ein sprachübergreifendes Lernen, das mithilfe des positiven Transfers und/oder der Interkomprehension erfolgt und erst bei der Wahrnehmung von Gemeinsamkeiten und Unterschieden beginnt.

Die Sprachenpolitik des jeweiligen Landes bestimmt natürlich auch den Fremdsprachenunterricht in den Bildungseinrichtungen. Ausgehend von der Schulsprachenpolitik in Rumänien wird im Folgenden ein Modell der umgekehrten Sprachenfolge (Englisch ja, aber nicht als erste Fremdsprache! vgl. Bausch 2010) zum Erwerb der individuellen Mehrsprachigkeit dargestellt. Die Grundlage des Modells ist ein integrativer Lehr- und Lernprozess, der auf Transfer und Interkomprehension beruht. Berücksichtigt sind auch zwei wichtige Faktoren: das empfohlene Mindestunterrichtsvolumen und die Anzahl der Schuljahre, in denen Fremdsprachenunterricht erteilt wird. In Rumänien werden für die erste Pflichtfremdsprache 472 Stunden über einen Zeitraum von acht Jahren und für die zweite Pflichtfremdsprache 354 Stunden über einen Zeitraum von sechs Jahren empfohlen. Die dritte Pflichtfremdsprache gibt es nicht. Die dritte Wahlfremdsprache verfügt über ungefähr 70 Stunden über einen Zeitraum von zwei Jahren.

(Hrsg.): *Mehrsprachigkeit und ihre Didaktik*. St. Augustin: Asgard, S. 105.

¹⁵ Meißner, F.-J. (2008b): Interkomprehensionsunterricht und Qualitätsentwicklung. In: *Babylonia* 1/08, S. 35.

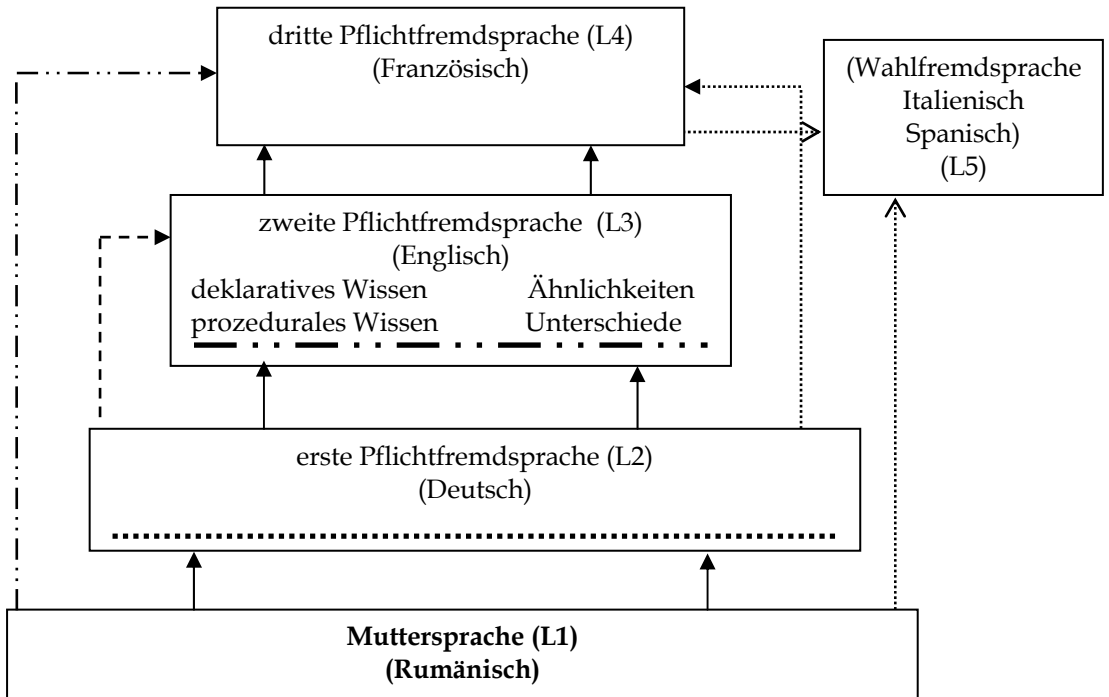


Abb.1: Modell zum Mehrsprachenerwerb mit einer umgekehrten Sprachenfolge

In Anbetracht der Mehrsprachigkeit und vor allem des Tertiärsprachenerwerbs schlage ich ein Modell mit drei Pflichtfremdsprachen und eine Wahlfremdsprache vor. Die Sprachenfolge ist nicht mehr die „klassische“, wobei das Englische als wichtigste Fremdsprache/lingua franca die „Pole-Position“ besetzt.

Die erste Pflichtfremdsprache sollte die deutsche Sprache ab Klasse 2 sein und das aus wenigstens drei Gründen:

- Laut Statistik hat sie in letzter Zeit in Rumänien für persönliche und berufliche Entwicklung an Bedeutung gewonnen.
- Da die Begegnung mit dem Deutschen in Rumänien sehr gering ist und das Rumänische als Muttersprache und das Deutsche keine Ähnlichkeiten aufweisen, herrscht noch das Vorurteil, dass diese Sprache sehr schwer zu erlernen sei. Deswegen wäre es besser ganz früh mit dem Erlernen dieser Sprache zu beginnen, so dass auch der Zeitraum dafür länger ist.
- Beginnt man mit dem Englischen, das als eine *leichtere Sprache* wahrgenommen wird, sinken die Chancen, dass die Lernenden die nötige Motivation zum Erlernen dieser Sprache entwickeln werden.

Das Englische als zweite Pflichtfremdsprache ab Klasse 4 könnte man als eine Brücke zwischen dem Deutschen und dem Französischen betrachten. Mit dieser Sprache kann man den Lehr- und Lernprozess schon auf Transfer von Vorwissen und Fertigkeiten aufbauen, d.h. die Erfahrung mit der ersten Fremdsprache hilft beim Erlernen einer weiteren Fremdsprache. Da Deutsch und Englisch der gleichen Sprachfamilie angehören, sind die Transfermöglichkeiten auch sehr hoch. Beim Französischen als dritte Pflichtfremdsprache ab Klasse 6 spielt nicht nur der positive Transfer vor allem aus dem Englischen, sondern auch die Interkomprehension eine wichtige Rolle, da diese Sprache mit dem Rumänischen verwandt ist. Dieselbe Verwandtschaft gilt auch für die zwei vorgeschlagenen Wahlfremdsprachen: Italienisch bzw. Spanisch. Die unterschiedlich gepunkteten Linien zeigen, inwieweit der Transfer von in einer Sprache Gelerntem auf eine andere möglich ist und ob die Interkomprehension zum Erwerb rezeptiver Sprachkompetenzen führen kann.

5. Fazit

Die individuelle Mehrsprachigkeit ist heutzutage schon ein Normalfall, denn sie ist die Voraussetzung für den interkulturellen Dialog und für ein gelungenes Zusammenwachsen Europas. Die Plurilingualität funktioniert als ein Gesamtsystem, bei dem die einzelnen Sprachen miteinander interagieren und aufeinander einwirken. Die Mehrsprachigkeitsdidaktik, die auf Transfer und Interkomprehension beruht, fokussiert nicht ausschließlich das Sprachwissen, sondern auch die Sprach- und Sprachlernbewusstheit. Ein Gesamtsprachencurriculum und eine Sprachenpolitik, die unterschiedliche Sprachen fördert, sind Voraussetzungen für den modernen Fremdsprachenunterricht, der als Hauptziel die Befähigung der Lernenden zur individuellen Mehrsprachigkeit hat. Die Sprachlernangebote sollten so vielfältig sein, dass Kinder unter mehreren Sprachen wählen können und die Sprachenfolge sollte auch flexibel sein. Man sollte auch berücksichtigen, dass Englisch auf Platz eins der Sprachenfolge offenbar ungünstig auf die Motivation für das Lernen von weiteren Fremdsprachen auswirken kann.

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LEARNING AND CULTURE IN THE STUDY OF MATHEMATICS

COSTEL CHITEȘ*

costelchites@yahoo.com

Abstract: *With this article, we set out to highlight the need for mathematics in the spiritual shaping of contemporary man. We focus on the notions and skills that the child acquires during the first years of primary school, and that will help shape new notions to be encountered later, during adolescence. Truth, Beauty and Goodness can be supported through mathematics classes. The idea in our article is based both in teaching experience and in data extracted via empirical research that was done on two samples of students, selected from amongst the students of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, as well as alumni of the same. Our idea was shaped from processing the data and the surveys that were handed out: facilitating the teaching of mathematics can be supported by development of rational thought and culture in this field. Teaching mathematics can thus gain popularity and easier accessibility, through the conceiving of a large scale, flexible strategy, both cross curricular and across curricula. In this way we support the idea that creating an adequate culture for students of this field of study is meant to stimulate their epistemic curiosity towards the experiencing and studying of one of the oldest and most complex sciences.*

Keywords: *Learning, study, culture, history of science, mathematical thinking.*

The way in which one can perceive, learn, research and apply mathematical knowledge and skills has puzzled may a cultural figure's mind, ever since the dawn of time.

Such intellectual endeavours have troubled the minds of many past generations, and developing mathematical learning skills in children and adolescents is still, today, a permanent source of preoccupation and research. Since learning is a life-long activity, this also addresses adults.

* Lecturer PhD., *The Faculty of Educational Sciences, Dimitrie Cantemir Christian University.*

We have focused on two target groups: a) current students of the Science Faculty of "Dimitrie Cantemir" University; b) our alumni that are currently engaged in teaching within an official institution.

Within the second group, we have given both the students themselves, as well as the parents of the children they teach, standardized survey questionnaires.

80% of the interviewed students or alumni have stated that mathematics can be supported by developing reason and culture. Teachers of mathematics have noted their own students' joy, when they were presented with ingenious new way of tackling mathematical examples, the history behind some famous examples, or interesting details about the way important mathematicians were educated (Pythagoras, Euclid, Eratosthenes, Archimedes, Fibonacci, Gauss, etc.).

To harmonize taught knowledge, we will have to look into redeeming the souls of today's teenagers. We refer to the exemplary approaches of Pythagoras and Socrates, in ancient times.

It is thus necessary to read and read again the masterpieces of the great scholars, to study thoroughly the writings of the ancients, and to examine the sacred texts. These studies fill us with energy and support us on our own way, the path of ascendance that we choose to follow. "The works of wisdom excel the works of fortitude", through their meaningfulness, length and endurance.¹

There can be seen a wealth of works published in reputable publishing houses, works that create the possibility for us to become familiar with major writings of the past. The explanation for this lies in the fact that our current society carries the need to return to the noble, truth-generating idea: those of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. In other words: Science, Aesthetics and Ethics.

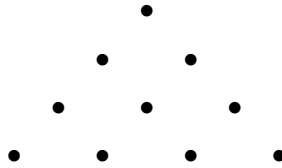
In Ancient Times, in the Greek and Latin world, it was considered that a well-proportioned thing was a thing of beauty. Within the meaning of Beauty, one could find, alongside proportion, colour and a pleasant attitude.

The attempt of defining the world as an integral unity, governed by a unique law, uniting cosmology, mathematics, natural science and aesthetics was first carried out by Pythagoras² (580-495 B.C.). Pythagoras

¹ Fr. Bacon, *Wisdom of the Ancients*, chapter XI, Bucharest, Paideia, 2003, p.40.

² Mario Livio, *Este Dumnezeu mathematician? (Is God a Mathematician?)*, Bucharest, Humanitas Publishing House, 2017, p.25-52.

and his disciples considered that the principle of all things is the number, thus giving an aesthetically mathematical view of the Universe. *Tetraktys* was the symbolical figure that the Pythagoreans swore upon, a figure that completely condensed the reducibility of arithmetic into geometry. The number four becomes synonymous with power, justice and stability.



By adding the dots we get $1+2+3+4=10$, and with these ten digits, one can express every number there is.

In the *Timaios* dialogue, one can find the same mathematical view of the world given to us by Plato³ (427-347 B.C.). In his Academy, Platonists will study and revere regular polyhedrons as ideal models. It is considered that Euclid's *Elements*, a famous synthesis of mathematics (300 B.C.), had had the sole purpose of proving that the five regular polyhedrons exist. The Golden Ratio is, later, taken up by Leonardo da Vinci, Pietro della Francesca, Luca Pacioli, A. Dürer, during the Renaissance. The Golden Ratio lies at the heart of many architectural and pictorial works of art, being, all the while, the principle of organic growth. It was admired for its potential infinite repeatability.

