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## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF CURRENT SCHOOL CURRICULUM MONITORING

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The issue of monitoring the school curriculum according to the curriculum taught/curriculum learned is part of the issue of educational curriculum management. As a rule, this issue is addressed alongside the issues of conceptualization, design and implementation of the school curriculum. In other words, monitoring occurs at all stages of designing and implementing the school curriculum. In the given article, a concept of monitoring the school curriculum is proposed from the perspective of curricular/scientific research, but also from the perspective of continuity in the development of school curriculum. Continuity of curriculum development implies continuity of curriculum monitoring. Monitoring is a process of tracking, observing and supervising the functioning of school curriculum, in which information and data on the quality of taught curriculum are collected, analyzed and interpreted and decisions are made to realize the reverse connection and perspectives of continuous development of the school curriculum. The process of continuous monitoring of the school curriculum in function is carried out in stages and by means of specific tools: indicators, descriptors, methods. The emphasis is on the self-monitoring of taught-learned curriculum by the teacher in the classroom, being an active participant in the continuous development of the discipline taught curriculum.

**Keywords:** national curriculum, school curriculum, curriculum monitoring, curriculum development, curriculum implementation, curriculum impact, curriculum research.

### CADRUL CONCEPTUAL AL MONITORIZĂRII CURRICULUMULUI ȘCOLAR ÎN FUNCȚIE

Problema monitorizării curriculumului școlar în funcție de curriculumul predat/curriculumul învățat face parte din problematica managementului curriculumului educațional. De regulă, această problematică se abordează alături de problemele conceptualizării, proiectării și implementării curriculumului școlar. Cu alte cuvinte, monitorizarea apare în toate etapele conceperii și aplicării curriculumului școlar. În articolul dat, se propune un concept de monitorizare a curriculumului școlar din perspectiva cercetării curriculare/științifice, dar și din perspectiva continuității în dezvoltarea curriculumului școlar. Continuitatea dezvoltării curriculare implică continuitatea monitorizării curriculare. Monitorizarea este un proces de urmărire, observare și supraveghere a funcționării curriculumului școlar, în cadrul căruia sunt colectate, analizate și interpretate informații și date privind calitatea curriculumului predat și luarea unor decizii de realizare a conexiunii inverse și a perspectivelor de dezvoltare continue a curriculumului școlar. Procesul de monitorizare continuă a curriculumului școlar în funcție se realizează în etape și prin intermediul unui instrumentar specific: indicatori, descriptori, metode. Accentul este pus pe auto-monitorizarea curriculumului predat-învățat de către cadrul didactic la clasă, fiind participant activ în dezvoltarea continuă a curriculumului la disciplina predată.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** curriculumul național, curriculumul școlar, monitorizarea curriculumului, dezvoltarea curriculumului, implementarea curriculumului, impactul curriculumului, cercetarea curriculară.

### Introduction

In the last decades, the spectacular changes of society have become subjects of debates, analyzes and forecasts. In the background of globalization, a veritable „explosion” of technologies, information, values, alternatives, etc. can be identified. In fact, this state of affairs is characterized as a postmodern one.

In this sense, education, as a determining factor in the development of society, is no exception. Postmodernism in education is associated with the current trends characteristic of the development of system, but also with many prospective openings:

- valorization of the humanistic paradigm of education, which is oriented towards the maximum development of one's own self, personality and own experiences;
- establishment of a knowledge society;

- establishment of new socio-humanistic relations based on: harmony with nature, cooperation and negotiation, equalization of chances, valorization of all resources, etc.

Postmodern education focuses on the interconnection of psychocentric and sociocentric paradigms, which led to the emergence of a new paradigm – the curriculum – having as priority the purposes of education designed according to the psychological, pedagogical, but also society's requirements for education.

The transformations at the level of educational curriculum aim at the resizing of informative and formative functions of education, the development of curricular products „in perspective”, the valorization of interdisciplinarity/transdisciplinarity; the expansion of optional subjects, the unification of information and communication technologies, the formation of a new generation of teaching staff, the promotion of partnership relations between educational agencies, the stimulation of active, interactive learning, self-learning [3, p. 5].

In this context, the issue of monitoring the curriculum at all stages of development and implementation becomes a priority and timely one and approached from several perspectives. But the problem of continuous monitoring of the school curriculum in function is addressed sequentially, including from the perspective of curriculum research.

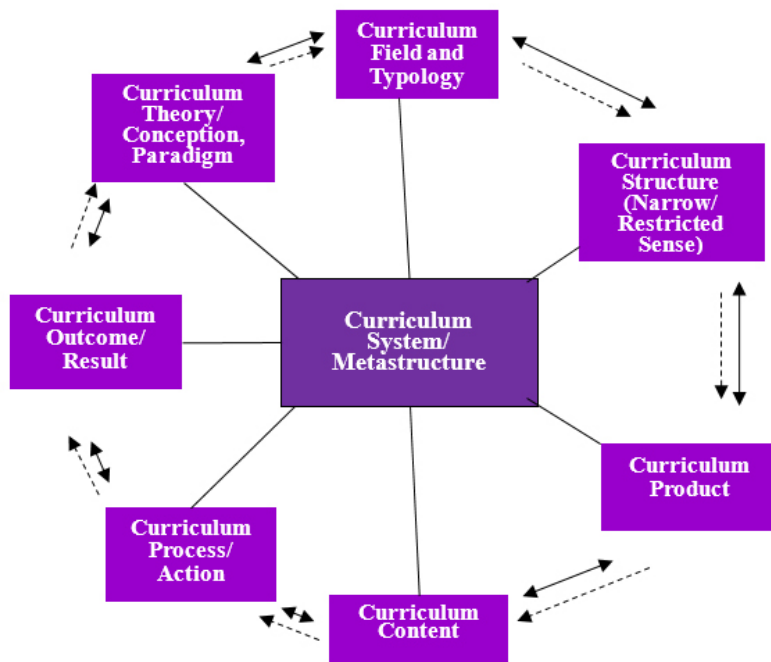
### Educational Curriculum as Object of Monitoring

The systemic approach of the educational curriculum constitutes the foundation of construction/conception and development of the Educational Curriculum. The concept of “system”, “systemic approach” correlates with something unitary, made up of components, in permanent connection and interdependence. At the same time, each component can perform its own specific functions, correlated with certain purposes, or each component is made up of separate elements.

Integrity represents the basic criterion of the unity of system, being the result of interconnection of the components of this system. The method of making the connection between the components takes the form of a structure.

In the context of these theories, at least six subsystems of the Educational Curriculum are identified, which are in permanent interdependence and interaction and, to a large extent, determine the efficiency/quality of education: curriculum concept/conception, curriculum domain, curriculum structure, curriculum product, curriculum content, curriculum process/action, curriculum outcome/result. Their structure falls within the logic of building educational (sub)systems with inputs and outputs, their own, specific functions within the cyclical and spiral development/functioning of the educational curriculum.

**Fig. 1. Educational Curriculum as System (Metastructure).**



The curriculum paradigm is focused on affirming the priority role of educational goals, at the level of any pedagogical project. Depending on the objectives, the other elements of curricular approach to training are also structured, i.e. teaching-learning methods, assessment strategies and contents.

In Sorin Cristea's view „the emergence of postmodern curriculum paradigm is due to the need to resolve the conflicts between the psychocentric and sociocentric approach to education, between education and training, between teacher and student” [4, p. 6-7]. In this sense, the constitution of curriculum paradigm:

- does not replace the general theory of education and the general theory of training, but on the contrary, ensures their unity, having as its object of activity the design of education and training;
- ensures the pedagogical, psychological and social correlation of the curricular elements at system level;
- ensures optimal communication between teacher and student.

The educational curriculum as a system and paradigm generates the concept and methodology of monitoring curricular processes.

### **Concept and Methodology of Monitoring Educational Curriculum**

Monitoring is a continuous process of following, observing, supervising and controlling an educational fact or phenomenon, in which information and data are collected, analyzed and interpreted in order to evaluate the supervised educational fact or phenomenon and to take necessary decisions.

Monitoring the implementation/functioning of the school curriculum means the systematic and continuous monitoring of how the education system and process behaves in relation to the proposed changes. Regarding the education process, three types of monitoring are distinguished:

- administrative monitoring, which refers to the follow-up/supervision of compliance with the legal provisions regarding the education plan, curriculum, textbooks, the organization and development of the educational process, etc.;
- formative monitoring, focused on monitoring the learning process: for example, the periodic administration of criterion tests aimed at the essence of a study program, allows the identification of problems, difficulties in its development, etc.;
- monitoring/piloting school performance, which is generally achieved with the help of normative tests; they have the role of informing, in comparative terms, about what schools and classes „produce”.

Other authors specify that the monitoring of a curriculum should establish to what extent it meets the following requirements/demands: coherence, quality, equity [8; 9].

D. Potolea claims that the monitoring of a curriculum must accompany each stage of its construction:

- when determining the goals, the following must be evaluated: cultural values; expectations of social forces; current school performance; assessment of educational needs;
- at the time of planning: the control of suitability of the objectives; the appropriate selection of contents, didactic strategies; the adequacy of school textbooks;
- during the performance: the observation of reactions of teachers and students; the study of students' results, etc.;
- during field experimentation: the reactions of those included in the experiment (the sample); program quality control under different conditions;
- during the introduction into school practice on a large scale (examination of the final form of the curriculum): control of the effectiveness of system as a whole; controlling the training of teaching staff for the promotion of respective curriculum;
- at the time of the quality control: the examination of quality of the curriculum's implementation: the study of causes of the variation in efficiency; possible correction suggestions, etc. [7, p. 126-127].

The monitoring of curriculum's implementation is designed in stages and is carried out in the following logical sequence:

- establishment of the curricular aspects that will be subject to monitoring;
- determination of the monitoring model of criteria and indicators that will be followed;
- selection and quality training of monitors (persons who will monitor);

- specification of the work methodology (how the monitoring will be carried out, which methods, tools will be used in the monitoring process);
- collection of information and data, their analysis and interpretation;
- formulation of conclusions and recommendations.

The design of a monitoring action requires compliance with all these stages, especially the good training of the people who will deal with monitoring, and the efficiency of a monitoring process depends on the quality of information collected, which, in turn, influences the quality of decision to be taken.

The monitors involved in the implementation/operation of curriculum will be interested in the following:

- ensuring the necessary conditions for the school curriculum's implementation/operation;
- the actual process of school curriculum's implementation/operation;
- monitoring the system of competences designed in the school curriculum in the teaching-learning-evaluation process;
- correlating the discipline-specific competences with transversal ones in the training process;
- adequating the educational contents transposed in the school textbooks to the competences training process;
- valorizing the modern teaching-learning-evaluation strategies in the educational process;
- the degree of training of teaching staff for the implementation/operation of the curriculum centered on competences, etc.

The main purpose of monitoring is to evaluate the conditions of school curriculum's implementation/operation, the identification of possible problems or dysfunctions in the process of its implementation/operation at the level of educational institution, their operative solution in order to ensure the successful implementation/operation of the document in question and the achievement of pedagogical targets/purposes established at the level of the educational system and process.

The monitoring of curriculum's implementation/operation is oriented towards: knowing the real conditions for the curriculum's implementation; identifying the difficulties faced by teachers in the implementation process; providing, if necessary, methodological support in solving some problem situations that may arise in the process of curriculum's implementation/operation; evaluation of the impact produced by the curriculum on the student, the teaching staff, the training-development process of school competences; the accumulation of a database as a point of analysis and reflection for curriculum designers in the perspective of further curriculum development; promoting effective monitoring methodologies; implementation of monitoring tools; elaboration of methodological recommendations and normative acts for monitoring [6, p. 129-130].

Curriculum monitoring is carried out through the actions of:

- establishing the actors involved in the process of monitoring the implementation/functioning of the school curriculum;
- elaboration of the Action Plan regarding the monitoring of process of the school curriculum implementation/operation;
- design of the methodology and tools for monitoring the process of school curriculum implementation/operation;
- validation of the methodology and tools for monitoring the school curriculum;
- training of monitors;
- implementation by monitors of the process of monitoring the implementation/operation of the taught curriculum – gathering information;
- processing and interpretation of data and information obtained from the monitoring process;
- data analysis and synthesis, formulation of conclusions and recommendations;
- implementation of the monitoring methodology at the institutional level.

The monitoring of school curriculum's implementation/operation is carried out with the support of the institutions and within the deadlines established by the program, and the monitors focus on the following basic aspects of the process of curriculum's implementation/operation:

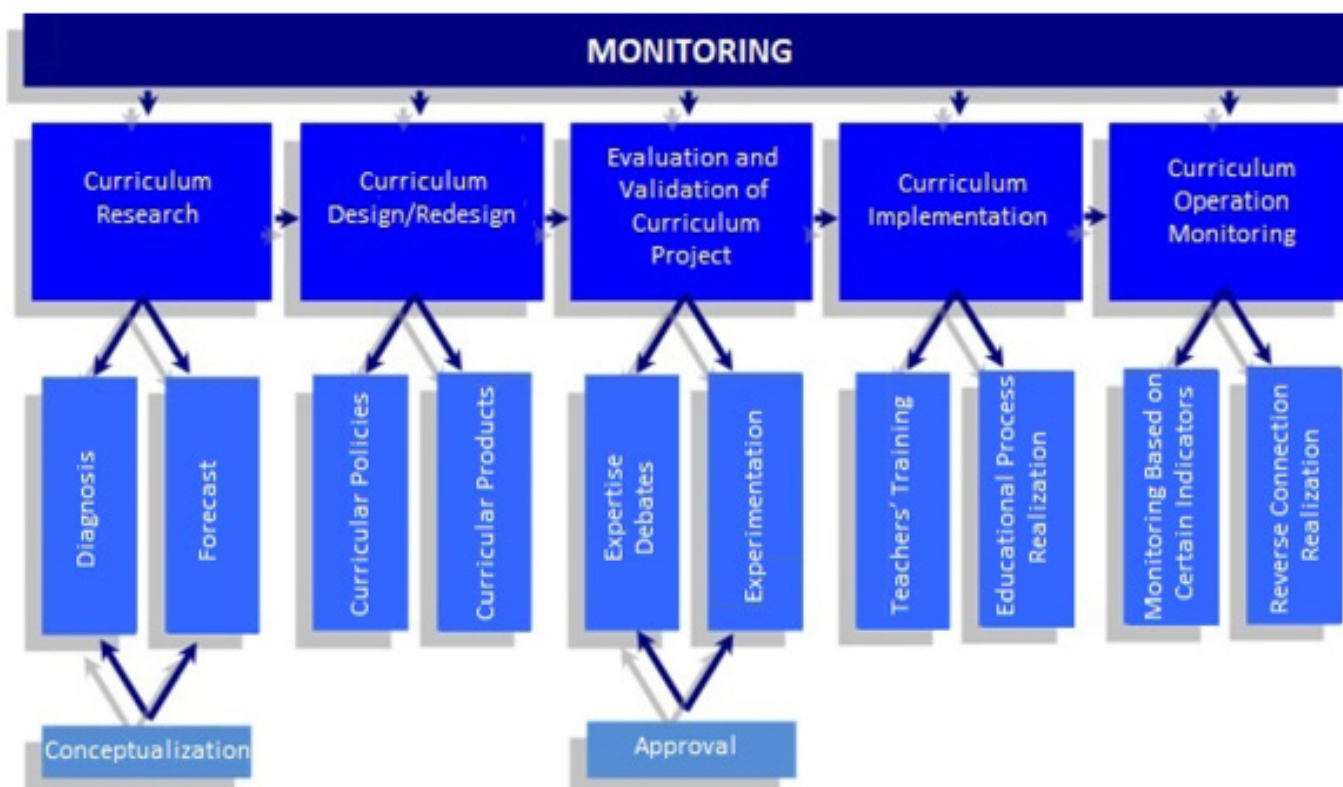
- the conditions for curriculum's implementation/operation;

- the management of curriculum's implementation/operation process;
- the adequacy of school textbooks to the competence-centered curriculum;
- the selection and organization of contents;
- the applicative size of the contents;
- the use of other didactic resources, etc.
- the assessment of school results:
  - the procedures for evaluating school results are aimed at checking the level of disciplinary/ transversal competences?
  - the assessment tasks are designed contextually and in relation to the requirements of authentic training and assessment?
  - the performance criteria and indicators used to assess the level of competences mastery? etc.;
  - teachers' training.