Vitruvius's (sec I.1.Hr.) recommendations regarding the creation of an optimal architectural ratio will be pivotal, for the Middle Age, as well as for the Renaissance.

It must be mentioned that, in the case of the human body, Beauty is expressed through spiritual qualities as well, and also those of the character, which can be perceived rather with the mind's eye. The cultivation of real virtue was the advice of Plato (Symposium 211 e). To Plato, the body is a dark cave that keeps the spirit in chains. Plato argued that perception based on senses needs to be replaced with an intellectual, philosophical perception.

For his reason, we cite the contemporary attempts at reconciling physics with theology, as well as the in-depth study of universal culture in all the famed colleges of the world. Students are given an impressive bibliography to read, which in turn creates a propensity for establishing

³ *Ibidem*, p. 40

connections across different fields of science, as well as new scientific, technical and artistic breakthroughs. The great cultural personalities were encyclopaedists. The rapid development of science of these last centuries has made the covering of this vast and complex system of knowledge by one person alone, impossible, for which reason specialization in one particular field became necessary.

Current research has proven that no act of creation can be understood without it being placed in a larger historical and cultural context. Which is why the ideal of erudition, of establishing an educational chain, must be passed on to the following generations. The true meaning of solitary work is the work table, the existential desk of the intellectual person. Sitting at his work table, every morning, the intellectual addresses the god of reading with this prayer: "Give to us our daily hunger".⁴

Many a cultural figure have firstly studied science, and only then art. We will cite a remarkable figure, to then go on and present you with an elegant example he has created. Father Pavel Florensky (1882-1937) was an original and bold Russian intellectual and a cultural figure that excelled in: mathematics, physics, theology, history of religions. He was also a poet, and a man knowledgeable about arts, as well as a patron of them. He graduated from the Faculty of Mathematics, within the Moscow University, simultaneously attending classes at the History and Philology Faculty. Later, he went to the Moscow Academy of Theology. He writes important works, such as "The Pillar and Ground of Truth: An Essay in Orthodox Theodicy in Twelve Letters", (1914). In this, he describes a highly original view on the genesis of culture. This work has led to the founding of the illustrious Russian club: Lusitania. To this circle belonged many a famed name, such as: D.Egorov, N.Luzin, P.Alexandrov, P.Urison, V. Stepanov, etc. This led to Moscow becoming one of the world's "mathematical capitals" of the world, in the the 1930's.

The elegant example we wished to convey is presented by P.Florenski in his 1919 work, published posthumously in 1967, and later translated into French in 1972⁵: „La perspective inversée, l’iconostase et autreécrits sur l’art“. Florenski makes use of two new mathematical propositions of his time: 1) a proposition from G.Cantor theory which stated that between

⁴ Gaston Bachelard, *Dialectica spiritului științific modern (Dialectics of the Modern Spirit)*, vol. I, Bucharest, Scientific and Encyclopedic Publishing House, 1986, p.31.

⁵ P.Florensky, „*La perspective inversée, l’iconostase et autreécrits sur l’art*, Paris, Allia, 2013, p.107.

a plane and space there is a bijective correspondence, meaning they have the same cardinality; 2) a proposition of topology which states that plane and space are not topologically equivalent, since they are Euclidean spaces of different dimensions (respectively two and three).

For this reason, any representation of space must be a plane, it must bear the sacrifice of shape, so that naturalism becomes a definitive impossibility. Abstract art will gain legitimacy.

Developing calculus algorithms, introducing children to the computer at an early age, synthesizing and developing science and current technology, these must lead to a continuous rearranging of the contents of educational syllabi, of teaching methods, which would allow for an approach that is better adapted to tomorrow's youths. Thus, experimental mathematics has gained newfound importance, with a special part being played by intuition and experiment. A holistic approach should keep its eyes set on directly achieving large scale depiction, without the need for previous analysis.

In view of a serious preparation, there is emphasis on elements of theory of combinations, on a path that leads to the continuous studying of daily phenomena, from the experimental view, to the holistic view, and the back to the view that is based on analysis and synthesis. In-between these different views, there must be a balance, for it to lead not only to a better understanding of the Universe, but also of oneself.

In the design of the Mathematics and Sciences curriculum, room must be found or created for the introduction of themes that help students adapt better to the demands and skills that will be demanded to them over the following years.

To correctly understand the introduction of logical games, of new kinds of exercises, continuous study is required from the adults. A very good teacher constantly keeps training, to be able to meet the requests of the students/pupils, to better be able to guide their study effectively.

I shall provide an example of said matter. The property of interchangeability that is innate to the multiplying of natural numbers is accepted by students, as early as primary school, by verifying it through multiple examples.

Scientifically, however, regardless of how many examples we go through, interchangeability remains unproven (the number of attempts being finite, whereas the quantity of natural numbers is infinite). It is necessary to be acquainted with the axiomatic of G. Peano (1891), which also demonstrates the property of interchangeability. The axiomatic

method trains our habituation to reason in an inferring manner, and is as important in any other field of activity we are to choose.

Consider a domino piece in vertical position.

•	•
•	•
•	•

 The child

discovers that 3 times 2 is 6 (since there are three rows, each containing two dots).

Let us rotate the domino piece into horizontal position

•	•	•
•	•	•

.

We have the same amount of dots $2 \cdot 3 = 6$ (there being three columns, with two dots each).

The child thus infers that $2 \cdot 3 = 3 \cdot 2$, meaning he verifies the property of interchangeability belonging to the multiplication of natural numbers. It is worthwhile to note the arithmetical and geometrical nature of the reasoning behind this, in a manner that is analogue to that of the ancients.

As an adolescent he will come across real numbers (or complex numbers, or numbers that are part of a commutative ring) that will replace the dots on the domino pieces. These mathematical objects will be called arrays.

Thus $\begin{bmatrix} a_{11} & a_{12} \\ a_{21} & a_{22} \\ a_{31} & a_{32} \end{bmatrix} \in M_{3 \times 2}(\square)$ or $\begin{bmatrix} a_{11} & a_{21} & a_{31} \\ a_{12} & a_{22} & a_{32} \end{bmatrix} \in M_{2 \times 3}(\square)$. With these new

objects, they will define the algebraic operations of multiplying arrays, multiplying by scalars, and they will discover two vector spaces that are isomorphic, where isomorphism $f : M_{3 \times 2}(\square) \rightarrow M_{2 \times 3}(\square)$, $f(A) = A^T$.

The operation of transposing is nothing more than the rotating of the domino piece, which the student will have been practicing ever since he or she was a child.

The wealth of examples is infinite, and it is, first and foremost, necessary that we possess it, that we may, in turn, pass it on to our disciples. It is sufficient to promote, through books such as this, this way of understanding the role of mathematics in the spiritual development of our disciples.

Conclusions

a) Being familiar with the biography of famous mathematicians open up a new cultural horizon into their day and age, into the way in which they went about solving the mathematical examples they came across, or into their contribution to other examples, that would later be solved by their followers. Students would thus have real models to follow, which would develop several qualities: earnestness about study, tenacity, virtue, moderation, thirst for truth, righteousness, the joy of discovery, etc.

b) The need for mathematics is on the rise, if we are to relate to the growth of science and technology. The number of mathematics classes is insufficient, for all ages. In view of this, we support a very thorough training of teachers and mentors, since, in the first few years of school, children also benefit from their family's support.

c) It is necessary that we introduce classes and seminars dedicated entirely to the study of good practices, and that they be organized by the University, primarily for the benefit of the parents (in France, in the 1970s, there was published a book entitled "Modern Mathematics for the Recycling of Parents", by A. Kaufmann and G. Cullman).

d) The creation of cross-curricular synthesis works, addressed to students. Science and art have not developed separately, for which reason they need to be presented as such.

e) Developing a confidence in study within youths, through working on examples, putting together portfolios, extra reading, this can lay the foundation for successful partaking in school contests, as well as a solid basis for the individual's development into adulthood. What is required is rich bibliographical resources, skillfully picked, playing to the disciple's level and cultural propensity. This leads to a positive use of the internet. It is in this manner that the late academic Solomon Marcus stated that the internet is now playing a special and vital role, through its use, surely, in the said positive way.

It is also the role of the mentor to determine the disciple to use it for his or her cultural shaping.

f) The school must support acquiring and reading books. Let us not forget that a person can be judged by the worth of the books kept within his or her personal library.

g) Current teachers, that have graduated the "Dimitrie Cantemir" Faculty of Educational Sciences, enjoy a reputable status. First of all through the high grades they receive, sitting the tenure examination, and second through the way they are perceived by the students and their parents. Often, with their own students, they make use of teaching methods, knowledge and mathematical skills that they have acquired during college. What is truly essential is that they have acquired both the desire and the taste for the study of mathematics.

h) Students whose teachers had actively participated in the yearly student Symposiums held by the Faculty of Educational Sciences, by submitting papers, have got very good results in contests of mathematics. Teachers that chose mathematics as the field of study in which to write their Bachelor's Degree paper have got very good results with their own students.

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THE EFFECTS OF QUIZZES ON HOMEWORK

OZLEM SAYAR*,

ozlemsayar@erciyes.edu.tr

YUSUF SAYAR**

yusufsayar0@hotmail.com

Abstract: *Students mostly have difficulty in doing homework because they cannot accept it psychologically since they sometimes regard homework as an unnecessary burden or as a side-effect of class. When they do not do their homework, the course becomes unproductive and one-sided because the instructor becomes the only one struggling for the course. In this respect, it also affects the productivity of the lecturer. As a lecturer, I have found a solution for this problem by taking quizzes in every course. This research tries to analyze the effects of quizzes on students' psychology and homework completion.*

Keywords: *Quiz, homework, student, class, motivation.*

Introduction

Students are assigned many different kinds of homework through the years of their education. Lyn Corno (2000) implies that homework is a tradition of schools.¹ Homework can be regarded as an indispensable part of being student; however, students sometimes do not consider it as a necessity and they frequently neglect their responsibility to do it. Jianzhong Xu (2008) also claims that as students spend more years at school, they gradually move away from the idea of doing homework.² So,

* Research Assistant, Department of English Language and Literature, Faculty of Letters, Erciyes University, Kayseri/Turkey

** Postgraduate Student, Department of Political Science and Public Administration, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Erciyes University, Kayseri/Turkey

¹ Corno, L., (2000), Looking At Homework Differently. *The Elementary School Journal*, 100(5), 529-548. Retrieved October 10, 2014, from JSTOR.

² Xu, J., (2008), Models of Secondary School Students' Interest in Homework: A Multilevel Analysis. *American Educational Research Journal*, 45(4), 1180-1205. Retrieved October 10, 2014, from JSTOR.

their eagerness in completing their homework decreases year by year and it creates some essential problems for lecturer, students and the productivity of the course. Generally, lecturers want to see well-prepared and hardworking students in classes; however, when the students are not prepared or their homework is incomplete, the motive in the class notably declines. In this case, pop-quiz can be an effective factor to make students do homework and get prepared before the class because they would feel obliged to study more to pass the quizzes and to get high points.

This issue can be found in Andrew August's work (2000) as following:

Many teachers, across disciplines and at various levels, face the problem of encouraging students to do the assigned readings, preferably at the appropriate time in the semester. In classes dependent on discussion of readings, this issue becomes even more important. If students have not done the reading, classes become boring, depressing and ineffective or discussions must range far beyond the assigned readings in order to engage unprepared students (p. 343).

As it is obviously stated in this quotation, when the students are not prepared, the lecturer also loses his motivation. Indeed, some of the lecturers give homework to students to make them read the text before attending the class and have an idea about the content of the class. Sometimes, the only way to make students study for the next course is to give homework about the subject of it. Corno (1996) again claims that some teachers use homework to get the students ready for the course, some give it to force them to repeat what they learnt after the class, some assign them to reduce the time that spent in front of the television, and others do it even because the parents of the students have wanted so.³

In their research, Sawyer, Nelson, Jayanthi, Bursuck and Epstein (1996) assert that "homework serves a variety of purposes such as providing skill practice for students, aiding students in preparing for tests and subsequent units of study, and indicating student mastery of subject matter to teachers" (pp. 82-3). According to this approach, homework has a variety of benefits for students, such as helping them to improve their learning skills in their studies and courses. However, the question is how to make students complete their homework. Teachers try some ways; for

³ Corno, L., (1996), Homework Is a Complicated Thing. *Educational Researcher*, 25(8), 27-30. Retrieved October 10, 2014, from JSTOR.

example, they punish the ones who do not do their homework by giving more to do. However, this can sometimes create negative results such as discouraging and making them enthusiastic for that course. So, the approach to the students that are irresponsible in doing homework is quite important because as a result of wrong strategies, the teachers would become a threat for the students, which also creates difficulty for them in being successful in those teachers' courses.⁴

Meanwhile, there are several kinds of the purpose of giving homework. Giving homework to prepare the students for the upcoming class or to repeat the previous course or to keep them busy at home are some of commonly known purposes, but there are some others, too. Harris Cooper, JorgianneCivey Robinson and Erika A. Patall (2006) describe these other purposes:

Homework has other purposes in addition to enhancing instruction. It can be used to (a) establish communication between parent and child (Acock& Demo, 1994; Balli, Demo, &Wedman, 1998; Epstein, Simon, & Salinas, 1997; Gonzilez, Andrade, Civil, & Moll, 2001; Scott-Jones, 1995; Van Voorhis, 2003); (b) fulfill directives from school administrators (Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, &Burow, 1995); and (c) punish students (Epstein & Van Voorhis, 2001; Xu &Comrno, 1998). To this list might be added the public relations objective of simply informing parents about what is going on in school (Coleman, Hoffer, & Kilgore, 1982; Corno, 1996; Rutter, Maughan, Mortimore, &Ouston, 1979). (p. 2)

In this quotation, the reality that is proven is that some lecturers assign homework for other reasons rather than the student-related ones such as as a tool to attract the attention of parents to school. So, homework serves not only to students but also to their parents.

Undoubtedly, homework is both necessary and useful for students. But, because it is given as a duty and because it is mostly compulsory, students cannot see its benefits because they regard it as a burden. In her essay, Pamela M. Coutts (2004) touches on this subject and says "these positive outcomes of homework frequently cited by parents (such as motivational, academic, and life skill benefits) are less recognized by

⁴ Gamble, H., (1982), Students, Grades, and Informed Consent. *IRB: Ethics and HumanResearch*, 4(5), 7-10. Retrieved October 10, 2014, from JSTOR.

children” (p. 182). Because the students consider homework as an obligation and enforcement, they become blind to the positive effects of it. Though they are not aware of the fact; indeed, homework influences them in a positive way. To illustrate, Janine Bempechat (2004) writes:

The purpose of this article is to argue that, as a pedagogical practice, homework plays a critical, long-term role in the development of children's achievement motivation. More specifically, homework assignments provide children with the time and experience they need to develop beliefs about achievement and study habits that are helpful for learning, including the value of effort and the ability to cope with mistakes and difficulty. (p. 189-90)

Bempechat implies that the effects of homework begin in the childhood and last long. It influences their motivation, teaches how to control time and how to reach to success. What is more, by doing homework, students can see the mistakes they do and the difficulties on their path, so that they can learn how to handle them. Moreover, the teachers are also aware of the advantages of homework according to Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey (2008). They claim that “The majority of teachers reported that they used homework to “improve skills in the classroom and for improving life skills beyond high school” (30), especially in establishing effective work habits about assuming responsibility” (p. 40). According to the teachers, homework serves not only to improve the skills of students at school, but also to help them in life outside the school by engraining the responsibility feeling in the students.

Additionally, Eunsook Hong, Roberta M. Milgram and Lonnie L. Rowell (2004) have a different perspective on homework:

Teachers assign homework, parents provide the environment in which it is done, and students—each with a unique profile of motivation and preference for learning—do the homework. It is a challenge for everyone involved to cooperate, share information about children's homework motivation and preferences, and develop strategies to be used at school and at home to attain a better match between what the child likes to do and has to do when learning. (p. 197)

These researchers think that homework is like a collaborative job. Teacher gives homework and says what to do, parents arrange the suitable place and environment, and student accomplishes what he must do. This part implies that being successful in doing homework does not depend only on the student. The teacher and the family should also take part in it and affect the student either by helping or by eliminating difficulties for him.

The aim of this research is to analyze whether students do homework completely and carefully and come to class prepared when they have a quiz on that homework or not. Indeed, the quiz can be a force for them to complete their homework. In general, the first grade students in English Language and Literature Department in Erciyes University were not used to do their homework regularly and they used to come to class unprepared. As a lecturer, I could not stand this situation because the course started to be unproductive and boring for both me and my students. So, as a solution, I started to take quizzes in the end of every course to enable students to study and to read the assigned homework before the class. This research was done in the end of the semester with students to find out how the quizzes affected their homework completion. So, as a result, the assumption that was mentioned above was proven to be true according to the results of survey done with my students.

In their research article, Albert H. Frakes and Michael F. Foran (1978) write: "The evaluative function of quizzes can be viewed in two ways: (1) as tools to be used like homework problems to communicate areas of strengths and weaknesses to the students, and (2) as measures of achievement of course objectives that can be used in grading" (p. 151). They describe the ways that quizzes can be seen. In this research, I applied both of these ways both to see the weakness of students and to use the quiz scores as their grades. Additionally, Bruce A. Baldwin (1980) says in his essay: "Overall, the paper suggests that giving quizzes before lectures or discussion results in (1) more productive use of class time, and (2) more learning" (p. 664). This quotation shows that when the students have quizzes, they pay more attention to their courses, so that the course become more productive and they learn better thanks to their earlier preparation for the quiz.

As another example, Gilbert Smith (1972) writes about the issue that how quizzes must be:

These frequent quizzes, commonly referred to in our profession as "pop-quizzes," should of course encourage the

student to prepare the material carefully. Yet they should also serve as a learning exercise in themselves, and they should help the student to prepare for the longer tests and the final examination. Most of all, if the course is designed to train the student in the use of the target language, the quizzes should test the student on the use of that language (p. 487).

In his article, Smith says that quizzes should contribute to the students in learning the subjects and preparing them to the exams in addition to training them in the target language. If the quizzes help students in these aspects, the homework problem can be solved much more easily because students can gain the responsibility by studying for the quizzes so that they will do their homework, too.

Gary R. McKenzie (1972) mentions about the effects of the quizzes:

Four possible explanations exist for these effects: 1) inference quizzes may have increased attention to stated interest group-relevant information; 2) inference treatment questions might teach subjects answers to final inference test questions directly; 3) inference quizzes might reinforce a particular kind of mental processing involving logical manipulation of concepts from history; 4) inference quizzes might reinforce a general form of mental processing, such as abstract logic, which is not related in any way to content (p. 238).

He does a survey about the quizzes and gets the conclusion. Then, he categorizes the effects of quizzes in four categories that are written above. From these results, one can understand that quizzes help students to have more information, to pay more attention, to be more successful in exams and they manipulate them to study more. Similarly to this research, Suzanne R. Slusser and Rebecca J. Erickson (2006) imply in their paper that the quizzes have positive effects on students' both academic and social life⁵. Moreover, Deanna L Nelson (2008) also states in her research paper that thanks to the frequent quizzes that she took in the courses, the

⁵ Slusser, S., & Erickson, R., (2006), Group Quizzes: An Extension Of The Collaborative Learning Process. *Teaching Sociology*, 34(3), 249-262. Retrieved October 10, 2014, from JSTOR.

students became more successful in memorizing the vocabularies⁶. Lastly, as a support to my research, in their article, Buffy Sallee and Neil Rigler (2008) shed a light on this issue by saying that the students—who have a quiz on the next day—study more and do their homework completely to be ready and prepared for the quiz.⁷

Methodology

The topic of this research is homework completion. The research problem is that students do not do the assigned reading or writing homework before the class. The purpose statement of this study is to investigate the effects of quizzes on students' homework completion and preparation for the class. The research question is whether the quizzes encourage students to complete their homework or not.

In my class, because students did not do their homework regularly, I decided to take quizzes every course as a force for them to do their homework. In the beginning, it was like burden for them because they were supposed to study for the quizzes in addition to do their reading homework before coming to class. But, as they got used to it, they started to see the positive sides of the quizzes and in the end of the semester, they thanked to me by confessing that after I started to take quizzes, they started to study and do their homework more carefully so that they could understand the course better. To see how they feel and think about the quizzes, I designed a survey and gave them to reply.

In this research, I applied the qualitative method because I wanted to know my student's feelings, thought and approaches to the quiz's effects on their homework completion. I also wondered about what they think about homework and to what extent the quizzes affect their reading homework completion. In the end of this research, I got all answers to my questions.

Participants. Participants were from English Language and Literature Department in Erciyes University. They were first grade students and their ages are 19-22. In total, there were 26 students included in this

⁶ Nelson, D., (2008), A Context-Based Strategy for Teaching Vocabulary. *The English Journal*, 97(4), 33-37. Retrieved October 10, 2014, from JSTOR.

⁷ Sallee, B, & Rigler, N., (2008), Doing Our Homework on Homework: How Does Homework Help? *The English Journal*, 98(2), 46-51. Retrieved October 10, 2014, from JSTOR.

research; 3 of them were male and the rest were female. The setting was Erciyes University, English Language and Literature Department.

Data Collection and Procedure. Data collection was done with a survey given to the students. This survey was self-administered because I prepared it and gave it to my students. It was an open ended question survey so that I could explore more reasons behind the reality with the help of my students' comments that they gave as reply to the survey questions. Because I prepared the survey myself, to validate it, I asked 8 colleagues to analyze my survey and I got positive responses, approval and support from all of them.

Instruments. The survey and the class observations were the instruments of this study. While preparing the survey, I got help from [surveymonkey.com](https://www.surveymonkey.com).

Survey questions. The first question was: How do you feel about doing homework? The second one was: What do you think about quizzes? The third was: How do the quizzes affect your homework completion? And in the last question, I wanted them to give the answer as percentage, it was a self-perception and self-identification question: To what extent (percentage) do the quizzes affect your homework completion? Indeed, they were all self-reported questions. Because it is a qualitative design research, I wanted the students to express themselves freely as much as they could. Here are the examples to the questions: For example, to the first question, one of the students wrote: "It is – homework– the duty which we are responsible for the each lesson. It helps us to understand the lesson, the topic of the lesson and makes us get prepared for the lesson." As an answer for the second one, another student wrote. "Thanks to quizzes, I can measure myself. Before the exams I can see my lackings (sides) and develop myself." As the last example, to the third question, the answer of one of the students is that: "There are some contributions of quizzes on my homework. For example, I study very well because of quizzes; but, if there aren't quizzes, I cannot study well and did my homework not completely."

Results and Discussion

The collected data from the students were analyzed and interpreted by me after I had done my survey. According to the answers of the

students to the questions, my prediction claimed before becomes true. First of all, in general, the students in this research do not like homework because they say it takes time of them after school and they cannot spend time for themselves. However, they are also aware of the importance of it. They define it either as a repetition after school, or as preparation before the course. The second question is about the quiz and their feeling about it. Students say that quizzes sometimes make them nervous and stressful because they affect their final grades. However, taking quizzes is also seen as a way to see their lacking sides in the courses before the final exam so that they can study and get prepared for the finals with full knowledge.

The third question is the core question of the survey because it is directly related to my thesis. It asks about the effects of quizzes on their homework completion and most of the students gave positive answers to it. They think that when they have quizzes, they study more and do their homework much more carefully. So that, when they come to class, they understand the subject better because they are prepared. They say that because they have quizzes they do their reading assignments regularly and completely, otherwise they would not. What is more, according to my own observations in the class, I also witnessed the increase in the success and participation of my students. Before I took quizzes, they were not doing their homework completely and they were coming class unprepared. Because they were unprepared, they would not participate; what is more, they did not understand the subjects fully because as a result of being unprepared, they were not familiar with the things that I was mentioning about. But, after taking quizzes, though they complained about it to me in the first weeks, I saw the improvement in their participation and success in replying my questions in class. Moreover, they gained confidence because they knew the subjects before the class so they became eager to attend to my course.

The fourth question was about the self-perception of students in the light of the third question. I wanted them to give percentages to the – positive – effect of quizzes on their homework completion. Most of them gave between %75-%100, and just one of them gave between %0-%50. These results show that they are also aware of the positive effects of quizzes, and the fact that their improvement in the course and homework completion were achieved thanks to quizzes.