Therefore, the monitoring of taught curriculum aims to answer the following questions

- To what extent is a functioning curriculum timely and effective for students?
- To what extent is a curriculum effective?
- What changes can be made in the school curriculum in response to those questions?
- Who and how monitors the implementation/functioning of school curriculum in function?
- What structures should be involved in monitoring the school curriculum in function?
- How is the information „collected”, where is it stored and who processes it?
- How is the reverse connection ensured?
- Who and how should ensure the connections between the curriculum research dimension and the curriculum monitoring dimension?

**Fig. 2. School Curriculum Monitoring: Concept and Process.**



Therefore, monitoring „accompanies” all curriculum processes: curriculum research, design/redesign, evaluation, validation, implementation, monitoring itself.

Each procedural aspect involves specific monitoring criteria and tools, which can be carried out at different levels: national level, rational/municipal level, institutional level and student class level. In turn,

each level involves the objectives, the specific tools for monitoring the school curriculum, but also the specific training of the monitors on different aspects of the curriculum. In the given case, we focused on the foundation of a concept of curricular monitoring at class level, also valorizing the school curriculum's self-monitoring by teachers. In this case, the subject of monitoring is the curriculum taught and the curriculum learned (impact). The research monitor and the teaching staff have a specific methodology, which involves the development of a register in which all the vulnerable aspects and difficulties of the curriculum will be fixed in the school discipline in question. This register will be developed in relation to the purposes generated by the written curriculum and the way of their evaluation. Therefore, the school curriculum's monitoring in general and in the classroom, in particular, is approached from three perspectives: pedagogical (indirect monitoring targets, feedback); psychological (dynamics of development, intellectual abilities); managerial (the way of organizing the school curriculum's monitoring).

As we mentioned, the monitoring of school curriculum in function can be carried out at the level of class, of educational institution, at the rational level and at the national level. The school curriculum's monitoring at each level pursues the same goals as those specific to each level.

This concept of school curriculum's monitoring involves the following principles:

- The principle of monitoring the degree of adequacy of the taught-learned curriculum to the written/ designed curriculum.

- The principle of monitoring the complexity and accessibility of the school curriculum according to function.

- The principle of monitoring the school curriculum's coherence with the purpose of each level of study.

- The principle of monitoring the relevance of school curriculum in function.

- The principle of monitoring the impact of school curriculum in function.

- The principle of monitoring the relevance of school curriculum in function.

Each principle generates a system of variables, criteria and tools for monitoring the school curriculum in function.

Resources for Monitoring School Curriculum in Function

To monitor is to oversee and confront a body of information against a set of criteria. The school curriculum's monitoring is approached as a curricular research carried out in a logic that leads to obtaining relevant conclusions and recommendations to argue for making decisions regarding curricular development.

Curriculum research recognizes that the process of school curriculum's monitoring can be influenced by significant factors:

1. Measuring the effects requires increased attention to the following aspects: monitoring reliability, validity, depth.

2. Validity of causal interferences. The monitor is required to determine the extent to which the curriculum produces an observable result.

The curricular research regarding the school curriculum's monitoring is carried out in stages: the preparation stage, the actual monitoring stage and the stage of formulating conclusions and recommendations. During the school curriculum's actual monitoring stage, different forms and methods generated by the monitoring indicators and objectives are applied. There are several methods of school curriculum's monitoring: context analysis, association matrix, concept development map, expertise, observation, questioning of teachers and students [2].

### **General Conclusions**

The given article represents the first attempt to address the problem of monitoring the school curriculum according to the perspective of curriculum research. The proposed concept will be developed both theoretically and practically, valorizing the following ideas: the implementation of curriculum's self-monitoring by the teachers, the development and implementation of a registry for fixing the errors established in the process of school curriculum's monitoring, the creation of a feedback mechanism regarding updating the school curriculum in function or building a new curriculum.



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**EDUCATION AND FAMILY COUNSELING:  
CERTAIN ASPECTS OF CULTIVATING POSITIVE DAILY THINKING  
IN ADULTS AND CHILDREN FROM PRACTICAL  
PHILOSOPHY PERSPECTIVE**

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The article represents a theoretical and applied study that follows the strategic line and doctrinal axis of many works by the author regarding the education and enculturation of the family through the valorization of reflection, the moral action of individuals in the context of counseling focused on the development of positive daily thinking in adults and children. Additionally, here is presented and explained a set of principles, conditions and strategies for family education and counseling, which have been scientifically grounded and correlated with essential orientations from the perspective of social psychology, positive psychology, practical philosophy and complex ontological counseling of the family. Some trends in enhancing the moral climate within the postmodern family are analyzed and methods for building well-being, happiness and improving the quality of family life are specified. In this context, the results of an opinion survey conducted on a structured sample of adults, young family members, and middle-aged individuals (420 subjects aged 25-50) are provided, followed by interpretations, conclusions, and practical recommendations for cultivating positive daily thinking.

**Keywords:** *education, counseling, family, positive daily thinking, practical philosophy.*

**EDUCAȚIA ȘI CONSILIEREA FAMILIEI:  
UNELE ASPECTE DE CULTIVARE A GÂNDIRII COTIDIENE POZITIVE  
LA ADULȚI ȘI COPII DIN PERSPECTIVA FILOSOFIEI PRACTICE**

Articolul reprezintă un studiu teoretico-aplicativ care urmează linia strategică și axa doctrinală a multor lucrări a autoarei privind educația și enculturația familiei prin valorificarea reflecției, acțiunii morale a persoanei în contextul consilierii axate pe dezvoltarea gândirii cotidiene pozitive la adulți și copii. La fel, sunt expuse și explicate un ansamblu de principii, condiții și strategii de educație și consiliere a familiei, care au fost științific fundamentate și corelate cu câteva orientări esențiale din perspectiva psihologiei sociale, a psihologiei pozitive, filosofiei practice și consilierii ontologice complexe a familiei. Au fost analizate unele tendințe de eficientizare a climatului moral din cadrul familiei postmoderne și s-au precizat modalitățile de edificare a bunăstării, fericirii și sporirii calității vieții familiale. În acest context, am oferit rezultatele unui sondaj de opinii, efectuat pe un eșantion structurat de adulți, familiști tineri și de vârstă medie (420 subiecți de 25 - 50 ani), urmat de interpretări, concluzii și recomandări practice de cultivare a gândirii cotidiene pozitive.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *educație, consiliere, familie, gândire cotidiană pozitivă, filosofie practică.*

**Introduction**

Family education and counseling represent two important dimensions of family pedagogy and of course the general theory of education. In our research and works, the respective approach is a socio-psycho-pedagogical one, since the family is a social institution, and its education and counseling is carried out through a set of complex, multidisciplinary interventions with a psycho-pedagogical and philosophical character. Of course, the philosophical aspect includes clearly defined ontological, existential and axiological implications. Studying that issue for many years, exploring the practical activities of family counseling and substantiating the type of *complex ontological family counseling* (2016; 2018) [3] we observed and accumulated a substantial volume of knowledge, skills and competences, which, sequentially, we will elucidate essentializedly in this study. So, we will expose the main conditions and

strategies of family education and counseling, we will correlate them with some main guidelines from positive psychology, practical philosophy and complex ontological family counseling. We will analyze and explain some tendencies of the members of postmodern family to make the moral climate within it more efficient and we will specify the ways of building well-being, happiness and increasing the quality of family life. In this context, we will provide the results of an opinion survey, carried out on a structured sample of adults, young and middle-aged family members (420 subjects aged 25 - 50).

The essential aspect that I established lies in the fact that we did not observe great differences in the views of familists regarding their attitude towards authentic moral values and the obvious and clearly formulated tendency to learn constantly, to make an effort from both sides: men and women, in creating and maintaining a positive family climate and creating the moral and material well-being of their families. At the same time, we have determined that many difficulties and some family conflicts arise because of some psychological and social *clichés*, which come from social cognition and everyday thinking of adults. These relate to how we think about ourselves, about family members, about other people; how we think about past, present or future actions, etc. At the end of study, we propose some strategies to increase the quality of family life by valorizing the daily positive thinking from the perspective of practical philosophy.

### **Certain Theoretical Aspects of Family Education and Counseling Focused on Cultivation of Positive Everyday Thinking in Adults and Children from Practical Philosophy Perspective**

Specialized literature [3; 4; 6; 8; 9, etc.] elucidates various aspects of family education and counseling. We, as supporters of valorizing this important goal of cultivating its members through the following: non-directive strategies for disseminating knowledge regarding increasing the efficiency of adults in terms of strengthening family cohesion and adaptability, children's education, optimizing family communication and relationships, etc.; deepening and diversifying the topicality of radio and TV shows; carrying out interesting activities related to the fulfillment of family functions (such as webinars, *round tables*, workshops, practical conferences, etc.); valorizing the thematic posts from the Internet; lectureships, parent meetings in educational institutions; carrying out activities and projects, carried out by *the Directorates for protection of children's rights*, NGOs, *family, youth, adolescent and children counseling centers* with the involvement of specialists versed in the respective issue. Simultaneously, with the counseling of large groups of adults, the forms of counseling in focus groups are quite effective and welcome, these, being organized according to the common difficulties encountered by adults in their functions as family members and parents, including individual forms of counseling (when the adult address independently to a specialist). It is obvious that *the principles of education and counseling* are focused on the observance of ethical and deontological norms, on a series of rules related to ensuring the accessibility and quality of applied strategies (forms, methods, procedures, techniques). In this context, we consider it appropriate to update, develop and complete some principles, which, in our view, are very important. In developing the principles and strategies, which will be described later, we started from *the analysis of our own family education and counseling experience, our empirical observations; theoretical benchmarks of family education* [2; 3; 4; 8; 10], *the value significance of the person and his/her life* [2; 6], *the instrumental model of moral education from the perspective of practical philosophy* [2], *the perspectives of the development of everyday positive thinking and the essential components of human happiness, approached in the context of positive psychology* [1; 11; 12] and *moral psychology* [6].

Therefore, the formulation and structuring of the principles in question essentially follow the milestones of the above-mentioned route of scientific substantiation:

- ***The principle of balanced exploration of the general dimensions/contents of education (moral, intellectual, technological, aesthetic and psychophysical education) with an emphasis on the practice and internalization of ethical values in the context of positive everyday thinking development***, compliance with which will ensure the avoidance of educational extremes and will contribute to awareness of the importance of harmonizing all psycho-pedagogical interventions to cultivate the integral personality in the three environments: family, school and community.

- **The principle of ensuring the functional correlation of the goals, perspectives of education with respect for the unity of pedagogical requirements; initiating, stimulating moral action and strengthening the moral convictions of the learners.** Centering counseling and education on this principle will contribute to re/thinking, re/structuring, designing, realizing and monitoring the valorization of educational and counseling process of the family, inciting the specialist and parents to certain analyses, prognoses, logical and coherent actions.

- **The principle of focusing on the optimal combination in education and counseling of complementarity and partnership symmetry; of the male-paternal and female-maternal models,** the observance of which will ensure the prevention of gender discrimination and segregation.

- **The principle of valorizing the educational resources, the native potential and the availability of positive thinking of the personality in combination with the practice of essential postulate of practical philosophy, which involves the formation of unity between conscience and moral conduct,** the observance of which will ensure the effective valorization of parental reflection, awareness and quality enhancement family actions.

- **The principle of centering education and family life on moral axiology and practice.** Adherence to this principle will contribute to the promotion of ethical models of adults in the development of positive everyday thinking in the growing generation.

- **The principle of cultivating a healthy way of life in symmetrical combination with the formation and practice of a dignified/moral way of life and behavior of the person,** the observance of which will contribute to the education of a healthy personality from a psychophysical, social and moral point of view.

Of course, the stated principles will work optimally only when they are known, aware and systematically explored by specialists in the field of education and counseling, including by parents (we mean school education and family education). It goes without saying that the principles *entail* the set of strategies, which can be used in family education and counseling, but also in family education, centered on the cultivation of positive everyday thinking. In this sense, it is important to know what **positive daily thinking** entails, what its essential aspects are and how to avoid or transform its negative elements in order to increase the quality of personal and family life. Therefore, the emancipation of man continues at a rapid pace, encompassing more and more directions and fields.

Today, **personal development**, in its varied and multiple forms, is not only an objective of self/ education, but also constitutes a moral value with implications in all dimensions of education (moral, intellectual, technological, aesthetic, psychophysical personal development). In the same way, we can conceive, design and achieve personal development regarding the spiritualization of man; or approach it in the context of valorizing any element of the dimensions of education and the desired *new educations*, such as: *personal development regarding the consumption of free time or the optimal exploration of mass media; or personal development regarding health, family education; for environmental protection, etc.*

Human existence, undeniably a social phenomenon, therefore, also an anthropological, culturological and philosophical one. These four determinatives certainly include everyday life; family life; professional life, etc., which, in turn, are penetrated by a series of influences and actions of a social, psychological, educational, etc. nature. Namely, in this context, we mention the importance of emergence and development of social psychology, positive psychology, sociology of education, counseling and family therapy and other sciences that study man, his/her existence, development and formation in all aspects of life. Thus, the socio-psycho-pedagogical approach announced by us obliges us to specify **the following key moments**:

- any aspect of human life deserves to be studied from the perspective of **social cognition**, since until formal/ institutionalized education, each of us internalizes the set of representations and knowledge obtained from everyday life, first of all, from the family and the concrete community;

- human thinking represents a higher cognitive process, which develops gradually (the stages of thinking development/ Piaget J. et al) and of course it mediates human knowledge and metaknowledge, being influenced by several factors: native, environmental, educational. In the given study, we will analyze some elements of social cognition, which contribute to the development of everyday thinking, therefore, we will primarily refer to the environmental factor;

- the development of social psychology, in our view, contributed to: strengthening and deepening the philosophy of education [2; 5], of practical philosophy, focused on moral action, approached in a social and psychopedagogical context [5]; the delimitation of study object, the conceptualization of family therapy and counseling, the specification of research methods and psychological and educational intervention, which contributed to the diversification and argumentation of the effective exploration of eclectic counseling technologies [3; 8];

- this study is not intended to familiarize the reader with the history of emergence of social psychology and detailed research in the field of social cognition (this is impossible to do within the framework of an article). We decided to outline only certain *facets of everyday thinking, which focus on certain distortions of self-knowledge, of the way we think about ourselves and others; how we think about actions in the present, past and how we think about the future* [1, p. 15]. We are interested in these in connection with determining the specificity of family counseling from the perspective of cultivating positive daily thinking in adults and children.

Next, we present the results of survey carried out on a random sample, structured into two age groups of family members/parents (the 1<sup>st</sup> group, 210 subjects from 25 to 40 years and the 2<sup>nd</sup> group, 210 subjects after 40 to at 50 years old; the urban environment and the capital's suburbs, being involved the parents of students of three high schools in the municipality of Chisinau, with whom we have been working for several years). The survey had more of a statistical character, aimed at detecting the opinions and attitudes of adults regarding the awareness of family difficulties, which are caused by everyday thinking, that is, by certain negative phenomena of social cognition (such phenomena as: erroneous representations, preconceived opinions, outdated stereotypes, social errors etc.).

In essence, the results/ data obtained, for the most part, did not surprise us, confirming, in fact, our empirical information and observations, accumulated during about 38 years of activity focused on counseling native families. Obviously, the whole sample was able to formulate an adequate answer to the question of *what daily/everyday thinking consists of and what knowledge it gives us*. We determined that the negative phenomena of social cognition upset young subjects the most - 65% compared to 28% of subjects after 40 years, a fact complemented by the explanations of the interviewees, made additionally. The second group, which consists of more mature, wise people with a certain life experience, demonstrated that the investigated subjects are more selective regarding the amalgam of phenomena related to social cognition, and, we would even mention, figuratively, that they possess *a certain immunity* to many of them. The only exception was the phenomenon we call **the social moral sentence**, which was exposed through the following expressions known to all: *what will people say; shame from neighbors, relatives, friends, etc.; it is not good to be discussed by the public; what do you make me the laughing stock of the world; I don't want to be pointed at; it's not normal to be talked about by everyone*, etc. 74% of young subjects and 83% of mature subjects are worried about this type of assessment. We, to a certain extent, consider this phenomenon as a kind of *social regulator of people's behavior* and we cannot give examples of some negative influences on family relationships, but on the contrary, often, the care of not being so labeled prevents a series of behavioral difficulties, committed both by adult family members and minors, although they sometimes show dissatisfaction.