Limitations of the study. There were some limitations in this study, too. First of all, time was limited because it was just a semester, which means 4 months. Secondly, this survey was prepared by me because I could not find any survey exactly related to my topic on the internet, so although I asked 8 of my colleagues from different universities, the validity and the reliability of my survey is questionable because I am not an expert on preparing it. Thirdly, the number of participants was not many; there were just 26 students in my class; so, to have healthier results, I believe the participants must be at least 50. Moreover, the objectivity is another big issue as a limitation. Because I am their lecturer, the students may be afraid that if they wrote something negative about the quizzes I do, I would get offended and give low marks as a result. So, they may not behave so objectively in the survey.

Conclusion

Consequently, I understand that I am right in my claim because the results and comments of the students prove and support it. Though students think homework is a burden for them, they are also aware of that homework is an essential element in school because it helps them in the courses. Additionally, they say that when they have quizzes, they do their homework more carefully so that they have full knowledge about the plots before coming to class, so taking quiz can be regarded as a positive force for them to do their homework completely and regularly even though they do not like both homework and quizzes. Consequently, although quizzes make students nervous and stressful, it is useful in studying carefully and a force them to do their homework completely before the class. Thanks to the quizzes, students learn their lacking information before the exams, they get well prepared before the class and they understand the subjects better; thus, the course turns out to be a productive one instead of a burden for both them and their lecturer.

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DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE IN STUDENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS MAJORING IN AGRARIAN SCIENCES

ROZHKOV YURII*

yuriev694@gmail.com

Abstract: *This article deals with a problem of teachers' professional competence. It analyzes such terms as "competence" and "expertise". According to the results of analysis author makes a conclusion that the "expertise" is a derived concept from "competence" and means the scope of activity in which a person uses its knowledge. Professional training in higher educational institutions is defined by researchers as an organized activity of teaching staff directed on the development in students the system of scientific and professional skills, moral standards and common cultural qualities foreseen by education acquired by a particular student. Scientific work proves that the formation of the future specialists majoring in agrarian sciences depends on the development of meaningful personal qualities, acquiring professional knowledge and skills, which are necessary for completing professional tasks. In this regard the educational and training process according to humanistic concepts at agrarian schools acquires a special significance so as the professional activity of specialists majoring in agrarian sciences left with no humanistic influences may become a disaster for society.*

Keywords: *agroindustrial complex, competency, professionalism, agrarian education, professional education.*

Introduction

Modern society requires educated professionals. Special attention is focused on training agrarians so as the further development of civilization is impossible without agricultural manufacturing which is the basis for humanity existence. Development of the future specialist of agroindustrial complex depends on formation of important for personality qualities, acquiring scientific, professionally oriented knowledge and skills necessary for accomplishing professional duties. In

* Lecturer at National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine

this regard special attention is focused on orientation of educational process of agrarian educational institution onto humanistic principles, so as education without humanism, in its basis, is dangerous for society.

Process of transferring to market forms of management, creating mixed economy and reappraisal of values in religious sphere requires respective staff supply and significant changes in training of future agrarians. Thus training of competitive graduates of higher agrarian educational institutions is the urgent problem of education in Ukraine.

The aim of research is to determine and characterize problems of development professional competence in students of agrarian schools, to analyze the terms competency and competence, represent the difference between them.

The analysis of scientific literature

The problem of development of professional competence in students of higher educational institutions majoring in agrarian sciences is enlightened in the works of S. A. Isaienko, O. I. Shcherbakova. Among scientists, who researched the issue of professional competence, one can emphasize R. Burns, T. H. Brazhe, A. K. Markova, V. H. Leontiev.

Development of professional competence in students of higher educational institutions majoring in agrarian sciences

Reformation of higher agrarian education will be useful for changing the status of agriculturist, its professional functions and duties. The requirements for qualification and professional competence will also be changing. Thus such phenomena as “competence of specialist” and “professional competence” should be studied.

Analysis of scientific studies gives us the possibility to make a conclusion that there are no clear definitions of the terms mentioned above. Actually in order to understand and percept the using of terms mentioned above it is necessary to analyze terms which determine the ability of personality to participate in labor activity. Particularly we are talking about terms like “professionalism”, and “qualification”. The term “professionalism” means a particular quality of specialist who has the high level of skills necessary for accomplishing specialist’s professional duties, has the ability to implement scientific and theoretic knowledge on practice which guarantees the ability to effectively solve professional tasks in future. That is why professionalism is a qualitative

feature of specialist which connects an effective professional activity with personal qualities of specialist.

Professional training of future agriculturists is implemented during educational process at agrarian school. Famous Ukrainian educator S. U. Goncharenko determines educational process as a system of organization of educational activity, which basis lies in the unity and connection between instruction and education. The process mentioned above is provided by curricula, and plans for educational work of respective educational institutions including all kinds of compulsive classes (lectures, seminars, laboratory classes, educational practice and externship). Educational process in every educational institution has its specific peculiarities and is organized according to its type, profile, form of education (part-time, full-time, evening-time etc.)¹.

Professional training of future agriculturists includes both instruction and education. According to the statements of many researchers the specificity of education in educational institution lies in the fact that this process is not activated by individual itself but is proposed to the student from the outside. Education as the way of external influence on personality is realized, by majority of students, as unacceptable and humiliating. New moral standards and spiritual principles, values appear in students only in the process of conviction and voluntary perception. Professional training in higher educational institutions is determined by scientists as specifically organized activity of teaching staff of entire institution directed onto development in students the system of scientific and special knowledge, skills, worldview convictions, moral standards and common cultural qualities, provided by education which student would have to acquire.

Taking into account the fact that professional training is multidimensional and multifunctional phenomenon, the modern scientists determine professional training as: system, complex of influences and interactions, values, valuable spheres, professional activities of personality. In a general social and pedagogical sense professional training is the process of acquiring scientific bases and technologies, special skills necessary for future profession, formation of psychological moral qualities of personality important for the work in particular sphere of human activity ².

¹ Goncharenko, S., *Ukrainian pedagogical vocabulary*, Kyiv: Lybid, 1997, p.345.

² *New definition dictionary of Ukrainian language in 4 volumes*, K.: Akonit, 2, 1999, p.610.

Professional training of future agriculturists is an integral constituent in the system of Ukrainian higher education. Logical alliance of instruction and education in the process of professional training and professional establishing is a key to renewing of worldview, moral and spiritual values of students. Professional training of future agriculturists is caused by numerous subjective and objective factors, among them results of character education in family, school where the fundamentals of human's personality, future professional direction and behavior are formed.

It should be mentioned that professional training of future agriculturists is directed onto development of professionalism, wide worldview, creativity, responsibility and self-development. Achievement of the defined goal is possible only in case of complex approach and engaging teaching staff, administration, and students' government bodies into educational process.

Educational and instructional activities of agrarian school tightly interact and also improve professional training of future specialists of agroindustrial complex of the country. Professional training provides the development of professional competence which consists of: scientific worldview, legal and economic literacy, national self-awareness, patriotism, social activity, high morality and spirituality, general culture which bases on the achievements of Ukrainian and world culture.

It should be mentioned that the difference between competent and qualified specialist lies in the fact that the first not just owns the particular level of scientific knowledge and skills, competent specialist is a specialist who is beyond the scope of his\her specialty.

At the same time the studying of philosophic, economic, pedagogical and other sources shows the availability of different approaches to the understanding of content of the term "competence". That is why we should take main thoughts of researchers into consideration and build up our own understanding of this term. First of all the content of the given term should be found in the vocabularies. Thus in "Vocabulary of foreign languages and proverbs", "New definition dictionary of Ukrainian language" and others we find that competent (latin *competenes* – appropriate, respective from "competo" – correspond, match) is a person who has enough knowledge, skills, knows his subject well³; a person who according to its knowledge is allowed to do something, decide something;

³ *Great definition dictionary of Russian language*, Saint-Petersberg: Norint, 1998, p.525.

a person who has authority in particular branch⁴; a person who owns some kind of information.

In modern scientific literature one may find paronymous term “competency” – (latin *competentia* – the one who belongs to the law, from *competere* – achieve, tend, correspond) which is explained as a circle of seals of any organization, enterprise or person; circle of questions where a given person has particular authorities, knowledge, experience⁵.

Analysis of the mentioned scientific sources allows us to make a conclusion that competency is a derived concept from competence and means the sphere where a human may use his or her knowledge and skills. At the same time competence is a semantically primary category and represents knowledge, skills and experience combination of which accomplishes the so-called “mental equipment” of the person.

For better understanding of our vision of difference between two concepts “competency” and “competence” you may look at the table.

Table

Terms	Meaning (key word)	Where may be found	Determination
Competency	Terms of influence	Legal document (diploma, order, statute etc)	According to the filled vacancy and occupation
Competence	ability	Knowledge, skills experience, ways of activity	At work

Having analyzed psychological and pedagogical literature one may say that professional competence is interpreted as:

- system of knowledge, skills and experience, which are acquired by the specialist in a particular branch, necessary for solving professional tasks⁶.

- system of knowledge and skills which form artistic potential of a specialist and build up its activity⁷.

⁴ Morozov, S.M., Shkaraputa, L.M., *Dictionary of foreign words*, K: Scientific thought, 2000, p.650.

⁵ Kyzminskyi, A.I., *Dictionary-catalogue of pedagogical and psychological terms*, Cherkasy: 2002, p.112.

⁶ Kyzmina, N.V., *Methods of investigation of pedagogical activity*, L., 1970, p.114.

⁷ Brazhe, T. G., *Development of artistic potential of a teacher*, Soviet pedagogics, 8, 1989, pp. 89-94.

- system of knowledge and activity, corresponding to the content of professional activity, culture of professional activity, professional values and stereotypes ⁸.

We consider the professionalism to be the qualitative feature of the subject of activity, which means the level of qualification of a given person. Researchers (Kuzmina N.V., Burns R., Brazhe T.H., Markova A. K., Leontiev V. H.) propose the general structure of subjective properties of the competent specialist which grasp three basic components: personal, individual and also professional skills and experience, thus professional competence is determined according to specialty of the worker and according to the level of its self-development.

Thus, analysis of literature sources allowed us to conclude that professional competence of the specialist is a necessary condition for professional accomplishing of professional tasks, artistic activity and innovative approaches to organization of educational process, development student's personality.

According to analysis of the material it may be concluded that professional competence is determined as a particular intellectual, motivational and psychic condition which allows acting on one's own authority, as ability of human to perform particular professional functions. Professional competence characterizes the knowledge of a particular specialist in special branches and also its professional skills and experience, education. The characteristics mentioned above allow us to consider specialist as the purposeful person who is able to achieve great results in professional activity. Development of professional competence is a continuous process so as modern conditions of informational world require constant renewing of the knowledge of any specialist. Only upon condition of continuous self-education human may be considered as educated, be competent worker, be real ace in its branch.

Deep analysis of the researches of famous scientists allowed us to make a conclusion that determination of the term "professional competence" is not complete so as we have just made an attempt to find "formula of competence" (M. A. Choshanov), to characterise qualities of professional competence (I. Kolesnikova) and criteria of professionalism (I. Ziaziun).

⁸ Fishman, L.I., *Models of educational management: general review and school technologies*, 1-2, 1999, pp. 112-120.

Determination of professional competence and competency was taken into consideration by a lot of scientists, but the difference between these terms is not clearly determined, this problem demands further investigation.

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ONLINE INTERACTIVE RESOURCES AND TEACHING TOOLS FOR THE CLASSROOM - THEORETICAL APPROACHES IN EACHING-LEARNING PROCESS

NICOLETA DUȚĂ*

nicoleta.duta@fpse.unibuc.ro

Abstract: *In this we article presented some interactive resources for teachers, including popular and up-and-coming classroom technology tools, online resources and apps. Teachers need resources that help them utilize technology as a medium for instruction instead of as the focus, or even worse- a distraction. Once thought of as just a part of resources ', we 've come to see how technology can be so much more than that. It can play a key role, and at times a leading role, in all elements of the teaching and learning environment. Technology can shape, and reshape, who is the learner and who is the teacher. It can open knowledge and content that otherwise would be less accessible, through access to open educational resources, for example.*

Keywords: *Teaching-learning, resources online, educational platforms, classroom, technology.*

1. Introduction

The accelerated changes that the current society goes through (globalization, technological revolution, multiculturalism, incertitude, etc.) affect educational institutions. These social changes, along with the European convergence, the change of the educational paradigm (now centered on learning), the “revolutionary” moment that the socio-educational institutions go through (new quality, efficacy and efficiency exigencies...) generate new demands and, on the short term, big changes at university level.

2. Literature review

2.1. *The Role of online Resources and teaching tools for the Classroom*

Today, we need to embrace the digital age, as trainers and lecturers. Technology in education opens up a huge world of possibilities as to how

* Lecturer PhD. at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Department of Teacher Training, University of Bucharest.

we convey, share and engage with students presenting different ideas, facts and theories¹.

The following stages offer us a lens through which we can observe how Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has leveraged incremental and deep change in learning environments (see Figure no. 1). The first three stages represent learning environments using technology to evolve—using technology, at varying degrees, as a means to make advances towards more digitally-rich, 21st century learning environment².

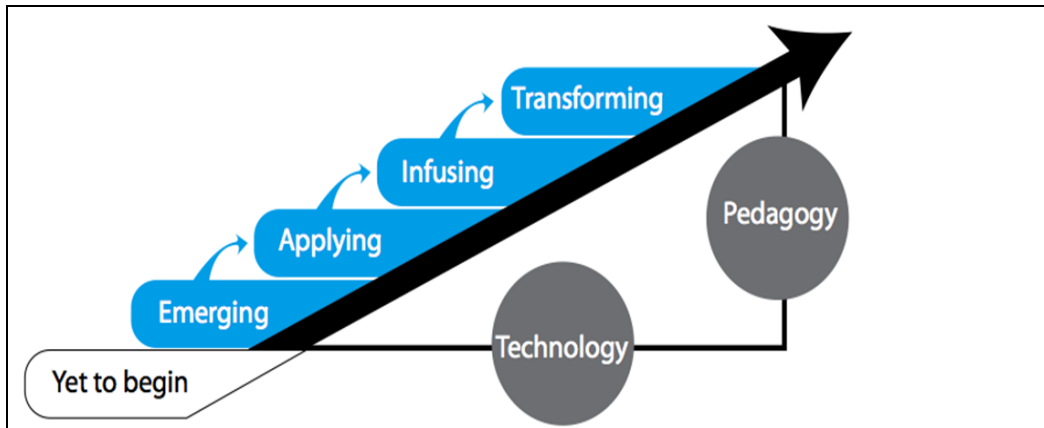


Figure no. 1. Stages of ICT Integration in Education. (Anderson, J. – UNESCO Bangkok, 2010³; based on Anderson and van Weert, 2002⁴ and Majumdar, 2005⁵).

¹ Hicks, Tony (2013). The importance of digital platforms in the learning environment. In *Training Journal*.

<https://www.trainingjournal.com/articles/feature/importance-digital-platforms-learning-environment>.

² Groff, J. (2014). *Technology-Rich Innovative Learning Environments*. OECD Working Paper.

³ Anderson, J. (2010). *ICT Transforming Education: Regional Guide*. Bangkok: UNESCO.

⁴ Anderson, J. and van Weert, T. (Eds) (2002), *Information and Communication Technology in Education: A Curriculum for Schools and Programme of Teacher Development*. Paris, UNESCO.

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001295/129538e.pdf>.

⁵ Majumdar, S. (Ed.). 2005. *Regional guidelines on teacher development for pedagogy-technology integration*. Bangkok, UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001405/140577e.pdf>

According to Groff (2014, p. 4) education systems and schools that fall into these categories are using technology at varying degrees to move in the direction of the 21st century. However, there are many learning environments going beyond this, to reinvent the fundamental model that drives their organization of learning and teaching⁶. In this way, they transcend 'transformation through technology' because technology is not used as a lever, but rather, used to appropriately fill in the methods and approaches in their redesign (see Figure no. 2).

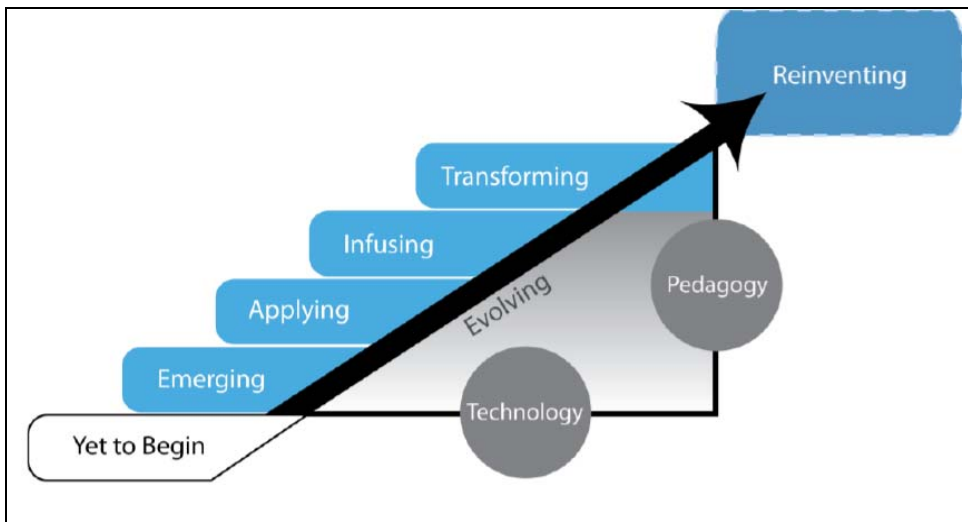


Figure no. 2. Stages of ICT Integration in Education to include 'Reinventing' (adapted from Anderson, 2010)⁷.

Innovative technologies not only have the potential to evolve pedagogical practice, but also completely transform entire learning environments. When technology is leveraged with a very strategic vision and change management plan, the results can be revolutionary⁸.

The digital transformation is an unending tidal wave continuing to change how we work, communicate, play and conduct our daily lives. Not only is this the world our learners are currently immersed in, it will continue to progress and the world that is their future will be digital in

⁶ Groff, J. (2014). *Technology-Rich Innovative Learning Environments*. OECD Working Paper.

⁷ Anderson, J. (2010). *Op.cit.*

⁸ Groff, J. (2014). *Op.cit.*, p. 8.

ways we can 't even begin to imagine⁹.

Learning environments today must be at least partially digital, not only to provide students with access to the tools and ways of operating that are infused in our world, but also to engage them in modes of learning that mirror their personal activity. The pedagogies and learning experiences described thus far connect with numerous cognitive competencies and capacities, but also with digital literacy—helping to develop critical skills to engaging with, consuming and producing digital media (Hobbs, R., 2010).

2.2. Description of Resources online and teaching tools for the Classroom

Teachers use digital resources for a variety of purposes and in many ways, including (Eady & Lockyer, 2013, pp.71):

- As a way to introduce students to a topic
- As part of a teacher lecture or demonstration
- As a stimulus to group or whole-class discussion
- To provide students with access to different text types
- To engage students in activities that are not possible in the classroom
- To allow students to work at their own pace as a review or extension activity¹⁰.

Based on literature review¹¹ we find some resources that teachers may find useful when attempting to implement technology into their classrooms, separated by 5 common areas that are increasingly important for teachers, and for an effective learning environment.

⁹ Hobbs, R. (2010). Digital and Media Literacy: A Plan of Action. The Aspen Institute & The Knight Foundation.

¹⁰ Eady, M. J. & Lockyer, L. (2013). Tools for learning: technology and teaching strategies. In *Learning to Teach in the Primary School*, Queensland University of Technology, Australia.

¹¹ *** 25 *Teaching Tools To Organize, Innovate, & Manage Your Classroom*. By TeachThought Staff, The Future Of Learning <https://www.teachthought.com/the-future-of-learning/25-teaching-tools-to-organize-innovate-manage-your-classroom/>

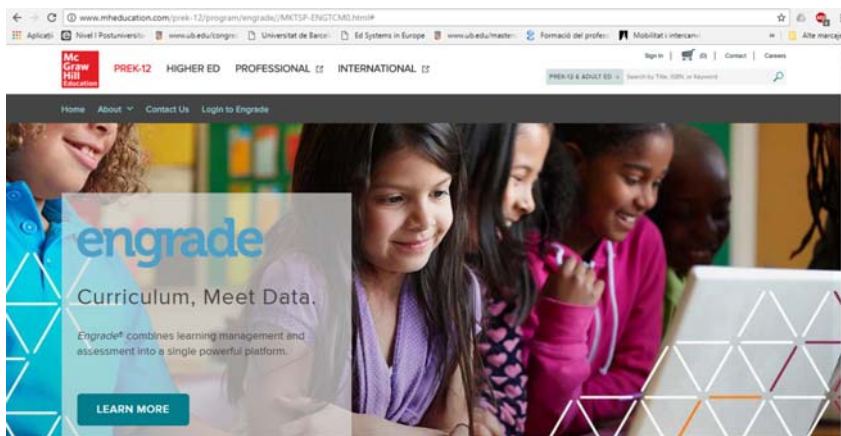
Table no. 1. Resources and teaching tools for the classroom¹²

Organization	Project Based Learning	Classroom Management	Presentations	Assessment
Engrade TheTogetherTeacher MyBigCampus MySchoolBinder LearnBoost	GlogsterEDU Mindmeister SonicPics Dipity MyHistro	CollaborizeClassroom Edmodo Socrative Remind101 ClassDojo	Brickflow Present.me Projeqt Prezi	Kwiksurveys ClassMaker Testmoz Mentimeter Knowledge

Resources for Organization

[Engrade](#)

This innovative platform¹³ provides teachers with an all-in-one grade book that offers attendance charts, grade books, calendars, seating charts, behaviour tracking, and more. It also gives teachers access to 3rd party lesson content, the ability to create custom tests aligned with common core standards, and a way to track individual student progress.



<http://www.mheducation.com/prek-12/program/engrade//MKTSP-ENGTCM0.html#>

Engrade combines learning management and assessment into a single powerful platform. Engrade brings together the best of learning management systems (LMS) and assessment solutions into one complete

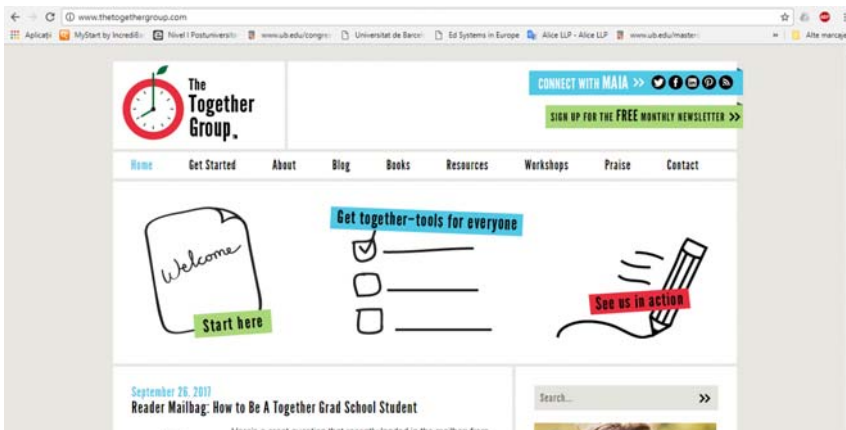
¹² 25 *Teaching Tools To Organize, Innovate, & Manage Your Classroom.* By TeachThought Staff, The Future Of Learning <https://www.teachthought.com/the-future-of-learning/25-teaching-tools-to-organize-innovate-manage-your-classroom/>

¹³<http://www.mheducation.com/prek-12/program/engrade//MKTSP-ENGTCM0.html#>

resource for teachers, students, principals, and administrators. With seamless connections between assessments and curriculum, Engrade tailors instructional content to student comprehension, delivering a truly personalized learning experience¹⁴.

[TheTogetherTeacher](http://www.thetogethergroup.com/) (www.thetogethergroup.com/)

On this site, teachers can find multiple resources that will help them stay organized in their classrooms. Once registered to the site, teachers have access to lesson plan templates, to-do lists, sub plans, project ideas, and much more.

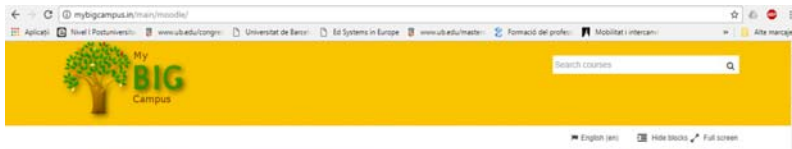


<http://www.thetogethergroup.com/>

[MyBigCampus](http://mybigcampus.in/)¹⁵ gives teachers, students, parents, and administrators unprecedented access to an endless amount of useful resources to raise student achievement. Through an interactive platform that can be accessed through mobile devices and tablets, My Big Campus makes it easy to engage with students, develop lessons, track student improvement, as well as connect with parents and other members of the learning community.