At the same time, the investigated subjects from both groups (the 1<sup>st</sup> group – 87% and the subjects from the 2<sup>nd</sup> group - 76%) perceive the damage and mention the negative impact on the family's well-being of preconceived opinions, such as: *the child must be beaten as long as they are at the bed's side; today's young people are losers, they are naughty, I don't know what's wrong with them; teenagers are unmanageable; it was really good when women knew their place*, etc. These were set forth as examples, even by the subjects under investigation. Of course, postmodern society, which is centered on the study of psychology, on the development and enhancement of personal efficiency, on the idea of individuality, uniqueness, freedom of expression and actions, the initiation of various types of cohabitation, etc., permanently creates a series of judgments, attributions, social opinions (which, with certainty, can be erroneous and false). The given situation requires the involvement of competent specialists in the field of education and family counseling, at the same time, the importance of collaboration with *inter- and multidisciplinary teams*, which presuppose the involvement of specialists from two interconnected fields, such as pedagogy and psychology or the

involvement of specialists from many fields: family counseling, psychotherapy, psychology, psychopedagogy, jurisprudence, social work, pedagogy, sometimes also from medicine.

In the targeted study, we will essentially approach only a few phenomena from everyday thinking, namely, **how we think about ourselves and others; how we think about the actions of the present, the past and how we think about the future**, focusing only on the most frequently encountered aspects that can produce difficulties in communication and family relationships, can create intrapsychic/ inner conflicts and interpersonal conflicts (from our experience working with native families). In this context, we make some clarifications and explanations regarding the essence of everyday thought phenomena, which can negatively influence the family climate.

Social cognition and people's everyday thinking often gives us the opportunity to observe the phenomenon called *the false consensus effect* (people tend to perceive and define their own characteristics, opinions, preferences, aspirations, behaviors as relatively common), which reverberates with the phenomenon called *the false uniqueness effect* (when people estimate one's personality or behavior as more unique/special, peculiar, which is shared by a very small number of people). Our observations and research results (65% in young subjects and 74% in more mature subjects) demonstrated that these two phenomena cause discomfort and family conflicts. We frequently collide in our daily thinking with such phenomena as: *social illusions, generalizations and attributions, erroneous findings, excessive/false modesty, judging other people based on the alleged ability to identify/ read the character and mentality of the individual, attributions of success or failure, cognitive rumination* (cognitive process by which the individual develops a series of repetitive thoughts regarding an unpleasant experience [1, p. 314]); *ennobling the past or devaluing the past, present and future, or, conversely, overvaluing them*, etc.

Next, we are going to outline some strategies, harnessed by us, that have proven to be effective in family education and counseling to cultivate positive everyday thinking from the perspective of practical philosophy. In this vein, we reiterate that *practical philosophy* valorizes the reflections on social morality, on human conduct and actions, on the acquisition of happiness. *Practical philosophy* includes moral philosophy, whose fundamental problem is that of person's purpose in the world [5, p. 127]. *The practical philosophy* of the family studies the same problems, but in a family context by conceptualizing, substantiating and identifying *the practices of forming the unity between knowledge, conscience and moral conduct*, in order to realize human nature through the exercise of virtue, concentrated in *the moral Self* [2, pp. 8-9].

Starting from the aspects exposed above, we propose the following strategies for cultivating positive everyday thinking, as follows:

1. ***The strategy of demonstrating the benefits of emotions, feelings and positive/moral thinking for person and family (for adults and children)***. Within the strategy we will eclectically combine various forms, methods, techniques and procedures. In particular, we will apply: *conversation, circularity, hypothesizing, explanation, narrative therapy, solution-focused therapy, strategic family therapy, comparison, analysis and synthesis/summarizing and modeling positive perspectives of thinking and behaving*, etc. At the same time, *the method of structured exercises* was successfully used, during its practice, each beneficiary (adult and minor) recorded in writing his/her emotions, feelings and unpleasant thoughts, ranking them in the order of their frequency of occurrence, indicating the cause, i.e. the negative phenomenon, arising from the social cognition that provoked them (detected at the level of everyday thought). Then, *the Personal Record of the re/structuring of everyday thinking is drawn up* based on the reflection and establishment of the set of emotions, feelings and positive thoughts, through which the first, the negative ones can be substituted. At the same time, the beneficiary verbalizes his/her actions, objectifying them in moral actions and positive, concrete behavioral strategies.

2. ***The strategy of demonstrating and establishing the value significance of the person and human life***. This strategy will be carried out with the counselor's scaffolding, with the aim of defining three valuable aspects regarding the person's life: *what he/she is like, what the person represents and what he/she has*, including, *elaborating his/her psychophysical portrait; his/her intellectual and moral portrait, accompanied by a list of value priorities and a list of achievements in life (personal, family, professional, etc.)*. The given method can also be given to the recipient as homework. At the next meeting, each position

is analyzed and discussed together with the beneficiary, highlighting the strengths and weaknesses of the personality. Finally, the value perspectives are projected, taking into account the person's aspirations, interests, desires and needs. This is done to demonstrate to the person the value significance of him/her and his/her life.

3. **The strategy of analysis and awareness of the themes of human existence in connection with the determination of negative phenomena of social cognition, which persist in the everyday thinking of person.** The strategy involves a review of the beneficiary's existential themes, by concretely answering three important questions: *what problems does he/she encounter* (defining the concrete aspect: personal life; family life/as a couple and in the relationship with children, etc.; in the profession, etc. a.); *who creates these problems* and *what the person has accomplished to solve them*. Each aspect is analyzed and discussed, and finally the beneficiary is proposed to develop a plan to solve the problems. Sometimes the counseling is personal, sometimes it is group, that is, it is for the whole family. Obviously we will be able to make concretizations, summarizations, generalizations, completions and modeling to transform negative elements into neutral or positive elements.

4. **The strategy of practising moral gratitude** is, in our view, one of the most important, as it is focused on learning two decisive behaviors for achieving personal happiness and family happiness. The first behavior is related to **the inventory and awareness of successes and achievements** (personal, family, professional, social, etc.), and the second is related to **the concrete manifestation of gratitude** (learning the various forms: *appreciation expressed orally or through various rewards; small gifts, letters of gratitude, invitations to concerts, performances*, etc. Here, everything depends on the creativity and inventiveness of each person, but also on the knowledge of the preferences of those close to him/her (to cause them amazement, pleasure, moral satisfaction, etc.).

5. **The psychomoral restoration strategy** aims to cancel the state of restlessness, anguish, despair, which disturbs the soul balance of the person; restoring self-confidence; instilling the idea that everything is fixable and all obstacles can be overcome (except death); restoration of self-worth, restoration of inner balance and moral restoration [6, pp. 342-344]. The methods applied in moral therapy can be multiple: conversation/dialogue; circularity, hypothesizing, analysis and reflection; reframing; comparison, summarization, structured exercise, metaphor; narrative therapy; moral, humorous/comic stories; epistolary therapy, play therapy, melotherapy; occupational therapy, involving pets (especially cats and dogs), etc. Often in psychomoral restoration such procedures and techniques are of great use as: examples and stories from the counselor's personal life; psychological montage, suggestion, neurolinguistic programming, etc. Of course, we will strive to bring the person back to the state of well-being that he/ she experienced previously, other times, the counselor's actions, well thought out and carried out combinatorially, will succeed in substantially changing the cognitions, attitudes and behaviors of the beneficiary.

6. **The strategy of developing and monitoring the positive/ moral perspectives of the person and the family** is widely applied in *the Synthetic Model of complex ontological counseling of the family* [3, p. 37], which guides the counselor in the direction of the optimal combination of supporting and learning factors, of action and reflection through the analytical-synthetic exploration of the philosophical dimension/ontological, existential and axiological aspects; of the educational/ psycho-pedagogical dimension and the dimension of practicing systemic moral actions [3, p. 36-37]. The forms of counseling can be individual or group/ collective, and the various methods, taken from all types of therapies: collaborative; strategic; structural; systemic; centered on reflection; narrative; moral etc. The essential moment here resides in the fact that in the end we bring the beneficiary to the awareness of the negative phenomena of social cognition, which influenced his/her daily thinking and which complicated his/her personal and family life, in order to avoid valorizing them in the future. At the same time, in parallel, we propose to elaborate with the beneficiary together, at other times, he/ she will do it independently, *the list of positive/moral perspectives (personal or family)*. The counselor's actions are combined with discussions, explanations, reframing and redefining, etc., the emphasis being immediately placed on his/her reflections and the elaboration-structuring-application of techniques for monitoring the realization of the planned perspectives.

Summarizing what has been exposed, we consider it appropriate to complete the material in question

with the recommendation to deeply study the sources presented in the bibliography (and others) and to be aware of the need to conscientiously, systematically, competently and objectively approach the issue announced in the title of the study, involving as fully and creatively as possible the beneficiary and valuing the theoretical and practical eclecticism of counseling the person and the family. At the same time, we recommend specialists in the field of counseling and family education to harmoniously and appropriately combine the flexibility and suppleness of professional thinking with the originality and quality of applied technologies.

Of course, the study carried out only points to a vision and a type of approach to the problem, this, representing a brief introductory foray into the complex and contradictory aspects of social cognition and everyday thinking, which penetrates and influences the existence/life of each person, of the entire family or even the human community. The ideas presented in this study and in other similar studies incite the author's hope to develop a monographic study devoted to the prevention of personal and family difficulties that arise from erroneous social cognition.

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## PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL CONDITIONS CONDUCIVE TO INTENSIVE ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING BY PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS

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The article includes an analytical approach to the psycho-pedagogical conditions that favor the intensive learning of the English language by primary school students. The research methodology consisted in studying the specialized literature from the perspective of its functionality in the classroom. As psycho-pedagogical conditions, which stimulate the teaching-learning-assessment process of students in the age of information and technologies, we researched: the learning environment, the professional level of teaching staff, the pedagogical principles, the interactive teaching-learning-assessment methodology, the use of ICT and other didactic resources, the partnership with the family. The finality of these conditions focuses on the knowledge of English as an international language, and as an essential competence in today's society, which justifies the fact that Romanian students learn English starting within preparatory class, recently introduced in primary education, until the end of secondary education, then the high school, with the possibility to continue at the university or in other forms of education for young people and adults.

**Keywords:** *the learning environment, the professional teaching staff, the pedagogical principles, the interactive teaching-learning-assessment methodology, the use of ICT and other didactic resources, the partnership with the family.*

### CONDIȚII PSIHO-PEDAGOGICE CONDUCENTE ÎNVĂȚĂRII INTENSIVE A LIMBII ENGLIZE DE CĂTRE ELEVII DIN ȘCOALA PRIMARĂ

Articolul include o abordare analitică a condițiilor psihopedagogice care favorizează învățarea intensivă a limbii engleze de către elevii din clasele primare. Metodologia de cercetare a constat în studierea literaturii de specialitate din perspectiva funcționalității acesteia în sala de clasă. În calitate de condiții psihopedagogice, care stimulează procesul de predare-învățare-evaluare a elevilor din epoca informației și a tehnologiilor, am cercetat: mediul de învățare, cadrul didactic profesionist, principiile pedagogice, metodologia interactivă de predare-învățare-evaluare, utilizarea TIC și a altor resurse didactice, parteneriatul cu familia. Finalitatea acestor condiții se focusează pe cunoașterea limbii engleze ca limbă de circulație internațională ca și competență esențială în societatea actuală, ceea ce justifică faptul că elevii români învață engleza începând cu clasa pregătitoare, recent introdusă în cadrul învățământului primar, până la sfârșitul învățământului gimnazial, apoi cel liceal, având ulterior posibilitatea de a continua și la universitate sau în alte forme de educație a tinerilor și adulților.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *mediu de învățare, personal didactic profesionist, principii pedagogice, metodologia interactivă de predare-învățare-evaluare, utilizarea TIC și a altor resurse didactice, parteneriatul cu familia.*

#### Introduction

The interest in learning English, as one of the languages of international circulation, by the population of the whole world, of different ages, is constantly expanding and, respectively, its teaching is developing, adapting to various social and psycho-pedagogical conditions. On the one hand, the users, in our case the children, but indirectly also their parents, on the other hand, the teachers and managers, are becoming more aware and more responsible of the need to diversify educational offers and adapt them to the needs of the subjects. Teaching English as a foreign language to young schoolchildren is not an absolute novelty, even if formal education has relatively recently legislated learning standards in several countries.

In Romania, but also in the Republic of Moldova, through non-formal didactic approaches, with a playful character, preschool children and primary school students learned English, oral teaching in this sense, having a wider spread. Obviously, the friendly/inclusive educational environment, the educational Curriculum with all its components, including the contents and pedagogical methodology, but also the effective partnership with the family decisively contributes to the qualitative learning of communication, as a crucial linguistic action.

**The research methodology** consisted in studying the specialized literature from the perspective of its functionality in the classroom and related to the educational practice we have. Both reference bibliographic sources and didactic works, analyzed reflexively, allowed us to draw relevant conclusions and recommendations for improving the process of conscious, motivated learning, but also for increasing the sustainability of acquisitions, which can be used in multiple contexts.

### **The learning environment**

Together with the teacher, the teaching-learning methods, the assessment tools, the teaching resources used, the partnership with the family and an attractive, safe and also supportive/inclusive learning environment help young school children to learn to communicate freely without fear of making mistakes, excited about their daily progress as fluent English speakers. The way students are positioned in the benches is another important element in the teaching-learning process. The ideal arrangement is that all the benches are placed in a single row with some appropriate distance between them, and the empty ones are at the back of the classroom so that taller students will not occupy the front seats, so that everyone has visibility and be seen by the teacher [3, p. 14-17].

It is well known that one of the oldest and most used teaching aids is the blackboard, and today, in the digital age, it exists, and if, in some places, it is missing, it should, that in every classroom an interactive whiteboard or a smartboard, to make the qualitative and intensive learning of the English language more efficient. This is why it is necessary for the foreign language teacher to be a good user of it, of online educational resources, keeping a certain logic and, last but not least, creating an attractive, engaging and friendly teaching-learning environment.

At the same time, it should be emphasized that primary stage (PS) students feel confident, learn and respond optimally if they work in a pleasant, familiar environment where they feel comfortable and at ease. In order for this to be possible, the English teacher must „decorate” the classroom with different teaching materials, educational resources, brightly colored posters, images relevant to the study of the language, or even with students’ works - drawings, cutouts, collages, photographs or even written works [15, p. 48].

Any approach focused in the direction of the educational process could create an atmosphere conducive to teaching-learning, can be brought into the classroom, provided it does not prevent the development of instructive and educational activities, or distract attention from the learning objectives, be they plants, animals, toys, digital tools or any other object that could be of interest to young learners. If the classroom is also used by other classes or for teaching other subjects, the teacher should try to create a corner, a space dedicated specifically to the study of the English language [4, p. 1], using all educational materials-resources arranged on flipchart, magnetic board with thematic posters – produced exclusively by students, or brought by them to actively shape the educational process.

Last but not least, the ideal format for intensive learning would be for primary education classes, where English is taught, to benefit from modern equipment necessary for the smooth running of the lessons, which go from the classic to the interactive format, with recourse to the technological-digital component. Thus, the English teacher uses a video projector, laptop, phone, tablet or interactive whiteboard for participatory activities, as well as audio systems for learning materials in multimedia format.

### **The professional teaching staff**

The teacher is an actor in front of the students, whose performance has an overwhelming influence on the learning process. Many times, students say that they love a certain subject of study because they like the way the teacher behaves during class. Specialists in English teaching believe that learning a foreign language is very similar to learning to play the piano. You can’t be a good pianist, even if you know a lot about music history, without practicing. Similarly, you can’t be a good English speaker if you don’t actually speak the language, you don’t practice it systematically [2]. In the classroom, the teacher must impose a certain routine in this sense, in addition to being sympathetic and empathetic in an attempt to create a familiar, safe atmosphere, he goes from being active to being passive and letting the other conversation partners to speak. Since he gave up the position of the dominant actor during the English class, the teacher

assumes other determining roles for the success of learning and the smooth running of the lesson. The role of the teacher is changing. His voice is heard less and less in the classroom, to leave room for the students to express themselves in the foreign language they are studying [Ibidem, 2].