¹⁴ Source: <http://www.mheducation.com/prek-12/program/engrade//MKTSP-ENGTCM0.html>

¹⁵ <http://mybigcampus.in/main/moodle/>

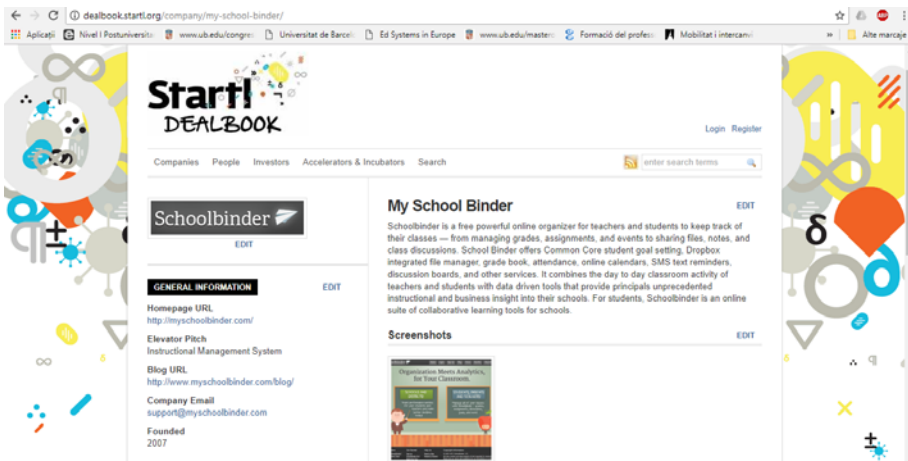


<http://mybigcampus.in/main/moodle/>

[MySchoolBinder](#)

My School Binder¹⁶ gives teachers the opportunity to easily add, edit and organize assignments on their class page. Students in turn, can submit completed assignments, ask questions, and receive instant feedback from their teachers.

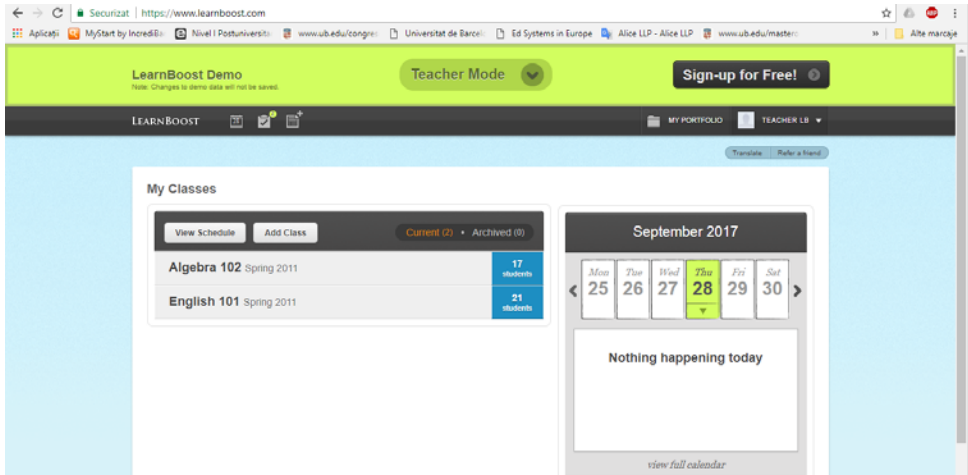
Additionally, students and teachers can view events and assignments on the Schoolbinder Calendar, and be reminded of upcoming due dates with custom notifications. Teachers also have access to teacher forums where they can receive feedback and tips for lessons and projects directly from other educators.



<http://dealbook.startl.org/company/my-school-binder/>

¹⁶ <http://dealbook.startl.org/company/my-school-binder/>

[LearnBoost \(www.learnboost.com/\)](http://www.learnboost.com/) helps teachers record, organize and sort individual student progress. It also allows teachers to develop and organize lesson plans, share student progress with parents and students, and can also be integrated with Google Apps, making it a convenient time saver.



<https://www.learnboost.com/>

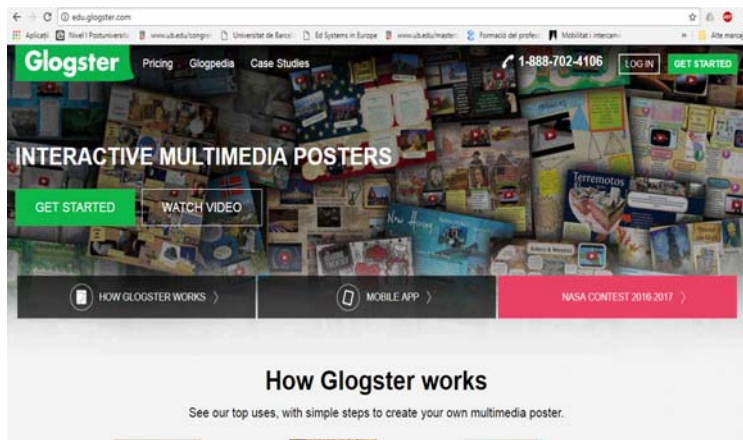
Resources for Project-Based Learning

[Glogster EDU \(www.edu.glogster.com/\)](http://www.edu.glogster.com/) is a global education platform that empowers students and educators to create interactive online posters that include text, photos, videos, graphics, sounds, and much more. Glogster encourages students to take control of their own learning in a fun way by promoting independent thought, creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving.

Glogster also provides teachers with strategies to implement curriculum into projects, promote skill mastery, facilitate digital literacy, and encourage innovation and collaboration.

Glogster is a cloud-based (SaaS) platform for presentation and interactive learning. It allows users to mix all kinds of media on a virtual canvas to create multimedia posters, and access a library of engaging educational content created by students and educators worldwide. Glogster enables interactive, collaborative education and digital literacy¹⁷.

¹⁷ Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glogster>

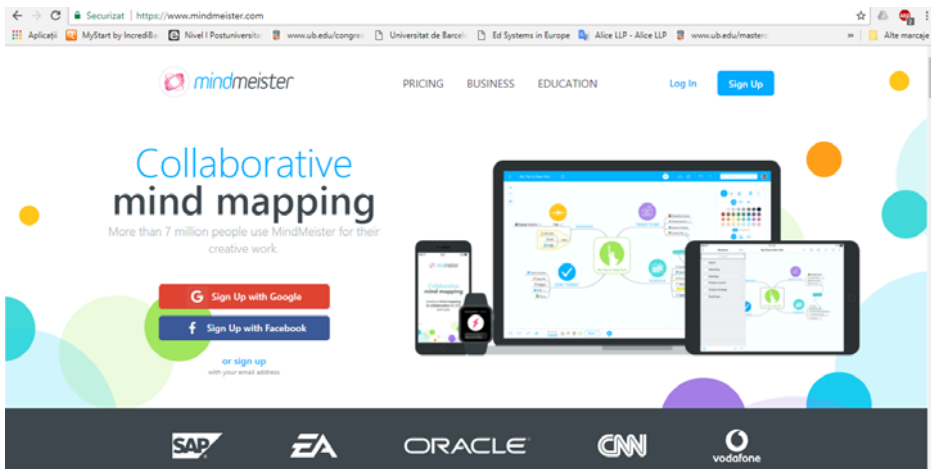


<http://edu.glogster.com/>

Edu Templates¹⁸

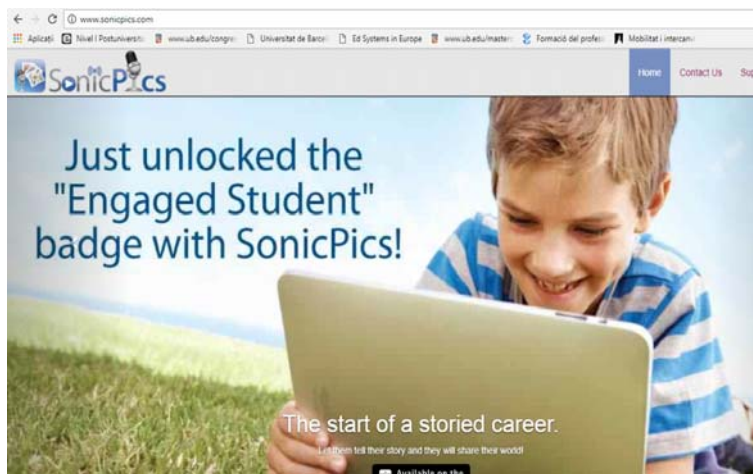
Mindmeister (www.mindmeister.com) is a great mind-mapping tool that can help students develop and organize project ideas. This free app encourages collaborative brainstorming, where students can work together to plan and analyze potential projects.

¹⁸ <http://edu.glogster.com/glogpedia>



<http://mindmeister.com>

SonicPics (www.sonicpics.com) is a great app that allows students to combine pictures with recorded narration into a threaded story. There are multiple uses for this app, as students can share personal narratives, review curriculum, or create custom presentations for class.



Interface <http://sonicpics.com>

Key Features
SonicPics is feature-rich. We have thought through how you will want to create and share your stories to make it simple.

Sample Uses
SonicPics is a versatile app that allows you to express yourself easily. Here are some ideas to get you started.

In the Classroom
Engage your students and capture what they are thinking and learning.

Key Features

- Create Slideshows**
Create slideshows quickly and easily.
- Add Images As Slides**
Use the images on your iPhone, iPod Touch or iPad or take new ones to use in your slideshow.
- Record Narrations**
Record a narration for your slideshow. SonicPics synchronizes your images to your recorded audio.
- Intuitive Interface**
SonicPics is simple to use. As a user put it "It's clean, simple and intuitive."

Playback Recordings On Your Device
Play your recorded slideshows on your iPad, iPhone or iPod Touch.

Share Recorded Slideshows Online
Publish your recorded slideshows to YouTube, share to your computer via wifi, or email to your friends.

Supports Video Out
Project your images as you record and then share the recording on an external display.

Universal App
SonicPics now runs NATIVELY on your iPhone, iPod Touch and iPad.

SonicPics Engages Students.
SonicPics is a very easy to use tool for turning your images into custom slideshow movies that

<http://sonicpics.com>

Dipity

Through Dipity, students can combine images, photos, text and other media into a visually stimulating, interactive timeline. This is a great tool for students to creatively map out past or current events, add desired media or effects, and present them in a seamless, fun slideshow.

dipity Sign In Join Dipity

Create a Timeline Hot Topics Dipity Premium

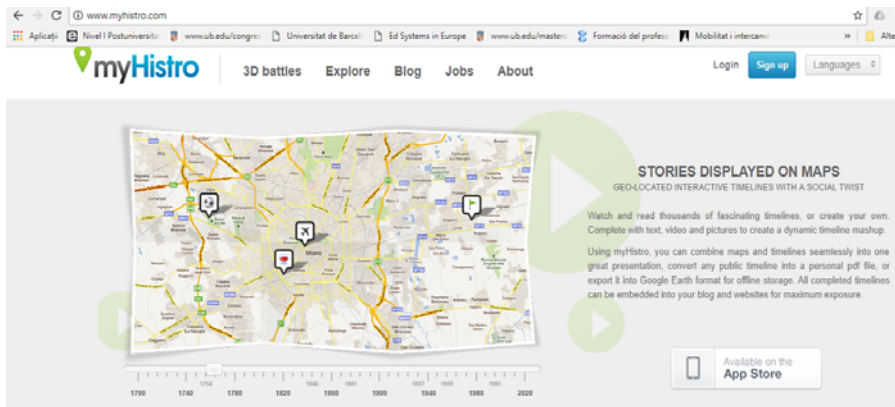
Steve Jobs: 1955-2011

Timeline Home List Map View in Dipity Search

- Becomes President + CEO of Pixar
- Officially CEO of Apple
- Apple Opens iTunes Music Store
- Introduces Windows-Compatible iPods
- Introduces G3 and Color iMacs
- Opening day of Finding Nemo

<http://dipity.com>

MyHistro allows students to create interactive timelines by combining blogging, media, and Google maps to tell personal stories. Students can create personalized maps that tell about one's family, ancestors, special memories, or other aspects of their history and future. This can be presented in a slideshow and can be a great way to get students to creatively tell their own life stories or focus on historical events.