The teacher plays different roles during a lesson. Jeremy Harmer, one of the best-known specialists in English language teaching, mentions the following roles of the teacher: „organizer”, „controller”, „participant”, „prompter”, „resource”, „tutor”, „evaluator” [7, p. 108-115]. So, in the following we will describe different educational circumstances of the teacher, in which he is active, concretely, in the classroom. The first role of the teacher is to organize the lesson. The organization of a lesson begins outside the classroom, when the teacher thinks, consulting the curriculum/syllabus, of course, about what he has to teach, creates a plan either in his mind, or puts it on paper or collects it on the computer, chooses his means which he will use and the activities in which the students will be involved, he visually imagines how the lesson will unfold. The role of organizer will also continue in the classroom, when the teacher decides how to divide the students into groups according to the learning tasks, arrange the furniture, distribute the materials used. In the case of activities that involve organizing students into groups (creating a project, a poster, a sketch), the teacher can participate from the same position as the students, without dominating them or imposing their own ideas. Also, the teacher can adopt a more discreet position, that of a „*whisperer*” and help the students when they get stuck (they can't find the right word, they are not sure of the correctness of a sentence, etc.). In this case, the teacher is also a knowledge resource that the students can call on (they no longer use the dictionary to look up a word, but ask the teacher directly). By „*blowing*” certain information to the students when they are unsure, the teacher shows the students that he is there when they need support and motivates them to continue on the long and sometimes difficult road of intensive language learning foreign – *the tutor teacher*.

Modern approaches to teaching English promote a teacher who no longer stands still in front of the class and delivers his speech from there as an all-knowing authority. On the contrary, he is much more flexible, takes into account the needs and wishes of his students and adapts his methods accordingly. However, there are also situations in which the teacher must control his students in a manner similar to the traditional teacher (he interrupts the activities when the working time has expired, restores order when the students are preoccupied with something other than the activity he is carrying out, resolves any conflicts etc.) [Ibidem,7]. We cannot omit the fact, of course, that the teacher should not give the students English names, because the child remains the same person regardless of the language in which he expresses himself, and the national identity is drawn with a permanent marker in the identity book of the soul. Within a lesson, the teacher's *score* acquires different facets, integrated in the educational process, closely related to each other, without a strict limitation.

Finally, we can conclude from the above that a good English teacher is a charismatic leader and a manager, able to effectively manage all the resources at his disposal, to motivate students to get involved, to challenge them into the comprehensive and lasting process of learning a foreign language.

### **Pedagogical principles**

In this chapter, we emphasize from the start that pedagogical principles can be defined as norms with strategic and operational value, which need to be respected in order to ensure the efficiency of didactic activities, developed at the level of the system and the education process. The didactic principles have an indicative character, each teacher deciding for himself which principles to apply and at what moment of the lesson to do it. These principles are the result of the generalization of the experience gained by dozens of generations of teachers, which gives them a continuously perfectible character, which were first elaborated in the 17th century by J.A Comenius who stated that: „It is not enough only to you understand, you still have to learn, express and practice what you have understood!” [14, p. 1].

Didactic principles can best be described as a set of rules or general requirements that guide and provide a practical-functional meaning to the educational process, at the same time drawing the conditions for an effective success of the designed pedagogical objectives. Thus, we find that the principles of education fulfill the following general functions: they *guide* the path of education in achieving the objectives, they

*standardized* the practice of education and *suggest* requirements to be respected, they *provide* ways to solve situations, they *adjust* the activity of the teaching staff. On the way to practice, the laws of education are expressed in principles, and then in norms, as prescriptions, which guide their application [16, p. 41]. Also, we can consider without making the slightest mistake, that the implementation of these principles has concrete facts in the foreground, namely the certainty that the student, our subject that needs to be educated, is not an amorphous mass with a constant and high educational level, but it constitutes a diversity of characters, psychic developments, diverse temperaments and different level of education from individual to individual. Students have different wishes/ expectations from school. At first, most come to the institution with the desire to comply, later motivation and the interest of knowledge arise.

J. S. Bruner said that „To train someone in a discipline is not to make him store results in his mind, but to teach him to participate in the process that makes it possible to create knowledge” [17, p. 8]. We fully subscribe to this assertion and confirm the importance of knowledge production, its de facto creation, active participation in various acts of communication. Thus, of the two actors involved in the educational process, only the teacher is the one meant to provide professional training to his class of learners, differently trained not to simply take this information from them, more precisely, to learn to give a new meaning to the knowledge received in school. That is why the educational principles applied must be as diverse as possible, in order to be able to compensate for all the shortcomings in the training of students from the moment of the first step taken in the labyrinth of knowledge until the end of their training in the institutionalized system.

In substantiation of the above, we support the statement of Vl. Guțu, according to which the classical didactic principles remain current to this day. At the same time, thanks to the developments in pedagogical science, the emergence of new concepts and phenomena in education over the years, the classic didactic principles either changed or were supplemented with new ones:

**Table 1. Classical and modern didactic principles [Apud 19, p. 99].**

Classical didactic principles	Modern didactic principles
The educational principle of training; The principle of constant acquisition; The principle of ensuring the link between theory and practice; The principle of intuition; The principle of systematization and continuity; The principle of accessibility; The principle of thorough appropriation; The principle of respecting the particularities of the age of students, etc.	The principle of unity and integrity; The principle of contextuality; The cultural/ axiological principle; The principle of focusing on the learner; The principle of self-adjusting of teaching activity; The principle of individualization and differentiation of the act of learning, etc.

Among the very important principles in teaching-learning a foreign language, we will insist in detail on the *differentiated and individualized approach*, which involves adapting teaching methods to the different types of students in the classroom, with the aim of providing equal opportunities in the educational process and to reduce school failure, thus constituting a premise of school success. According to the principle of individualization, the organization and development of the educational process must be carried out according to the real possibilities of the students, taking into account the particularities of age, gender, level of previous training, as well as the individual differences, intellectual and physical potential of each individual student. These requirements refer both to the objectives, content and volume of what is studied in school, as well as to teaching-learning methods [12, p. 1].

One of the trends asserting itself in modern pedagogy aims at the flexibility of education, to ensure the development of the capacities and skills of each student in relation to his potential. Individualized learning sees both the student and the teacher as building a knowledge base together. It is necessary for certain children in the class, targeting in particular those who have a higher potential or those with deficiencies of any kind, the primary role in knowing them being played by the teacher.

The individualization of the didactic act at the level of the three links, teaching-learning-evaluation, is a pedagogical action that takes place under the conditions of education organized by school collectives and consists of measures that aim to adapt education to the intellectual possibilities of each child. It is achieved with the help of a differentiated instructional-educational content and various didactic techniques, adaptable to each child and each group of students [18, p. 132].

At the same time, this approach involves the personalization of learning, the adaptation of the didactic activity to the individual particularities of the student and can be achieved through the following techniques: personalization of the objectives (adapting them to the real possibilities of the student); personalization of learning activities, the student being able to choose the preferred way of working; adapting the time needed for learning (taking into account each student's own pace); adaptation of training materials (differentiated sheets, audio-video supports, boards, images) computer-assisted learning (realization of lessons in PPT); individualizing homework through common and differentiated tasks.

The fundamental function of differentiation consists in adapting the contents to the level of categories of individuals and to the level of each individuality in such a way that it acquires at least the volume of knowledge, skills and abilities generally required, thus ensuring a base unitary culture, appreciated as socially useful. By this, the school as an individual institution is authorized to practically apply the objectives of the general education reform to each individual student [13, p. 75].

The English teacher has a rich register of methods corresponding to the learning style and needs of each child through common requirements for all students or differentiated requirements, to which are added: common requirements for all students; differentiated requirements with: identical tasks – different time; different tasks – but at the same time; different tasks – different time; different tasks – according to the child's possibilities; identical worksheets – progressive tasks; individual activities – different themes [Ibidem 13].

The stages of differentiated instruction are the following: diagnosing students; placing students in groups based on diagnosis; determining means of differentiation and developing differentiated learning tasks/activities; differentiated approach to students at different stages of the lesson; the diagnosis of the results obtained by students in learning [22]. Thus, individualized and differentiated training, makes the process of intensive learning and children's relationships more efficient, defines cooperation and collaboration skills in the classroom, and the English language teacher in this way reaches his main goal of his teaching career, namely the school success of all his students.

So, only by respecting all these principles and each one separately, which are in a continuous interdependence with each other, can the educational process be successful. However, it should be noted that no matter how much the contents of the didactic principles and norms expand, they will not be able to cover the infinite variety of training situations and will not be able to provide convenient solutions for all kinds of changes that occur in the animated development of instructive-educational processes. In this sense, the teaching staff can produce, in a contextualized and specific manner for the group of students, certain principles/"golden rules", in partnership with the students, but also with parents and other colleagues who teach in the same class.

### **The interactive teaching-learning-evaluation methodology**

It is commonly recognized that the desire to learn a foreign language, and the need to learn in general, is almost as old as human history itself. According to the father of modern education, John Amos Comenius, „the acquisition of a language is also in relation to the sensations and experience acquired throughout the educational training” [ apud 10, p. 67]. Traditional methods of teaching, defined by a law of authority in which the teacher has the dominant role and based on the principle that the teacher brought knowledge to the student who was supposedly ready to receive it, are now considered unsuitable for mainstream education because from the point of view of several practitioners. Currently, the traditional teaching style is no longer an effective way to transmit information, knowledge, ideas, and thus various and at the same time different teaching-learning methods are being expanded, keeping in mind the needs of the student [1, p. 105]. Under this aspect, an effective and real teaching-learning process considers the use of methodology and pedagogy suitable to the requirements of the current generation of students, the use of new technologies and a constantly chang-

ing educational environment. And the difficulty in achieving this goal is finding new ways to stimulate and motivate the creative abilities of today's students, who have different approaches to learning.

From the perspective of recent educational theories, which place the student at the center of the educational act, it is recommended that we start from the student's points of interest in order to succeed in bringing him to the position of learning to learn. Precisely for this reason, these theses interposed in the educational process also try to fight against boredom in school, which is manifested by the lack of interest in the entire educational process, one of the main causes of school failure [5].

It has been shown that the practice of a „chalk-board” type of teaching which, we must admit, had its merits, its glory time, with the student passively participating and the teacher exclusively dominant, is in no way suitable for today's generation. In this case, given the updated context, teachers use a wide range of strategies to encourage the student's active participation in classroom activities.

Thus, learning by „doing”, bringing real-life problems in front of students and helping them discover the required information to solve these problems are methods that are part of the student-centered learning approach. The teacher guides and facilitates learning, rather than controlling it, helps students to interpret, organize knowledge, so that they form skills not only in the studied content, but also in the actual learning [20, p. 271].

In the context of today's modern society, there is a need for children to be involved from an early age in an active, interactive teaching-learning process that provides opportunities for teacher-student, student-student and student-resource interaction. The correct acquisition of the complex system of modern, active teaching-learning methods and strategies is important, because it has a greater impact on students. The school textbooks from which they took their information in the past are being replaced today with new technological resources to create interactive, student-centered learning. The explanation of the use of interactive, modern methods comes from the concept: „I listen and forget. I see and remember. I do and understand,” according to Confucius [21, p. 211].

As for modern teaching-learning methods and techniques, they provide an alternative to the traditional, classical formulas, offering other methodological and instrumental options, and they also enrich the evaluative practice. In the English class, as qualified teachers and experts in the secrets of modern didactics, we can „embrace” different teaching-learning approaches, the use of one method or another depending on the objectives, the learning context, and the student's potential. For illustration, in the following table, the modern methods and techniques are presented in a mirror with the classical/ traditional ones, relevant to the didactics of a foreign language:

**Table 2. Classic and modern teaching-learning methods and techniques [9, p. 32-137].**

Classical methods and techniques	Modern methods and techniques
The Grammar Translation Method.	The Direct Method.
The Audio-Lingual Method.	The Silent Way.
The Presentation, Practice, Production Method.	The Community Language Learning.
The Test-Teach-Test Method.	The Total Physical Response Method.
The Task-Based Learning Method.	The Communicative Language Teaching.
	Suggestopedia.

It is obvious, however, that among the various modern strategies we must also use materials, modern teaching-learning means, such as: worksheets, pictures or flashcards, materials from everyday life („from-life”, materials), picture stories, posters, brochures, leaflets, CDs (music), DVDs (films, commercials, cartoons), games, poetry), drama (plays, role-plays), projects.

The diversification of didactic strategies aims to encourage our students to demonstrate communication, comprehension, reading and writing skills in varied contexts and with certain intentions/ projections in different plans of everyday life.

Our duty and at the same time our reason as teachers is to prepare the student for „to be” and „to become”, for autonomy, for self-education and self-evaluation. Moreover, we can say that in today's edu-

cational process, another way of approaching the evaluation of school results is fundamental, a model of design-realization of the integrated process of teaching-learning-evaluation, centered, truly, on the student. Therefore, didactic evaluation activities must be designed from the perspective of the training needs of the educated. It is necessary for the evaluation to be centered on its formative aspects, so as to cultivate and support the students' interest in study, to guide them in the learning activity.

The English teacher must know all assessment methods and tools, and apply them according to the particularities of the class of students. The effective use and exploitation of assessment strategies, forms, methods and tools will highlight the aspect of creativity, critical thinking, individual manifestation, specific to each student, the final result being the formation, at the level of the individual, of the general culture, the development of skills, attitudes, skills, necessary for its social integration.

The option for one or another of the known evaluation methods (traditional methods and complementary methods) is the result of several factors: the purpose and objectives of the evaluation, its type, the specifics of the contents subject to assessment, the particularities of the targeted school population, the acquisitions of teaching staff regarding exercise/practice/experimentation various methods of deployment.

In the effort to determine the quality of school results and school progress, the foreign language teacher has at his disposal a rich range of assessment methods and tools. Or, the *evaluation method* is a way through which the teaching staff „gives students the opportunity to demonstrate the level of mastery of knowledge, the formation of different capacities tested by using a variety of tools suitable for the intended purpose” [19, p. 99]. *The evaluation tool* represents a constitutive element of the method, through which the student becomes aware of the evaluation task. It is the one that „values both the evaluation objectives and the initiative initiated to achieve the proposed goal” [Ibidem, 19].

Choosing the most appropriate evaluation methods and tools is an important decision in order to achieve a pertinent and useful evaluation approach. The most commonly used classification is the one that distinguishes the following assessment methods and tools:

**Table 3. Traditional and modern assessment strategies [After Stanciu, 2003, p. 99].**

Traditional strategies	Modern strategies
<p><b>Oral tests:</b> check conversation (through questions and answers); with visual support; rendering (re-telling); description and reconstruction; description/explanation/instruction; completing some incomplete dialogues, etc.</p> <p><b>Written tests:</b> Test Paper (unannounced written work/tests); independent work activity in class; control work (announced); home work; the test etc.</p> <p><b>Practical tests:</b> making some objects; execution of experiments or experimental works; drawing up drawings, sketches, graphs; the interpretation of a certain role; mime, dance, etc.</p>	<p>Predictive/ Initial assessment. Formative/Continuous assessment. Summative/ Final assessment. Systematic observation of students' activity and behavior; The investigation; The project; The portfolio; Self-evaluation etc.</p>

Evaluation strategies have variable frequencies of use, this does not imply that the ones that are found more often in the school program are also the most useful for motivating and supporting the learning of the educated.

**The introduction of ICT** in the teaching-learning-assessment process of the English language has become an immediate need of the professor at the department, and as regards the intensive study of modern languages, the opportunities for socialization, visualization, communication, graphic organization, of representation offered by new technologies. By using new didactic technologies of information and communication in the educational process, a new language learning environment is created, giving schoolchildren the opportunity to explore the new, to solve problems through their own research/investigation activities, to

relate to others in different cultural environments and social, to express reasoned opinions and, at the same time, it generates, to a very large extent, the improvement of their school results. With the direct help of the following applications such as: Plickers, AnswerGarden, Book Creator, LearningApps.org, Bitsboard, Padlet, Mentimeter, Kahoot, Socrative, the Moodle platform promotes the participation and cooperation of all students in English classes.

The purpose of the teacher in using the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) methodology is to achieve three major objectives, predetermined in the educational process: to support teachers in the teaching process at high quality standards, to increase the integration of digital technology in the teaching-learning-assessment process and improve English language proficiency at European level.

The use of the CLIL methodology in the teaching-learning-assessment of the English language of primary school students implies the use of open educational resources – RED/ OER – Open Educational Resources, which support the diversity of the topics addressed and the originality in the organization of the didactic materials, being focused exclusively on the integration of the English language as foreign language in teaching the contents of different study subjects in the primary cycle. CLIL is a relatively new educational approach to primary level classes in Romania, which combines the learning of the specific contents of some educational subjects with the learning of a foreign language. The foreign language is acquired through thematic content taught in an attractive way to encourage learning. Special attention is paid to learning skills, as they are very important for the development of communication and language skills. Another very important aspect of CLIL methodology is the impact it has on students' thinking and cognitive skills, helping them to broaden their conceptual horizons. CLIL exposes students to useful, innovative and valuable learning experiences, leading them to transdisciplinary learning. There are also a number of cognitive and linguistic advantages for students in the CLIL approach: the ability to think and learn in a foreign language, to use English in communication about other educational subjects [8, pp. 16-17]. According to Do Coyle, there are a number of innovative principles that must be respected in the CLIL approach at primary education level:

**Table 4. CLIL principles – „The 4 C” [ibidem, 8].**

<b>CONTENT (THROUGH LANGUAGE).</b> The foreign language is learned through subject-oriented content, delivered in a manner that encourages natural, active learning. The focus in language learning is <b>NOT</b> on structure or grammar, but on using the language in real-life contexts (to solve tasks).	<b>COMMUNICATION.</b> Language is used as a mean of accomplishing tasks, solving problems, developing projects, and expressing ideas.
<b>COGNITION.</b> The foreign language (English) is used as the language in which one thinks in parallel with the mother tongue. Using English improves understanding of concepts.	<b>CULTURE.</b> Learning a foreign language means acquiring knowledge about the cultures that use that language and confronting them with your own culture. Using English to communicate and think is an essential competence that can function in globalized plurilingual spaces.

Technology will not replace the role of the teacher, just as the school will always be the formal environment of the learning process, teachers will always play a central role in the learning process. We strongly believe that there will always be a need for teachers in education, but what will change is their role. To use ICT effectively in the classroom, teachers need to play a different role. Teachers are no longer the sole source of all knowledge. Students can find information on different platforms. There is virtually an infinite amount of information available anytime, anywhere, including in and for the English language.

**The school-family partnership** represents an important current problem, highlighted by various educational policy documents at the national and international level, but it also guides research in the field of education. In Romania, according to the National Education Law no.1/2011, parents are considered the main part-



ners and beneficiaries of the education process. Article 80 stipulates that all major decisions in pre-university education should be taken by consulting the representative associative structures of parents [11, p. 1]. This law gives parents the right to actively participate in the management of educational units, through the presence of two or three parents' representatives, depending on the size of the school (Article 96), in the school's administrative board. Parents are involved in the elaboration of the educational offer of the educational unit, by participating in the organization of *School after School* programs and in establishing the curriculum at the decision of the school [ibidem, 11]. The role of parents in the school-family partnership is a particularly important one in the development and involvement as much as it is needed and when it is necessary for the children to participate staggered, progressively and at the same time continuously throughout the educational process, within the education system, thus supporting a positive attitude towards the school.

The involvement of parents in the children's education facilitates the success of the activities carried out by the teacher, both inside and outside it, thus, the students get: high grades, good/very good reading and writing skills, a high attendance rate, relationships beautiful relationships between children and parents, the reduction of behavioral problems/conflicts and, last but not least, a satisfactory promotion rate.

The main factors that help the child in completing his own education are the school and the family. For a good collaboration between these two factors, *communication* is needed. It is stated more and more often that parents have not only a biological role and the obligation to feed or clothe their children, but also a moral duty to actively contribute to their education, that this task does not belong exclusively to the school. The family provides the child with the first information about the world around him, the first norms and rules of conduct, but also the social and emotional climate necessary for his needs and desires. This type of relationship is also decisive in that the family mediates and conditions communication with the other social components, especially with the school [6, p. 7-8].

This closely interconnected relationship offers teachers: an increased motivation to improve educational methods, presence and permanent involvement in supporting the educational act, and also as a benefit, it represents a high level in terms of the quality of communication and the cooperation of the partners involved.

The family occupies a special place in the institutional system of education. Its action during the entire period of development includes all aspects of personality formation. It represents one of the most complete socialization and education environments, due to the possibility to introduce the child to the most variable situations and to act on him through the most complex and natural means [Ibidem, 6].

Also, here we can mention the presence of the community in school life, benefiting from increased support from it both morally and financially at the same time, because the harmonious development of a child is not only the concern of parents, but also of society as a whole, consisting primarily of the legislative, financial and social protection systems.

## Conclusions

Finally, we conclude that, in addition to the above-mentioned factors, time is an extremely powerful weapon in the intensive learning process of a foreign language. A preschooler or a primary school student discovers over time, through the didactic experiences he takes part in, new words from his mother tongue that name specific objects or activities. Similarly, the little ones can also use the same strategies to learn English, more precisely, PS can be considered as a kind of training for their adaptation to school life. In other words, children perceive the intensive learning of a foreign language as an accessible and easy activity, being exposed to the content of all the psycho-pedagogical conditions offered by the teacher in the educational process. Knowing English as a language of international movement is an essential competence in today's society, which justifies the fact that students learn this language from the preparatory class, recently introduced in primary education, until the end of secondary education, then high school, having then the possibility to continue the study of the English language in academic education. Given the particular importance of the ability to express oneself in English in the context of permanent cultural exchanges, which characterizes today's society, studying it as an educational discipline from PS, constitutes a strategy through which students acquire linguistic and cultural acquisitions that to enable them to communicate in this language from an early school age and, subsequently, in the other school years, but also in adult life.

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## **CAREER GUIDANCE OF STUDENTS IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES: FINDINGS AND PERSPECTIVES**

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Career guidance for students is an essential process that helps them make informed decisions about their further education and career path. This process is influenced by a number of factors, including educational policies implemented at the international and national level. The fluctuations of the labor market justify the transfiguration of the career guidance and counseling process in the hierarchy of the education system. The elements of the career guidance process can be found in the practices of the pre-university education system, in order to assist teenagers in their career option. The conducted study highlights that career guidance is an important segment, reflected in educational policy documents, in which it is assigned an essential role in the personal and professional development of students.

*Keywords: career, student career guidance, educational policy documents.*

### **GHIDAREA ÎN CARIERĂ A ELEVILOR ÎN CONTEXTUL POLITICILOR EDUCAȚIONALE: CONSTATĂRI ȘI PERSPECTIVE**

Ghidarea în carieră a elevilor este un proces esențial care îi ajută să ia decizii informate cu privire la educația lor ulterioară și la parcursul profesional. Acest proces este influențat de o serie de factori, inclusiv politicile educaționale implementate la nivel internațional și național. Fluctuațiile pieței muncii justifică trasfigurarea procesului de ghidare și consiliere în carieră în ierarhia sistemului de învățământ. Elementele procesului de ghidare în carieră se regăsesc în practicile sistemului de învățământ preuniversitar, în vederea asistării adolescenților în opțiunea de carieră. Studiul realizat evidențiază că ghidarea în carieră este un segment important, reflectat în documentele de politici educaționale, în care i se atribuie rolul esențial în dezvoltarea personală și profesională a elevilor.

*Cuvinte-cheie: carieră, ghidare în carieră a elevilor, documente de politici educaționale.*

#### **Introduction**

In a constantly changing world, career guidance is not a simple act of choosing a profession. It is a complex process that takes place throughout the individual's life, giving him the flexibility to adapt to the demands of the labor market, helping to clarify interests, values and skills.

Career guidance provides the individual with detailed information about various professions, tools to identify their strengths and develop skills relevant to their desired career, provides individualized support to facilitate decision-making and career planning. Career guidance is an important investment in the future of each individual. Through its multiple benefits, it contributes significantly to the personal and professional development of the individual, leading to increased career satisfaction and professional success. Career guidance places the emphasis on the person and the dynamics of their development, emphasizes not only the professional aspect, but also the educational one. Career education represents an educational intervention for the development, in advance, of the skills and abilities needed by young people for the development and management of their own career.

#### **Approaching the problem: international and national level**

Career guidance and counseling of human resources has become an indispensable component of the socio-economic development of countries since the beginning of the twentieth century. The importance of career guidance and counseling services was further emphasized in the first decades of the 21st century, century when the great challenges of the contemporary world, such as: globalization, technology and computerization imposed the need for continuous adaptation to the dynamically changing labor market.

According to the reports of the Council of the European Union of September 28, 2023, regarding the guidelines for the employment policies of the member states, several decisions were adopted: “The member states and the Union must make efforts to develop a coordinated strategy for the employment of work, in particular to promote a competent, skilled and adaptable workforce, as well as forward-looking labor markets capable of reacting to the evolution of the economy, with a view to achieving the objectives of full employment and social progress, of balanced economic growth, high level of protection and improvement of the quality of the environment established in Article 3 of the Treaty on the European Union...”. “In order to strengthen economic and social progress, ..., to strengthen the industrial base of the Union and to achieve inclusive, competitive and resilient labor markets in the Union, Member States should address labor shortages and the lack of qualified personnel and promote quality education, future-oriented training, education and training and lifelong learning and reskilling, as well as effective active labor market policies and improved career opportunities, by strengthening links between the education system and the market work...” [11].

These are just some of the priority decisions stipulated in the September 2023 European Union Council Reports, which reinforce the usefulness and socio-economic necessity of career guidance and counseling services for the young generation, but also for adult human capital.

It was found that the experience of developed countries in the field of career guidance services is comprehensive through various practices that cover the vocational needs of the population of all age groups. Career guidance services are valued through various programs successfully implemented by social structures, such as:

1. *Counseling programs in schools and universities*: most EU member countries have career counseling programs implemented in schools and universities to support pupils and students in making decisions related to education/vocational training and careers;

2. *Online platforms in vocational guidance*: technological progress has launched possibilities for vocational self-exploration with the help of online platforms. These platforms help people discover their interests, skills and values in relation to career opportunities, but also possibilities of professional mobility in the context of the labor market globalization;

3. *Vocational integration/reintegration programs for people with disabilities*: for people with disabilities or who face difficulties in finding or keeping a job, there are special rehabilitation and vocational reintegration programs that provide support and resources to achieve their career goals.

Career guidance services are also offered by various centers and agencies:

- *Specialized career guidance and counseling centers*: in some countries, there are specialized organizations that provide career guidance and counseling services for young people, adults and people in professional transition/retraining. These organizations may offer services, such as skills assessments, individual counseling and vocational training programs (Canada, France, UK, Greece, Lithuania, etc.);

- *National Employment Agencies*: state structures empowered to ensure the implementation of state policy in the field of employment promotion, labor migration and mediation of unemployment situations. Within these structures, information and professional guidance services were also implemented for all categories of beneficiaries (USA, Great Britain, Germany, etc.).

Thus, we find that international practices in the field of career guidance services support the population in career issues. It is important to note that each country and community has its own needs and resources in this area, and career guidance and counseling practices and programs may vary accordingly.

At the national level, career guidance is an important segment, reflected in educational policy documents, in which it is assigned an essential role in the personal and professional development of students. The policy documents reflect concern for preparing students for future labour market challenges and promoting successful careers.

Thus, in the Education Code of the Republic Of Moldova it is stipulated that secondary education contributes to the formation of a free and creative personality by ensuring the development of students , skills, as well as by advising and guiding them in determining the optimal individual path to high school, secondary technical vocational or post-secondary technical vocational education. High school education ensures the development in students of the competences defined by the National Curriculum and advising them in

choosing the individual educational or professional route to higher education or non-tertiary Post-Secondary Technical Vocational Education, depending on potential, vocation and performance. It is important to mention that in the **Education Code** [2], we find career guidance as a concern in the context of education achievement in the Republic of Moldova, where clarity is required with reference to the conceptual positions: the structure of the system of institutions and the human resources involved in the process. Thus, it becomes necessary to develop a Conception regarding career guidance.

At the national level, we attest to the existence of normative acts that represent a foundation in guiding students in their careers, including the **Concept on the orientation, training and professional training of human resources** [3] and the **Regulation on the professional orientation and psychological support of the population in career** [16] - related issues, in which it is stipulated that there is a need „to be developed and implemented special programs and activities for information, psychological support, orientation, training and professional integration of citizens in accordance with the individual peculiarities of personality, with the needs of the labor market and with the continuous socioeconomic changes, as well as measures to support economic agents for their participation in the implementation of the respective programs”.

Document **Quality standards for primary and general secondary education institutions from the perspective of the child-friendly school** [17], Standard. 1.2. *The school communicates systematically and involves the family and the community in the decision-making process indicators*. 1.2.12. *Teachers involve community resource people in career guidance activities for children, including depending on local socio-economic specifics*, emphasize that teachers not only provide students with access to relevant career information, but also connect them with active members of their community. It can improve the relevance of education for students, giving them a broader perspective on future possibilities and building directions between the school and local work worlds, which need to be discussed with students in career guidance activities.

**The reference framework of the National Curriculum** [1], a document of educational policies, but also a document of theoretical, methodological and praxiological substantiation of the curricular system, provides for the curricular area Counseling and guidance, completed by the series of competencies, especially in terms of the competence to consciously choose the future area of professional activity for the purpose of self-realization, essential for the formation of a generation of young people ready to integrate successfully in the society and the labor market.

Career guidance can also be found in the High School Graduate Profile characterized by the general picture of the competences, knowledge and abilities that students should acquire at the end of the high school cycle. Career guidance for students is an essential process in helping them shape their graduate profile and make informed choices about their future careers.

In the context of students' career guidance, the development of the National Curriculum is a strategic direction to ensure the quality of education, and career guidance and orientation activities, as trans-disciplinary activities promoted within all school subjects by shifting the emphasis from knowledge formation to the formation of professional skills and competences, emphasize the applicability of the *Curricular area: Counseling and guidance*.

The analysis of the existing legal framework presents several policy documents containing provisions on career counseling and guidance. However, we attest to the lack of a coherent policy and mechanisms to implement the legal provisions, which would ensure students' effective access to Career counseling and guidance services and, subsequently, access to the labor market.

We highlight that the Career Guidance dimension is reflected in a number of school documents:

- National Curriculum for the **Personal Development** discipline – one of the five modules within the Curriculum is Personal Career Design and the Development of the Entrepreneurial Spirit, which emphasizes the understanding of professions from the perspective of the labor market, career planning and career decision-making, the development of the entrepreneurial spirit as an option career, etc. The competence units for this discipline aim at: identifying basic information about work, trades and professionals from different fields, as part of the mechanisms of knowledge and understanding of the real world; capitalizing on the opportunities offered by the school community for launching initiatives and personal development; appreciating the benefits of career planning based on informed decisions for personal development [6];

- **Methodical guides for teaching staff** in order to facilitate the teaching of the Personal Development discipline;
- **The best practices guide regarding career guidance and counseling of students and young people with Special Educational needs (SEN)** [13];
- The curriculum for the optional discipline **Career guidance** for grades VIII-IX, approved by the National Council for Curriculum (Order of the Ministry of Education and Research no. 917 of 25.07.2023), which guides students to choose either a profession, or a further educational path. This includes researching local job and education offerings, as well as lessons to develop life skills, for example, critical thinking, communication, teamwork and empathy [7];
- The curriculum for the optional discipline **Volunteering for Education** (X-XII), which has multiple and valuable formative values, generated at the confluence of education for volunteering and professional orientation towards the educational field [8];
- The optional course **Reading for career guidance**, aimed at motivating students regarding career guidance, familiarizing students with the spectrum of professions and occupations on the labor market in the Republic of Moldova and determining their own vocation through reading [9];
- The optional discipline **Economic and Entrepreneurial Education**, which provides activities for training the ability to understand and solve the problems that people face daily, facilitates decision-making in concrete economic situations [10].

These and other resources creatively capitalize on various contents on the dimension of career guidance, such as: Professions around me (my family), Professions of the community, Professions of the future, Economic sectors of the community, Domestic business, Professional interests, The path to success, Personal and professional relationships, The value of studies in building a career, Elaboration of CV, Cover letter, Job interview, etc.

The analysis of educational policy documents at the international, national and institutional level allowed us to find trends in the career guidance of students with special educational needs.

The need to develop the field of Career Guidance and increase access to vocational guidance services in order to achieve the right to work is set out in the **UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities (2010)** [4]; the **Strategy on the rights of persons with disabilities (2021-2030)** [18], which aims to improve the lives of persons with disabilities in the next decade through the initiative Developing new skills for new jobs (pt.8), a prerequisite to access and succeed in the labor market.

While the **Council of the European Union’s directive on equal treatment in employment and employment** [12] contributes significantly to promoting the equal rights of persons with disabilities in employment, including appropriate workplace arrangements, more needs to be done to ensure better labour market outcomes for people with special needs.

At the national level, the relevance of the professional orientation of persons with disabilities in order to access the free labor market is established in Law no. 60 of 30.03.2012 on social inclusion of persons with disabilities, which establishes, by art.40, general principles of the process of vocational guidance and training of persons with disabilities.