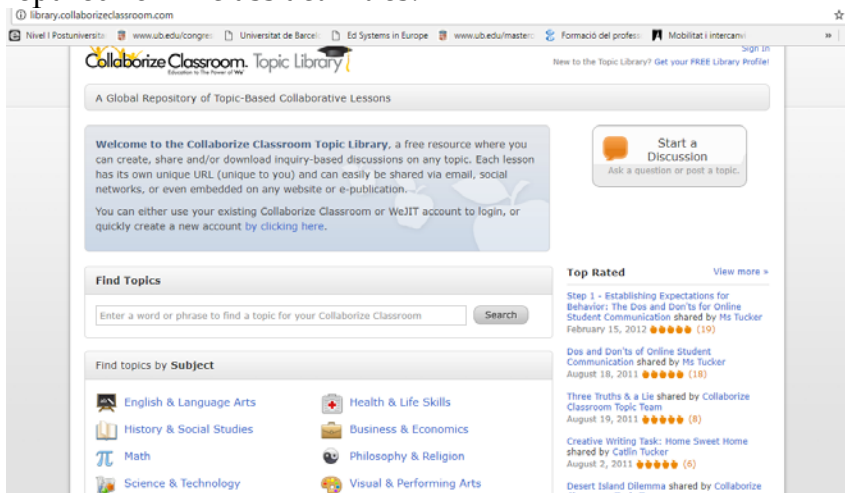


<http://www.myhistro.com/>

Resources for Classroom Management

[CollaborizeClassroom](http://library.collaborizeclassroom.com)

This is a great tool for supporting teacher's in-class instruction or helping their flipped classrooms be successful. This free online platform allows teachers to quickly launch a personalized learning site that addresses student concerns outside of the classroom, leaving students more prepared for in-class activities.



<http://library.collaborizeclassroom.com/>

Collaborize Classroom encourages students to help each other through problems with the guidance of their instructors, and provides teachers with instant access to lesson plans and project ideas to implement into the classroom. Additionally, this platform gives teachers the ability to better identify and accommodate different learning styles by

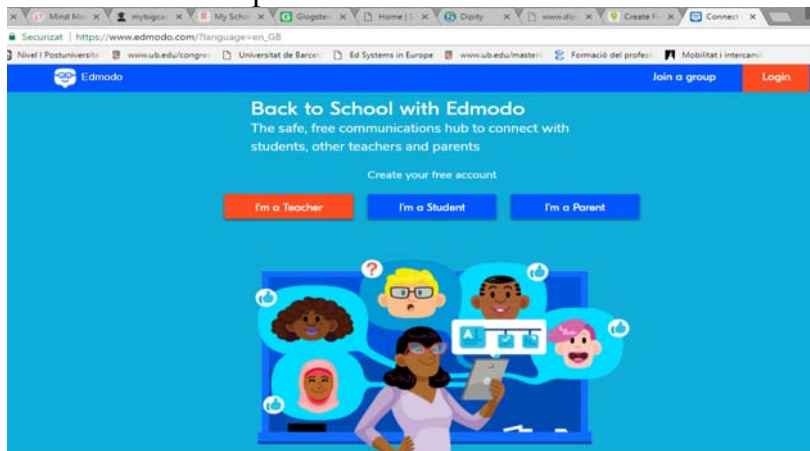
incorporating visual and audio into their lessons, and grouping students according to learning habits.

Collaborize Classroom believes that one of the most important challenges educators face today is to prepare kids for the world that awaits them after they leave the classroom -- those „21st century skills“ you keep hearing about. Collaborize Classroom is designed to complement classroom instruction and engage students in online activities, assignments and discussions that allow for deeper participation inside and outside the classroom¹⁹.

Edmodo

This social, Facebook-styled platform, allows teachers to continue classroom discussions outside of the classroom, check for student understanding, and get students excited about coming to class to learn. Teachers can connect students to resources and tools that will help them better understand classroom material, personally measure student progress, and enhance learning though integrating apps that amplify their lesson plans.

Edmodo helps connect all learners with the people and resources needed to reach their full potential.



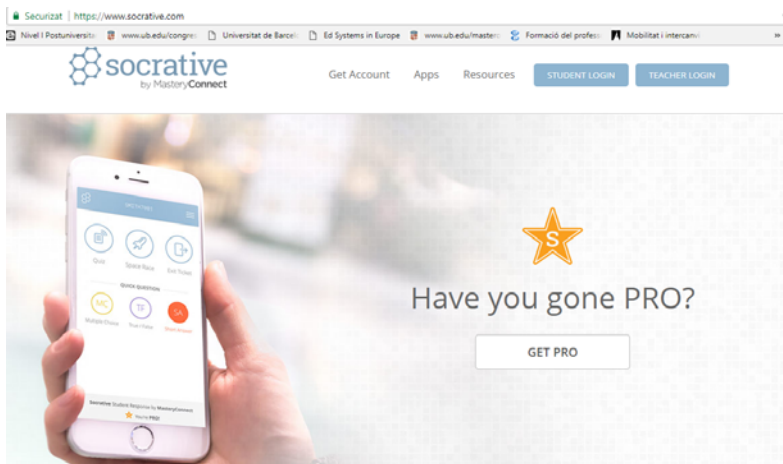
<http://edmodo.com>

Edmodo is a free classroom communication hub that lets you engage with your classes and connect with teachers globally²⁰.

¹⁹ Source: <http://www.digitalllearningalliance.org/collaborize-classroom/>

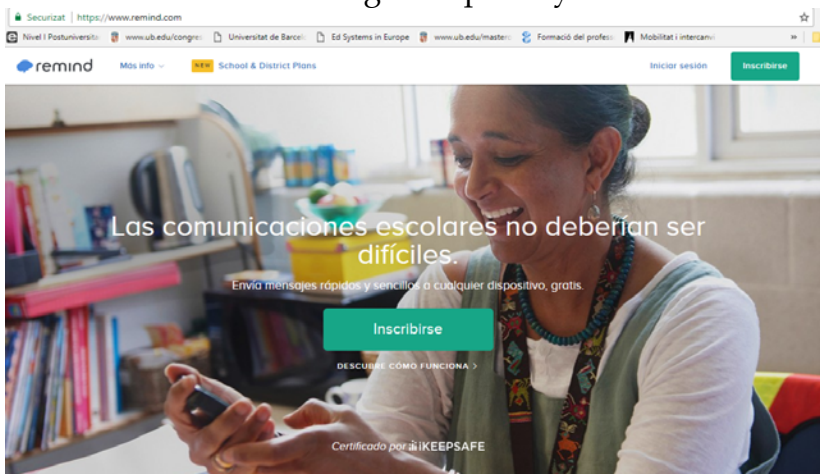
²⁰ <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/edmodo-classroom-tools/id378352300?mt=8>

Socrative (<https://www.socrative.com/>) is a great way for teachers to engage their students inside and outside of the classroom, as they can send out quizzes or other educational exercises that can be used to measure student understanding. Teachers can also take advantage of Socrative’s “Exit Tickets” which require students to answer a quick question before they leave the class that focuses on how comfortable they are in understanding the day’s material. This gauge’s student understanding of subject matter and informs teachers on what is working and what needs to be focused on.



<https://www.socrative.com/>

Remind (<https://www.remind.com/>) is a simple, safe, and secure way for teachers to send mass text messages to students and parents without invading their privacy.

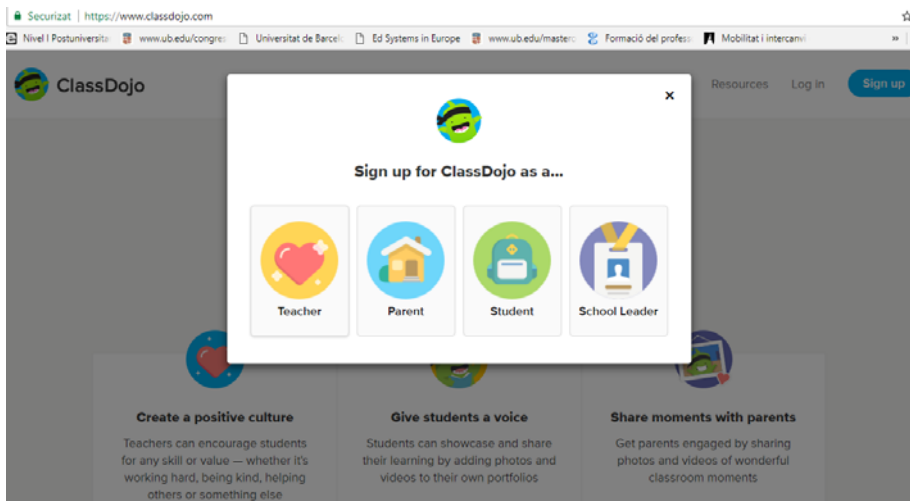


<https://www.remind.com/>

Teachers can use this to send reminders and notification to students concerning upcoming tests, homework assignments, due dates, and events which students and parents will receive through text message or email. Teachers can schedule messages to be sent in advanced, which keeps students up to date with schoolwork and helps prevent forgetfulness.

[ClassDojo](#)

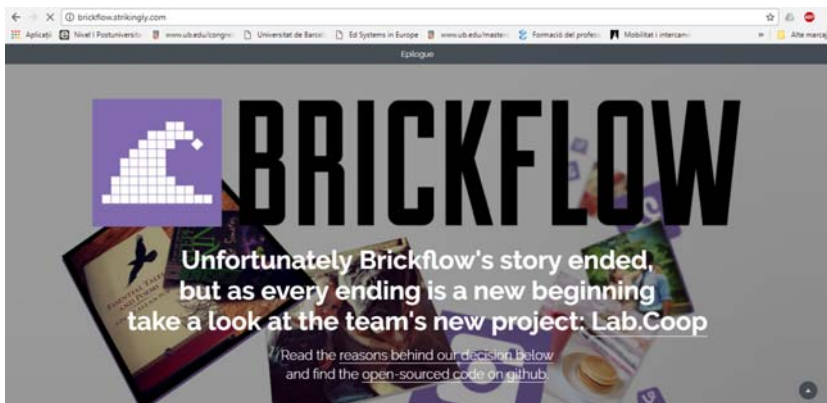
ClassDojo (www.classdojo.com/) is a tool for teachers to quickly and easily improve classroom behavior. Teachers are able to reward points to students for good behavior, which they receive in real-time on their smart phones or laptops. This engages students in a new way, and incentivizes good student behavior. Additionally, ClassDojo can track student behavior, producing analytical reports, which can be shared with parents and administrators.



<https://www.classdojo.com/>

Resources for Presentations

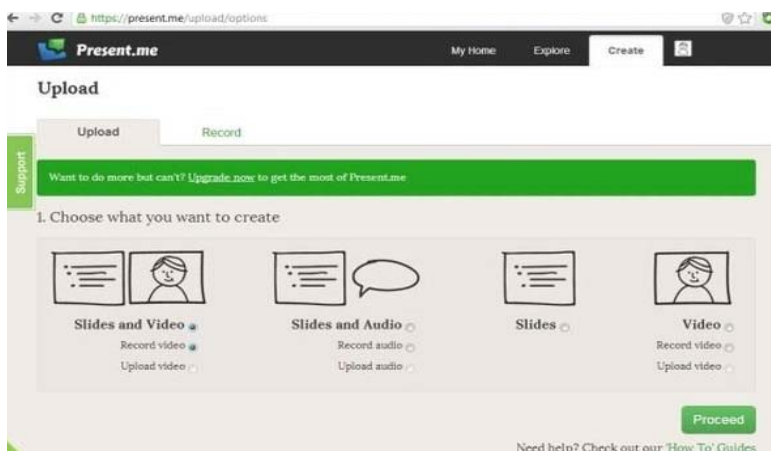
[Brickflow](https://brickflow.com) (<https://brickflow.com>) is an app where teachers and students can create presentations using content collected from social media. By searching the web through hashtags, teachers and students have the opportunity create a visual summary of a topic, building stories with content from Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, Tumblr, etc. This can be a fun and innovative way to spruce up classroom presentations and keep students up to date with current events.