Actions aimed at ensuring access to professional guidance and orientation services are also reflected in the National Program for Social Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities for the years 2017-2022, which through objective 4 highlights the increase in employment rate of persons with disabilities, establishes the need to implement actions on providing guidance and training measures for persons with disabilities, based on individual needs, at least 60% of people with disabilities who have benefited from orientation, training and professional rehabilitation courses have been employed.

Through the action plan on the implementation of the new **Program for the development of inclusive education in the Republic of Moldova for 2024-2027** [14], the Government aims to achieve the specific objective no.1.2 ensuring the access of children/young people with SEN and/or disabilities in Technical Vocational Education Institutions by developing and implementing the methodological framework on inclusive education in TVEI and the financing mechanism, so that by 2027 the share of those included constitutes 3% of the total number of children/young people included at this level of Education.

An important role in the career guidance of children with SEN has institutions participating in the process of professional guidance of children/young people with disabilities. The Republican Center for Psycho-pedagogical assistance (RCPA), subordinated to MER; Psycho-pedagogical Assistance Services (PAS) are directly involved in the complex assessment of children for educational inclusion and professional orientation and the formulation of recommendations on school and vocational orientation. One of the goals of the psycho-pedagogical assistance provided through the Psycho-pedagogical Assistance Services is to ensure the school and professional orientation; in the pre-university education, professional orientation activities are also carried out within the resource centers on inclusive education (RCIE).

In general education institutions, tasks in the field of Career orientation and guidance are set for the school psychologist, in accordance with the Methodological Guidelines regarding the psychologist's activity in general education institutions, according to which one of the action areas refers to determining the interests, skills, students' skills for career orientation.

Within the technical vocational education (TVE), system the responsibility for discussing and approving the plan of vocational guidance activities lies with the Teaching Council. **The framework regulation for the organization and functioning of secondary technical vocational education institutions** [15] provides for the following tasks regarding professional orientation: planning and organizing professional guidance activities (which is the responsibility of the deputy director); organizing school and professional orientation; guiding students' careers (which is the responsibility of the psychologist); guidance activities (responsibility of each teacher).

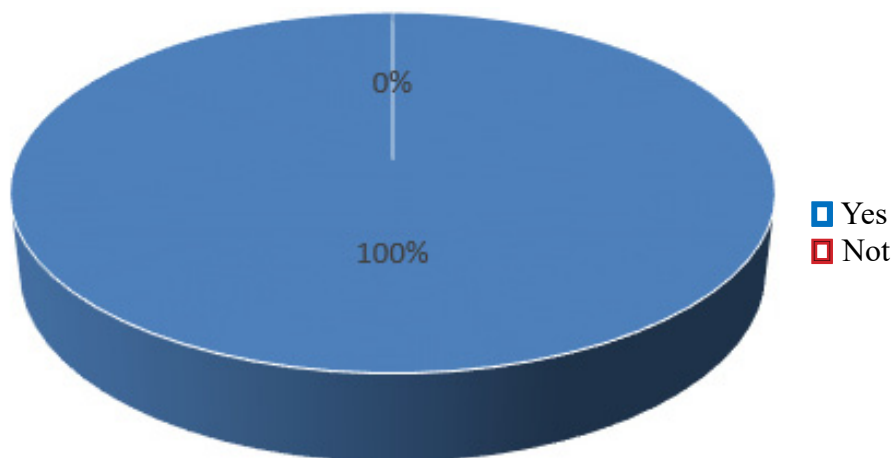
### Data analysis and processing

In order to establish career guidance and counseling trends in school reality at all levels of education with various categories of beneficiaries, the managers of some general secondary education institutions, teaching staff, students were questioned.

According to the answers provided by the managers, the following findings are outlined:

- Managerial staff (100%) claim that career guidance activities for students are organized in the educational institution they coordinate, they appreciate these activities as essential for the development of students, contributing to their professional training and preparation for future career choices (fig. 1);

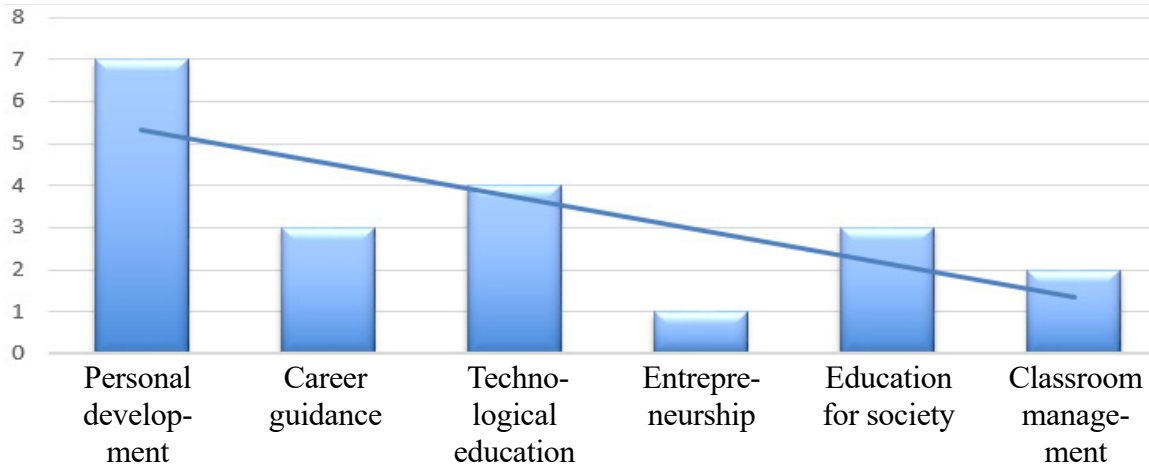
**Fig. 1. Organization of career guidance activities for students in the educational institution.**



- Managerial staff state that the students' career guidance activities are carried out within the disciplines of: *personal development, career guidance, education for society, technological education, entrepreneurship, classroom management*. By including career guidance in subjects such as personal development, the managerial staff suggest that these activities are not only limited to career guidance, but also aim at the general development of students in terms of personal, social and technological skills, however, it is worth noting that *the limited number of proposed activities may not cover the full diversity of opportunities and careers available to students* (fig. 2);

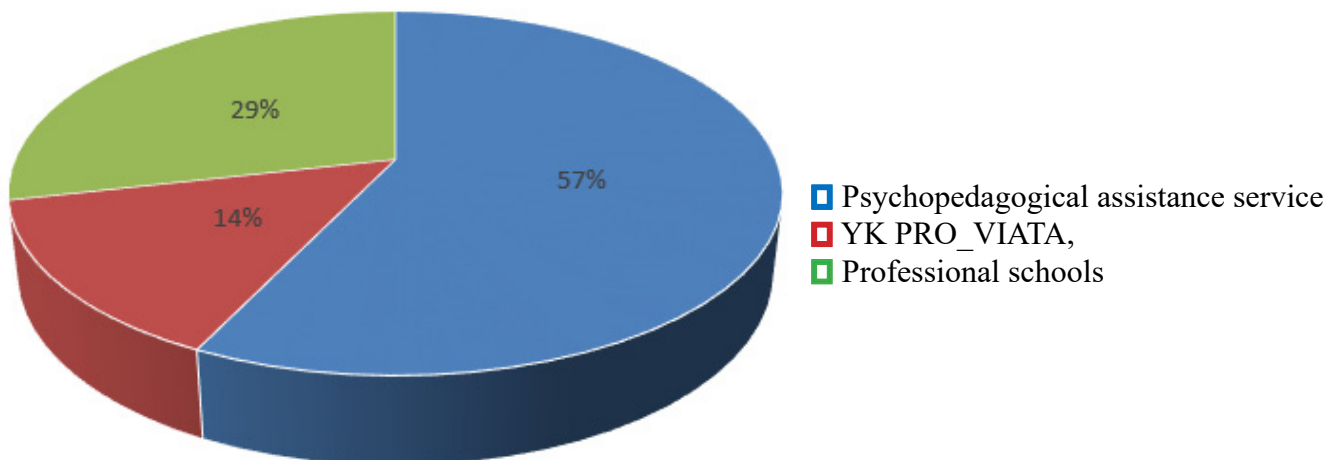


**Fig. 2. School subjects that integrate the dimension of career guidance.**



- in the context of the career guidance of students with SEN from the perspective of collaboration with educational partners in order to ensure the career guidance process of these students, school managers mention that they only interact with YK PRO\_VIATA, PAS, professional schools, the results indicate the efforts of school managers to collaborate with educational partners to support career guidance for students with SEN, but at the same time recognize the need to expand and diversify these collaborations to ensure a wider range of opportunities and resources for these students (fig. 3);

**Fig. 3. The educational partners with which the school collaborates in order to ensure the career guidance process for students with special educational requirements.**

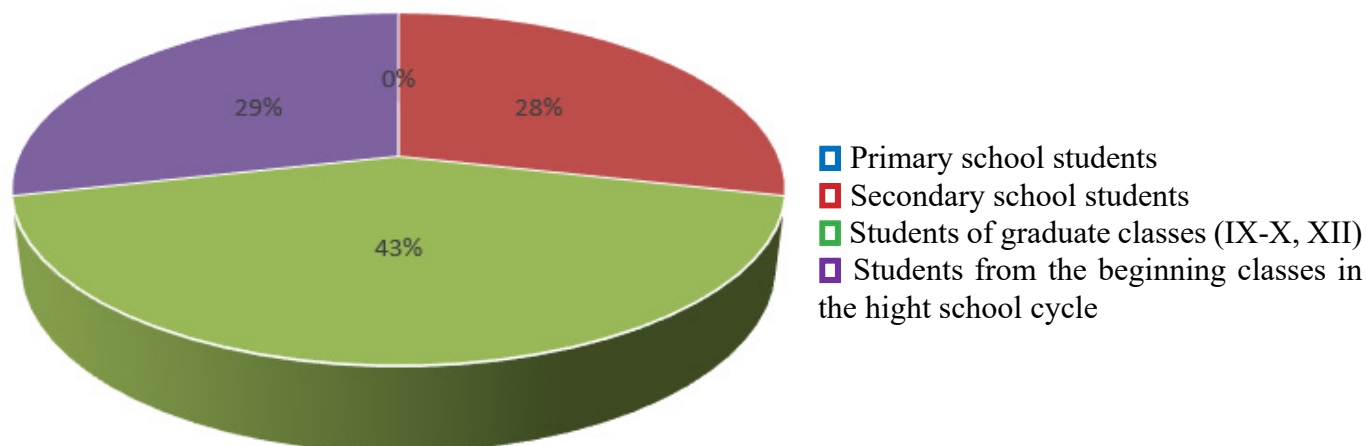


- 29% of students starting high school are involved in career guidance activities, 43% of graduate students, 28% of secondary school students and primary school students are not involved at all, these results show that a significant percentage of secondary school students and from the high school cycle are not involved in career guidance activities may suggest an opportunity to improve the strategies and resources available for these groups (fig. 4);

- the managerial staff claim that the difficulties they encounter in managing the career guidance process of students in the institution they lead are related to: *the lack of interest on the part of students, the indecision of students in choosing a profession, a modest number of hours and optional activities at this subject, lack of motivation, limited time for career guidance activities.*

The school managers have proposed recommendations for improving the career guidance process of students: mandatory inclusion of the discipline Career Guidance in the school curriculum; elaboration of a Guide /Magazine on promoting both intellectual and craft professions; distribution of more hours for career guidance of students; carrying out more career guidance activities; providing the institution with educational resources for students with special educational needs regarding career guidance.

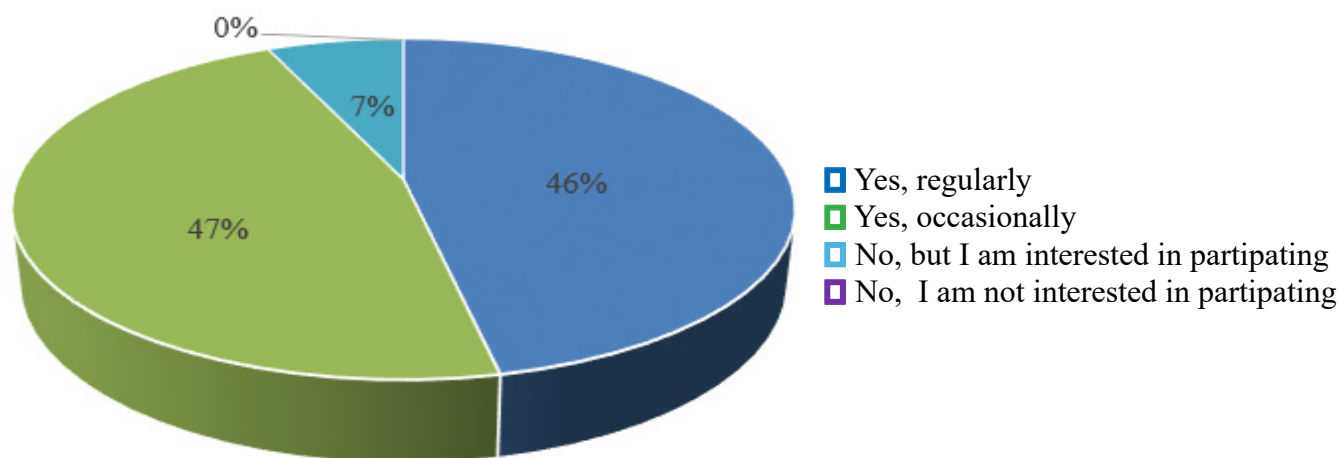
**Fig. 4. Categories of students for whom career guidance activities are carried out.**



The analysis and interpretation of the answers provided by the teaching staff highlighted the following:

- 45% of teachers regularly participate in the organization and implementation of school career guidance activities for students, demonstrating a constant commitment and active involvement in the career guidance of students; 45% participate occasionally, only 6% of teachers do not participate regularly, about 4% who do not participate at all and do not show an explicit interest in participating. The high percentage (45%) of teachers who regularly participate in career guidance activities is significant, but there is also a part that requires additional support or motivation to get more actively involved;

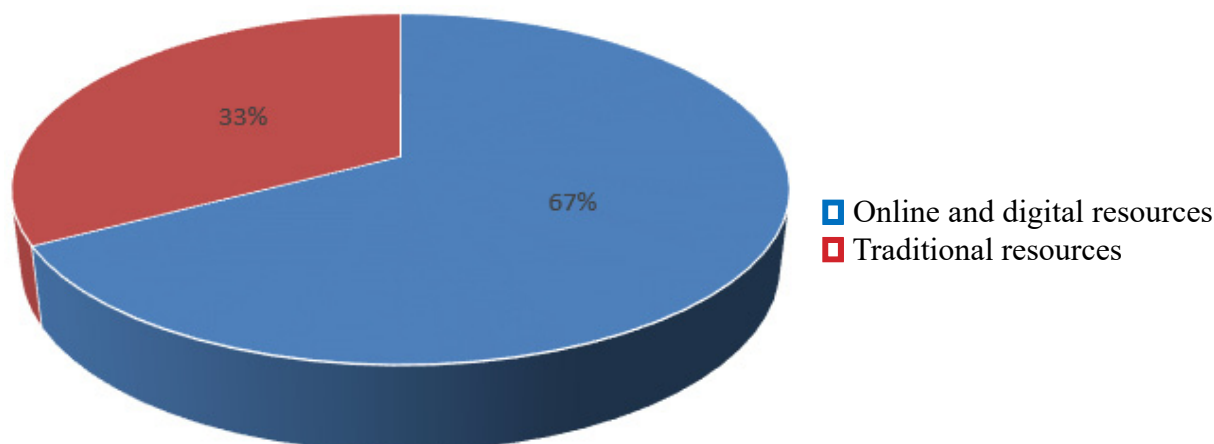
**Fig. 5. Participation of teaching staff in the organization/implementation of school career guidance activities for students.**



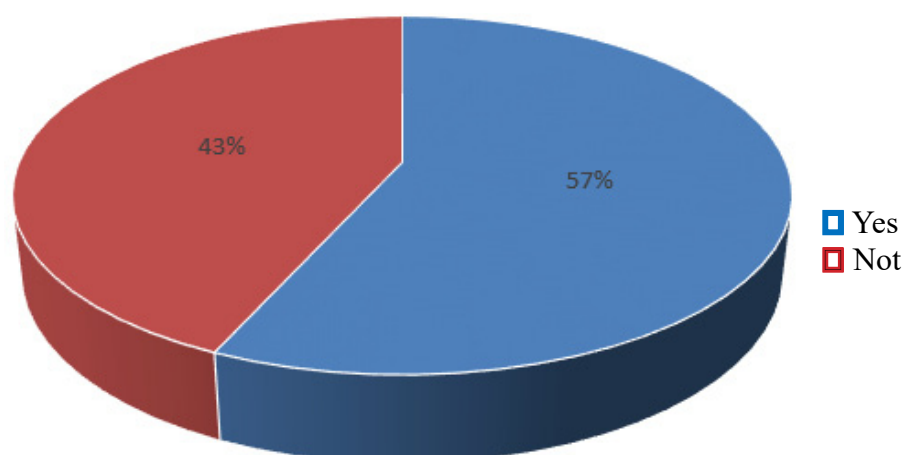
- regarding the resources used to guide students in identifying career options, 67% of teachers mostly use *online and digital resources* (videos, films, presentations, tests), without mentioning concrete examples of educational platforms; 33% of teachers use *traditional resources* (books, magazines, specialized textbooks, the teacher's personal development guide, didactic materials, student worksheets). The use of online and digital resources indicates an adaptation to current technologies, but also emphasizes the need for clear guidelines to help teachers select and use the most effective resources for students (fig. 6);

- only 57% of teachers state that they adapt career guidance activities and materials to meet the needs and abilities of students with special educational needs, among the examples provided by them can be mentioned: adapting the content and teaching methodologies to suit the needs students' specific needs, specific activities to help students with special needs explore the different career options available (reading texts, interactive games, use of pictures), use of relevant examples and practical activities (fig. 7);

**Fig. 6. Educational resources on student career guidance.**

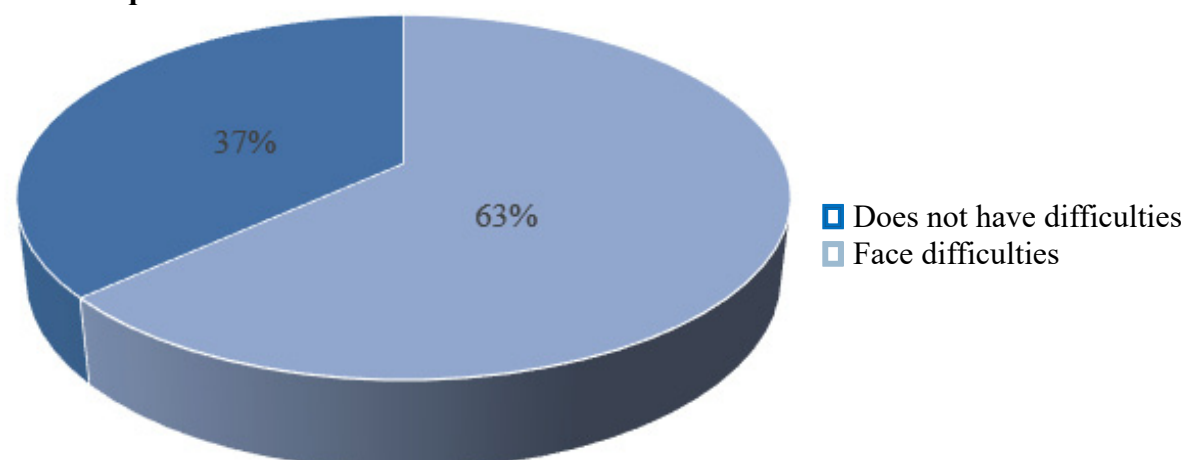


**Fig. 7. Adapting career guidance activities and materials for students with special educational needs.**



- 63% of teachers encounter difficulties in the career guidance process of students in the institution where they work, these being: the lack of didactic resources/materials and a relevant material base, the indifference and lack of interest of the students, the non-involvement of parents, the fear of make decisions on behalf of students, the lack of support staff and career guidance materials for students with SEN (fig. 8).

**Fig. 8. The difficulties of teachers in the career guidance process of students with special educational requirements.**



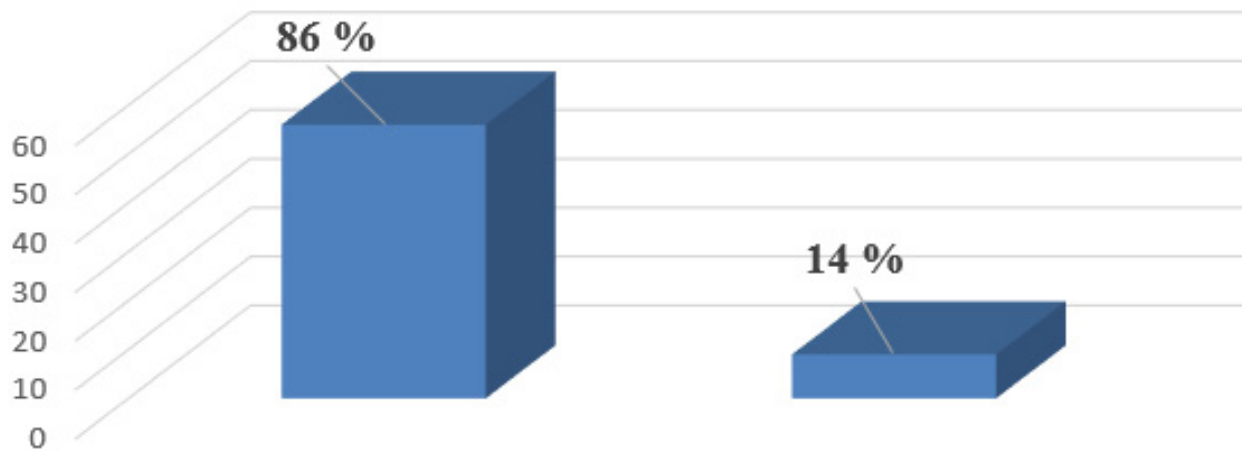
The teaching staff offered a wide range of proposals to improve the career guidance process for

students, including suggestions on establishing partnerships with businesses, developing support and didactic materials specific to career guidance, including for students with SEN, organizing trips and round tables with specialists in the field, visits to colleges and universities, the involvement of economic agents in guidance activities, the creation of a career guidance mechanism at the national level.

After processing the results of the questionnaire for students, we find that:

- 86% of students participated in educational activities in the field of personal development and career guidance, and 14% were not involved in any activity (fig. 9).

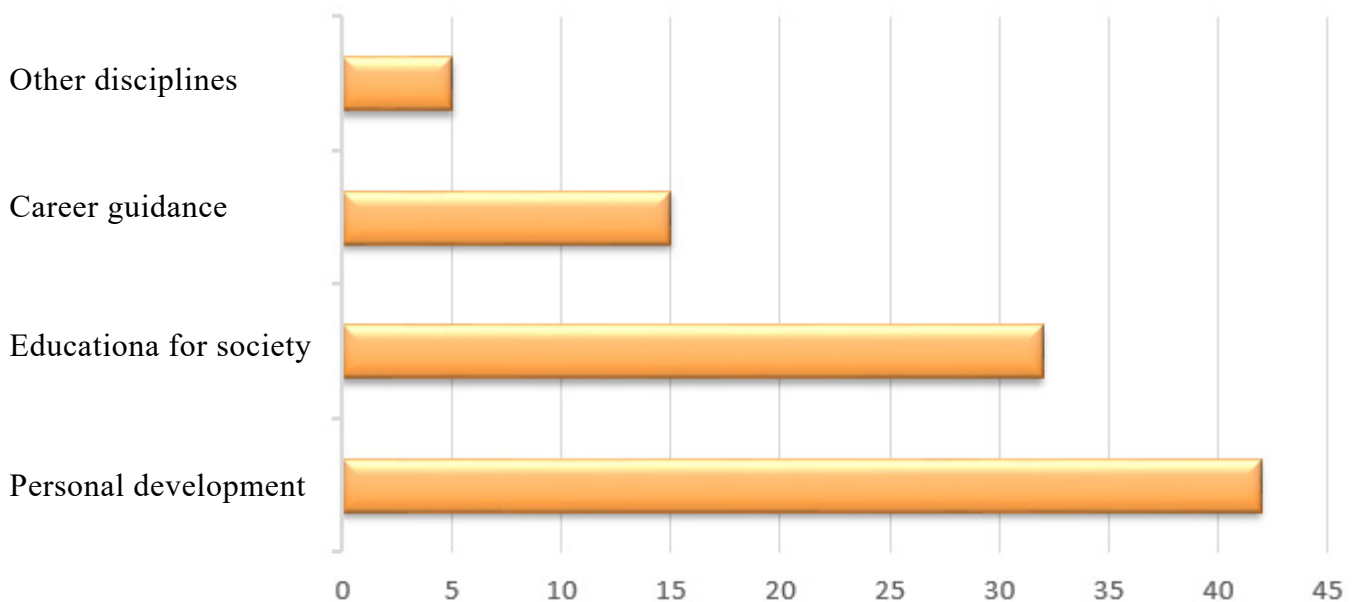
**Fig. 9. Carrying out educational activities in the field of personal development and career guidance.**



- these activities were mostly carried out by school teachers (55%), the head teacher (37%), the psychologist, NGO, National Employment Agency, etc.

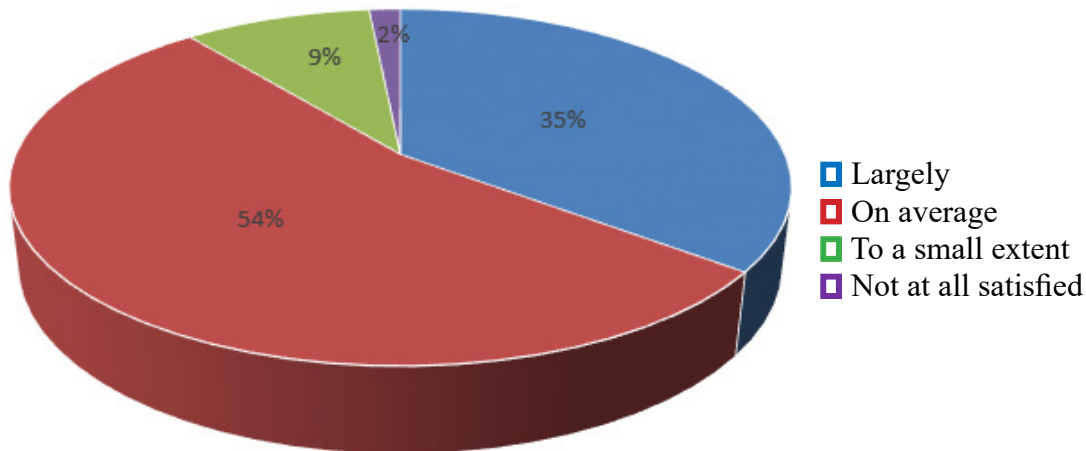
- the disciplines in which teachers carry out career guidance activities are: Personal development (46%), Education for society (35%), the optional career guidance course (14%), but topics related to career guidance were also discussed in the Romanian Language and Classroom Management classes (fig. 10).

**Fig. 10. School subjects in which career guidance activities are carried out.**



- 35% of students were largely satisfied with the information provided in the field of career guidance by educational institutions, 54% - to an average extent, 9% - to a small extent and 2% not at all satisfied (fig. 11).

**Fig. 11. Student feedback with reference to the dynamics of career guidance offered by the institution.**



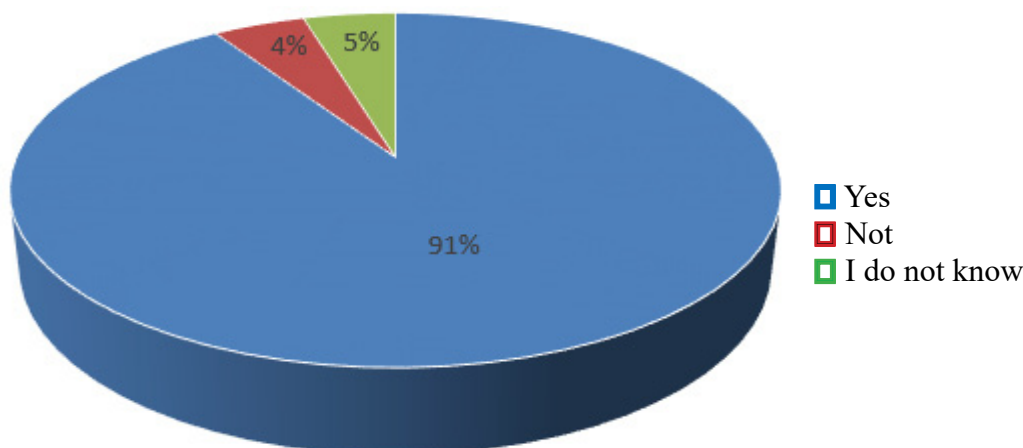
- Among the difficulties encountered by students in the career guidance process, we can list:

- A. Teaching staff does not have sufficient training in the career guidance segment, often students having to find out about professional offers independently.
- B. The way of organizing the career guidance activities was with a theoretical priority focus, content very difficult for the students to understand.
- C. The strategies for organizing these activities were monotonous, boring, and routine.
- D. Student uncertainty about career options.

- The activities in which the students were involved for the purpose of career guidance were carried out both in formal education, through lessons (project development), and outside the official school hours, through non-formal activities (round tables, information and guidance sessions conducted by various institutions and organizations, seminars and trainings, volunteer activities).

- 91% of the surveyed students consider the career guidance process important for their professional future, 5% do not find it relevant and the same percentage of students feel undecided (fig. 12).

**Fig. 12. The importance of the career guidance process for the professional future of students.**



The students' recommendations regarding the improvement of the career guidance process offered by the educational institution relate to:

- a) organizing a significant number of activities carried out both in the formal and non-formal framework regarding career guidance, in order to better understand career options (visits and trips to different enterprises, organizations, companies; inviting different specialists from various professional fields within educational institutions, etc.)
- b) providing with relevant and current information resources on different professional fields on the labor market of the Republic of Moldova, correlated with the professions of the XXI century;

- c) capitalizing on the modern didactic strategy in approaching the content regarding the career guidance process.
- d) carrying out the career guidance process throughout the school years, not only at the end of secondary and high school;
- e) the creation in schools of a Career Guidance Center for young people.

### Conclusions

The policy documents reflect the concern to prepare students for the future challenges of the labor market and to promote successful careers. At the same time, it is necessary to strengthen career guidance services in order to respond to the needs and interests of students.

We note that although there is a strong commitment from teaching staff and recognition of the importance of career guidance, further efforts are needed to address existing challenges and maximize the effectiveness of career guidance activities. A more integrated approach, which includes continuous training for teaching staff, development of materials useful in guiding students, diversification and adaptation of activities to the needs of all students can contribute to improving the career guidance process and preparing students for the professional path.

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## COMPETENCES OF THE TEACHER IN THE FIELD OF VISUAL ARTS. CONCEPTUAL LANDMARKS

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Various meanings of competence can be found in the specialized literature. Guțu Vl. (2023) defines it as „an integrated system of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, acquired, formed, and developed through learning, whose mobilization allows the identification and resolution of various problems in various contexts and situations”; „purpose, as a projected objective and as a learning objective”; „intellectual capacity with various transfer possibilities (capacity to communicate, decide, detect, select, evaluate data, information, relationships), a capacity that associates affective and attitudinal components, motivating action”.

Since the emphasis in higher education is on the formation of competent specialists, on the formation and development of competence as a quality of personality (Șevciuc M., 2007), the visual arts teacher, through good training, will contribute to the beautiful growth of students – forming the „person of tomorrow” (Berger G., 1973). The study programs, generous both through the variety of specialties and through the psycho-pedagogical training module, give confidence to young visual arts graduates to register and participate in the final exam, thus certifying the skills acquired in the initial training.

**Keywords:** *teachers, competences, visual arts, education, initial training, higher education.*

### COMPETENȚELE PROFESORULUI DIN DOMENIUL ARTELOR VIZUALE. REPERE CONCEPTUALE

În literatura de specialitate găsim diferite accepțiuni ale competenței. Guțu Vl. (2023) o definește ca fiind „un sistem integrat de cunoștințe, abilități, atitudini și valori, dobândite, formate și dezvoltate prin învățare, a căror mobilizare permite identificarea și rezolvarea diferitor probleme în diverse contexte și situații”; „finalitate, ca obiectiv proiectat și ca obiectiv de învățare”; „capacitate intelectuală ce dispune de variate posibilități de transfer (capacitatea de a comunica, decide, detecta, selecta, evalua date, informații, relații), capacitate care-și asociază componente afective și atitudinale, de motivare a acțiunii”.