<https://brickflow.com>

[Present.me](https://present.me)

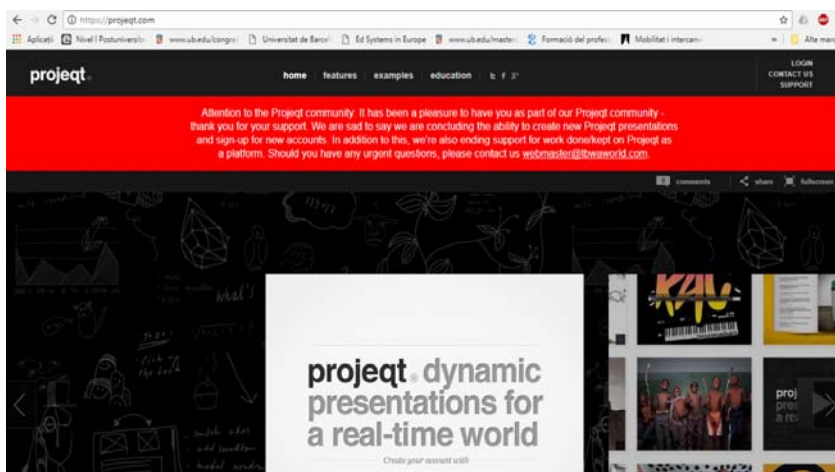
Present.me is a great tool for teachers and students that allow them to record presentations, lectures, or projects, and accompany them with visual content. This is a useful tool for teachers who wish to flip their classroom, and a fun way to encourage students to get involved in their own learning by creating their own visually rich presentations.



<https://present.me>

[Projqt](https://projqt.com)

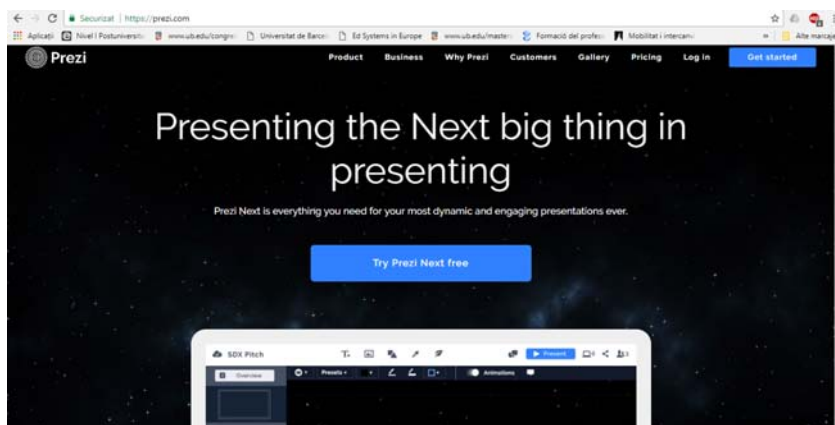
Projqt gives students and teachers the opportunity to express creativity and learning through a simple, intuitive presentation platform. Students and teachers may combine information they find online with content they have created themselves, creating a dynamic presentation that can include live blog feeds, tweets, interactive maps, quizzes and much more.



<https://projqt.com/>

Users can access presentations from anywhere at any time, and receive instant feedback from peers or teachers. This is a great tool for creating a social, interactive learning environment in the classroom.

Prezi is a fantastic tool for changing the way teachers and students present, moving away from the standard slide-by-slide model, and using a visually stimulating canvas that moves from point to point.



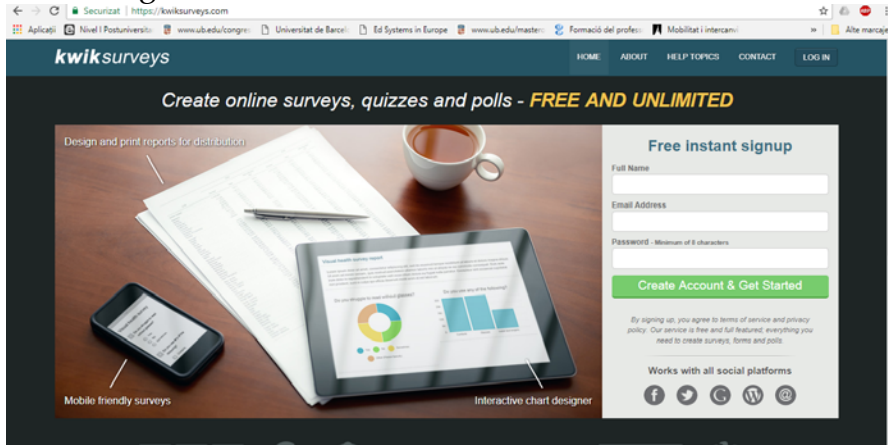
<https://prezi.com/>

Prezi is simple to use, visually stunning, and includes all the standard components of a normal presentation. The variations of presentations are endless, encouraging students and teachers to creatively customize each presentation to enhance how the audience members receive the information.

Resources for Assessment

[Kwiksurveys](#)

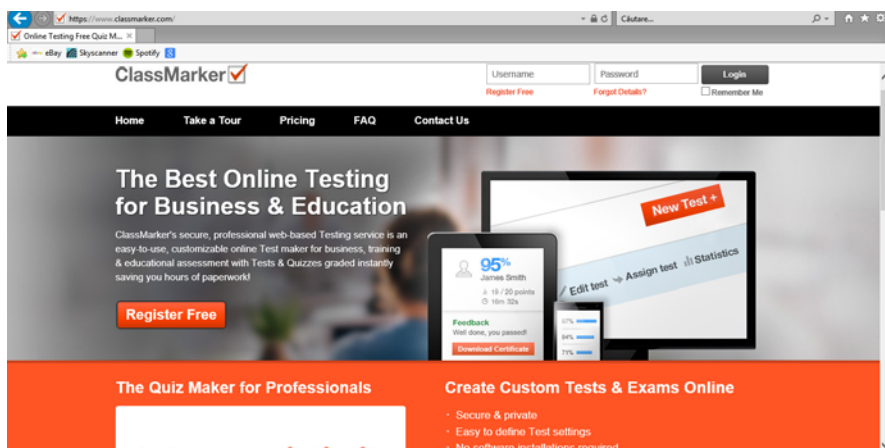
This is a great tool for creating custom polls, surveys, and quizzes that can be instantly shared through social media, or posted to teacher websites or blogs.



<https://kwiksurveys.com/>

[ClassMaker](#)

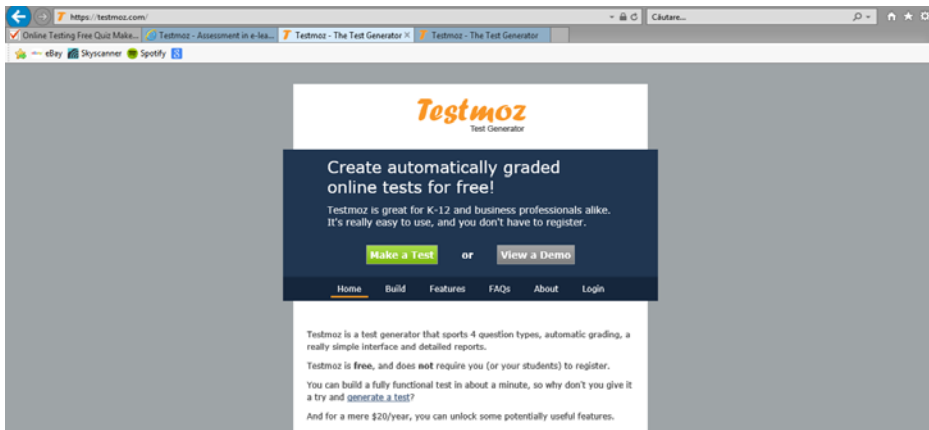
Through ClassMaker, teachers can create secure online quizzes and exams that feature multiple question types, such as multiple choice, short answer, and essay. Tests are automatically graded and are perfect for classrooms, online courses, E-learning, and study groups.



<https://www.classmarker.com/>

Testmoz

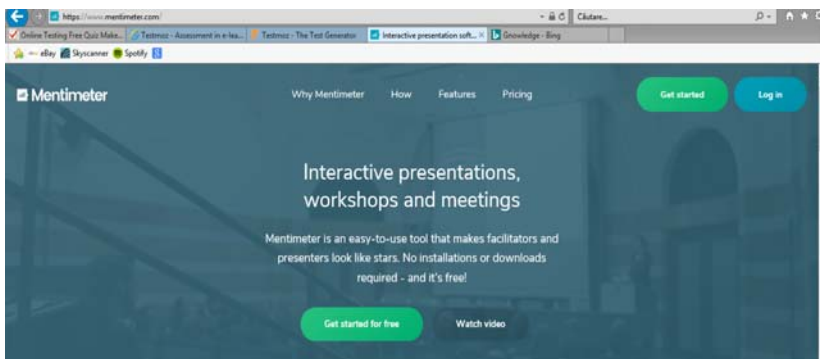
This free test generator offers multiple question types, automatic grading, detailed reports, and a simple design. Additionally, tests are pass code protected, but it does not require students to register to take the tests.



<https://testmoz.com/>

Mentimeter

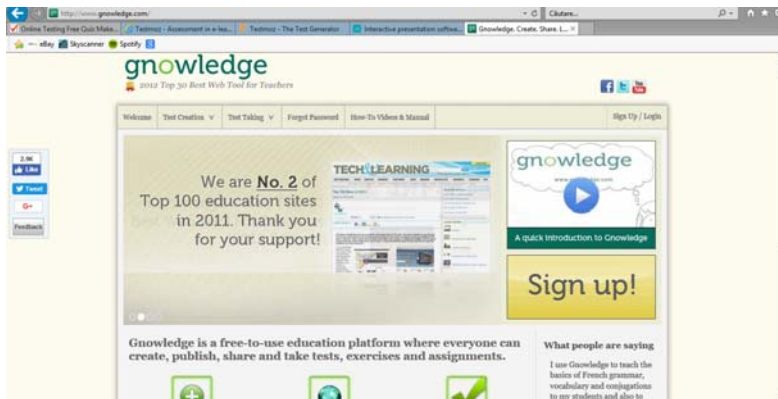
Mentimeter (www.mentimeter.com) enables teachers to send out questions to students and allow them to instantly vote on them or send feedback through mobile phones or tablets. This is a great way to democratize the classroom by voting on topics or activities, and a very effective tool for issuing pop quizzes.



<https://www.mentimeter.com/>

[Knowledge \(www.gnowledge.com\)](http://www.gnowledge.com)

Teachers can create and share tests with not only students, but with other teachers as well. This gives teachers multiple test resources and also promotes student understanding, as it randomizes test questions and answers, allowing students to take tests multiple times without making the material stagnant.



<http://www.gnowledge.com/>

According to Eady & Lockyer (2013) educational theories help us to understand how students learn to make meaning through communication. Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory argues that social interactions can facilitate development of higher-order functions when they take place in cultural contexts. Students learn when they interact and communicate with other learners in a positive environment. Instruction is deemed more effective when it is connected and relevant to the learner. Bandura's (1986) social learning theory also focuses on interaction and communication with others who provide a modelling framework for learners. Here, knowledge, skills and behaviours develop through modelling²¹.

3. Conclusions

Based on previous papers the use of social networking and educational platforms in Higher Education is becoming a new form of communication with students, and teachers can use these new tools for different purposes. Also, another important factor is the motivation of

²¹ Eady, M. J. & Lockyer, L. (2013). Tools for learning: technology and teaching strategies. In *Learning to Teach in the Primary School*, Queensland University of Technology, Australia.

students to the use of an online environment and the ability to display their own creations²².

The use of smartphones, tablets, and other tech items in the classroom does not necessarily have to have a negative impact on student achievement. On the contrary, the increasing accessibility and growth of technology presents teachers with the unique opportunity to take advantage of those once distracting gadgets, and use them to facilitate academic achievement in new and innovative ways²³. In this capacity, teachers do not need to be constantly fighting for student attention, but can freely accept it, by introducing a new educational environment that will automatically encourage student participation.

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*** *Effective Classroom Management*. <http://jerrysnyder.weebly.com/classroom-management.html>

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[https://www.trainingjournal.com/articles/feature/importance-](https://www.trainingjournal.com/articles/feature/importance-digital-platforms-learning)

[digital-platforms-learning](https://www.trainingjournal.com/articles/feature/importance-digital-platforms-learning) Hobbs, R., (2010), *Digital and Media Literacy: A Plan of Action*. The Aspen Institute & The Knight Foundation. - environment.

Majumdar, S., (Ed.), (2005), *Regional guidelines on teacher development for pedagogy-technology integration*. Bangkok, UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001405/140577e.pdf>

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