Deoarece, la nivelul învățământului superior se pune accentul pe formarea specialistului competent, pe formarea și dezvoltarea competenței drept calitate a personalității (Șevciuc M., 2007), profesorul de arte vizuale, prin buna sa formare va reuși să contribuie la frumoasa creștere a elevilor - formarea „omului de mâine” (Berger G., 1973). Programele de studii, generoase atât prin varietatea specialităților, cât și prin modulul de formare psihopedagogică, conferă încredere tinerilor absolvenți de arte vizuale de a se înscrie și participa la examenul de definitivat, certificându-li-se astfel competențele dobândite în formarea inițială.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *profesori, competențe, arte vizuale, educație, formare inițială, învățământ superior.*

### Introduction

Antonesei L., in his work „An Introduction to Pedagogy. Axiological and Transdisciplinary Dimensions of Education”, stated that „the didactic profession presupposes the authentic manifestation of a set of five types of competences: *cultural competence*, represented by general culture and the specific culture of the specialized field; *psycho-pedagogical competence*, which ensures the teacher a good quality of transmitting the specific culture to the beneficiaries of educational processes, as well as its connections with the field of culture as a whole; *psycho-affective and communication competence*, based on certain structural qualities of personality; *moral competence*, referring to the fact that educators must be infused with the values that



make up the educational ideal promoted by the education system in which they carry out their activity; *managerial competence*, intended to ensure the efficiency of the organization and management of activities, processes, collectives, and educational institutions” [9, p. 430-431].

In the paper „Common European Principles for Competence Training and Qualification of Teaching Staff”, resulted from the European Conference on testing common European principles for teacher competences and qualification (June 20-21, 2005, Brussels), *key competences* were described, reflected by the following *common European principles*: „a profession oriented towards quality standards in initial training through higher education institutions; a profession placed in the European context of continuous professional development/ learning and *lifelong learning*; a profession oriented towards mobility at both the initial training and continuous training levels; a profession based on partnership both in the inter-school and trans-school relations (industry, economic agents, providers of continuous training)” [9, p. 432]. Both the key competences and the advanced principles constitute a landmark in guiding the initial and in-service training of teachers.

In the Republic of Moldova, the „Standards of professional competences of teaching staff in general education” (approved at the meeting of the National Curriculum Council, minutes no. 18 of July 3, 2018; by the Order of the Minister of Education, Culture, and Research no. 1124 of July 20, 2018) aim at „consolidating the European dimension in the field of education and continuous professional development of teaching staff; orienting the professional development system in accordance with the requirements of the labor market and student-centered pedagogy; motivating teaching staff for lifelong learning; increasing the responsibility of each teaching staff for the success of their own professional career; promoting transparency, recognition of competences and/or qualifications” [3, p. 3]. The knowledge of these standards and their reception as core elements of the good functioning of the education system, ensure correlation with European education systems and integration in the field of work.

The competences of the teacher in the field of educational-artistic encompass both „artistic-pedagogical competences” and „general-pedagogical competences” [2, p. 30]. The coexistence of the two crowns the good training of the student at the Faculty of Arts, because they thoroughly prepare the graduate for the best possible integration into the Romanian education system. During the psychopedagogical training, the meeting with the system of pedagogical skills takes place, which includes (according to I. Gagim): „cognitive competence, affective competence, performance competence, evolutionary competence, exploratory competence” [2, p. 31], and the constitutive elements of artistic-pedagogical competence consist of: „perception (analysis, understanding, appreciation); interpretation (characterization, expression, transmission); creation (reflection, improvisation, composition)” [2, p. 34], capitalize on the artistic dimension.

The visual arts teacher, concerned with the standard of the teaching profession, knows and possesses the competences necessary for the successful conduct of the instructional-educational process, assimilating, integrating and retrieving elements that can help him in his activity in the classroom and beyond.

One of them is *the professional competence*, which includes: visual culture appropriate to the artistic field; creativity and the capacity of innovation; knowledge of specific techniques of visual arts; the ability to organize (diversification of tasks for students, teamwork, organization of exhibitions, etc. – „the competence to adapt and combine methodical algorithms and selected content appropriately, in relation to educational situations that arise, whether in class or study workshop, or outside the class”) [16, p. 38-39]. The continuous visual literacy and the constant feeding of the thirst for knowledge of the actors of various artistic activities and manifestations, only guarantees the continuity of the valorization of the arts among different categories of the public, starting with the most fragile human beings, children.

Moreover, another competence that highlights the fact that teachers are human beings is „the *human competence* – the competence to develop good relationships with students, parents, colleagues, superiors, and the community; the ability to work with the class of students; cooperation, positive collaboration with other colleagues, teachers, parents, etc.” [16, p. 38]. The workshop cannot be substituted by robots or any other means because empathy, emotional communication, and relevant explanations during the practical work process are necessary. This is because we can only shape an artist through hands-on work. For example, in the painting, sculpture, mural section, the direct involvement of the artist is essential, and learning must be direct through communication with the respective subject teacher. Therefore, human presence is

absolutely fundamental, precisely because the emotional dimension of human beings involves empathy, which can only be achieved through direct contact, person to person.

Under the umbrella of interpersonal relationships, the *competence of subordination* is also highlighted: the ability to maintain relationships with higher levels of hierarchy, such as directors, inspectors, methodologists (teachers are periodically monitored and evaluated by superiors and colleagues); this includes being prepared and appropriate in front of committees such as those in the examinations for obtaining teaching degrees [16, p. 38-39]. Motivation is also of human nature, it is about the construction of the ego. The values also instilled by people, at the right time, achieve special results in the training of specialists, visual artists capable of realizing their own management.

Good preparation highlights the didactic skills specific to the visual education teacher, which involves a series of capacities: „pedagogical analysis of the content in the visual arts curriculum; analysis of information and knowledge characteristics to be taught; planning visual education activities, conducting these activities, evaluating students, performing administrative and organizational tasks, developing students' personalities, programming personal artistic progress, and developing teaching performances” [16, p. 41-42]. Focusing on these capabilities highlights not only what to look for, but also how to measure progress.

### **The competencies of a teacher in the field of visual arts**

Ezechil L. and Neacșu M. (2007) propose a national standard for the teaching profession that „respects internal needs for professional training in the field” [5, p. 11]. So, **the competences of the teacher- Romanian model**, abridged according to Ezechil L. and Neacșu M. [16, p. 39-40 apud 5] highlighten the general and specific competencies:

1. *Methodological Competencies* (specific competencies: appropriate use of concepts and theories in the field of visual education - interdisciplinary approaches; application of modern and contemporary concepts and theories regarding the development of knowledge skills; competence in designing instructive-educational content; use of methods and teaching strategies suitable for individual/group characteristics, according to the objectives and type of the lesson; determination of materials and didactic aids used in learning activities; optimal use of spatiotemporal factors to enhance the efficiency of the instructive-educational process; use of a methodological repertoire suitable for the professional plan; linking instructive-educational activities to pre-established objectives);

2. *Communication and Relational Competencies* (mastery of communication methods – horizontal, vertical, multiple, complex, diversified, and specific; manifestation of empathetic, collaborative behavior; use of various sources of information for documentation purposes; concentration of instructive-educational activities on forms of communication);

3. *Evaluation Competencies* (competence in designing methods and forms of evaluation – phases, forms, types of evaluation; use of appropriate individual/group evaluation strategies; development of evaluation tools based on objectives and individual/group characteristics; use of specific evaluation methods for visual arts; capacity for self-evaluation, self-correction, and self-development);

3. *Psycho-social Competencies* (valorization of methods and techniques for student knowledge and activation – self-awareness and self-motivation; recognition of responsibility and assumption of the social role of the teaching staff);

4. *Specific Competencies in the Field of Visual Education* (competence in designing and supporting specific activities in plastic education; conception and use of materials/means of learning specific to the field; organizational competence);

5. *Project and Research Program Management Competencies* (knowledge of structuring methods, in European and non-European countries, in the field of visual education; knowledge of didactic methodology used in other countries; competence in finding and using informative tools to participate in European programs; valorization of experiences from mobilities that was part of);

6. *Career Management Competencies* (use of methods and techniques of psycho-behavioural self-control; adaptation of effective behaviors to overcome „crisis situations”; full assumption of various roles specific to the teaching profession; manifestation of self-reflective behavior regarding own didactic activities”).

The proposed model guides the teaching staff in understanding the importance of good training in the field, for the teaching career; brings to the fore the directions that must be at the center of the visual arts teacher's concerns, without them the educational process would be damaged.

Regarding training programs in higher artistic education, each specialty specifies sets of competencies. For example, the approved curriculum on June 28, 2023, for the *Painting* specialty [10] at the Academy of Music, Theater, and Fine Arts - *Faculty of Fine and Decorative Arts*, Chișinău, emphasizes the „accumulation of fundamental theoretical knowledge in the field of visual arts based on tradition and the history of the specialty; the broadening of knowledge about contemporary painting to promote national values; the acquisition of skills and their use in the development of techniques and means of expression characteristic of the visual arts; the application and accumulation of theoretical and methodological knowledge in the creation of artworks, and the use of new technologies in the creative process” – professional competencies that shape the profile of the university graduate.

High school graduates are familiar every year with the academic offers promoted both physically and online, through scientific conferences and the most diverse and exciting artistic manifestations, which bring more knowledge about the times to come.

The artistic higher education process is a transparent one. Within the National University of Arts „George Enescu” – *Faculty of Visual Arts and Design*, Iași, for the *Painting* specialization – Bachelor's studies, competencies include [19]: „mastering specialized terminology and grammar, understanding the basic principles of creative resources in the field; the ability to conceive, create, and complete projects in the field; and the ability to find visual and communicative solutions for ideational messages; the accuracy, the clarity and the argumentative consistency in the technical support of the practical work”. Knowing them from the first year of study brings the student closer to the secrets of good training.

The aim of this specialization is to ensure a „sufficient level of training that allows the development of creative artistic personalities in the field of painting and visual arts, capable of integrating and engaging in national, European, or international value circuits” [18]. In other words, it is envisaged to favor a social integration as suitable as possible for each young graduate, who through his artistic activity will combat kitsch and advocate for beauty and good taste.

The „Integrated and Polyvalent Educational Program for Training Specialists in the Field of Fine Arts” [9], the study program for the *Painting* specialty, can be accompanied by the *Psychopedagogical Training Module*, providing graduates with the opportunity to work as teachers and leaders of creative circles in pre-university educational institutions. While this training is included in the curriculum for *Art Pedagogy* specialization, for other specializations, “the psychopedagogical and didactic training of students and graduates in higher education dedicated to the teaching profession” is complementary. Therefore, the opportunity to undergo a psycho-pedagogical training program is highlighted, including pedagogical practice, which certifies the competencies for the teaching profession.

Another way to valorize the skills formed in students, graduates of art faculties, is the definitive exam, which represents the first teaching degree in the pre-university education system in Romania.

According to statistical data collected from 2019-2023 [4], graduates from the *Painting* specialty showed interest in obtaining this certification of competencies through the definitive exam, ranking second in the 2019, 2021 sessions with a percentage of 15%, 17%, and first in the 2020, 2022, 2023 sessions with 23%, 27%, and 24%, respectively, of the total candidates, graduates of art faculties.

Also, this study made it possible to find out the status of the candidates, by bringing to the fore the type of college attended. So, in 2019, of the total number of students enrolled in the exam, 87% graduated from the Faculty of Fine, Decorative and Design Arts, 12% from the Faculty of Orthodox Theology and 1% from the Faculty of Architecture. Analyzing the data corresponding to the year 2020: 87% were graduate students in the field of Visual Arts, 9% with studies in Orthodox Theology and only 4% from the field of Architecture. In 2021: 81% belong to the field of Visual Arts, 9% to the Faculty of Orthodox Theology and 10% to the Faculty of Architecture. In the 2022 session: 88% of candidates are graduates of the Faculty of Fine Arts, Decorative and Design, 8% of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology and 4% of the Faculty of Architecture. The same hierarchy emerged for the year 2023, when: 85% are those who graduated from the

Faculty of Fine, Decorative and Design Arts, 10% from the Faculty of Orthodox Theology and only 5% from the Faculty of Architecture [4].

The results are gratifying, considering the constant and majority percentages attributed to initial teacher training in artistic higher education institutions.

In the article „Methodological Aspects of Developing Specific Competencies for the Teaching Profession”, Stanciu M. considers that:

1. „The Bologna Process has brought significant changes regarding the organization and conduct of the initial training process for Romanian teachers solely through the university. However, we consider that the number of hours allocated to pedagogical practice is insufficient (as it was in the former pedagogical high schools).

2. The mechanism for teacher training after completing Module I and before the final examination in education (a mentoring program as part of an internship) has not yet been institutionalized in Romania».

3. The focus on competency in the initial (and ongoing) training process aligns with the requirements of a postmodern society, in accordance with global concerns in the field” [13, p. 308-309].

4. „The primary issue in the initial training of all students is the development of metacognitive competence, empowering them with techniques for efficient learning [14]”.

In the Republic of Moldova, the Public Institution „National Institute for Education and Leadership” has been established, with functions such as „providing theoretical and practical expertise to establish the framework for the initial and continuous training of teaching and managerial staff, offering high-quality; continuous training for teaching and managerial staff based on individual training needs; monitoring the relationship between initial and continuous training and the realities of implementing acquired skills in the classroom; organizing mentoring networks at three levels: i) mentoring for pedagogical practice internships; ii) mentoring for young specialists; and iii) mentoring for professional development in the workplace; monitoring and improving the professional integration of young specialists and their career progress [7, p. 3].

In the volume „Andragogy”, Guțu Vl. emphasizes a set of general/transversal competencies for the Arts field: „the practice–application of artistic skills and abilities under different forms and activities, showing human creative potential, sensibility, involvement and initiative; the transfer of artistic acquisitions/talents acquired within formal activities, within the individual vocational realization, exploring self-awareness, pointing the development journey of individuals through learning and work, based on the specific requirements and socio-economic expectations of the artistic field and living environment; exploring trends in self-awareness, self-information, self-education, self-promotion, and personal self-determination in the practiced artistic domain, ensuring through one’s own abilities and capacities a quality vocational marketing; appreciating and managing resources/products in the artistic field, demonstrating the skills of a loyal and trainable creator/consumer, capable of contributing to the enhancement of the prestige of artistic/cultural professions, promoting and valorizing the entire artistic heritage at local, national, and universal levels; the use of the artistic domain in the social, cultural, artistic, and informational space by demonstrating compatibility with the chosen profile and ensuring the conscious self-modeling of personality; promoting artistic values at the national and international levels; demonstrating skills for continuous professional development in the arts field, as well as contributing to the broadening of general cultural knowledge [6, p. 152-153]. The interest in progress, knowledge, training of skills and abilities, mediated by the „new” tools keep the human being in a continuous search for beauty – and promotion of the values of art.

## **Conclusion**

The conceptual approaches within initial training aim to highlight the path of developing teaching competencies in higher education. „The process of initial teacher training in pre-university education needs to be connected to new educational paradigms, promoting motivating and efficient education through modern, interactive, and informational technologies [8, p. 79]. The formation and development of teaching competencies in the field of visual arts can be seen as a guarantee of continuity in artistic value, and a well-trained

teacher will be „a source of joy in art, discipline, knowledge, culture, sincerity, and all the qualities that a human being has” [12, p. 18]. In context, the digital native and beyond, who embraces the teaching career, will consider the multiple aspects of learning, training and skill development, adherence to continuing education programs and the education of younger generations with and through art. Only by interacting with each other and interrogating art and science do we maintain the balance so necessary to human existence.

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## **SPEECH EXERCISES FOR FORMING SPECIFIC COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCES IN CONTEXT OF DEVELOPING DIALOGICAL SPEECH IN GAGAUZ LANGUAGE**

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In the article, the author describes the importance and features of the speech situation, notes its role in the formation of communicative competence in the Gagauz language. The author emphasizes the feasibility of interactive learning. The article describes in detail the characteristics of micro- and macro-situations, in the context of thematic units. Here the emphasis is on the development of speaking as a productive type of speech activity through which oral verbal communication is performed. The goal of teaching speaking in the Gagauz language and literature lesson is the formation of such speech skills that would allow the student to use them in extracurricular speech practice at the level of communication in a social environment. The topics of speech situations and assimilated dialogues should cover the range of life situations that are typical for the conditions of students' daily activities at school, at home, in the street, etc.

**Keywords:** *speech situation, Gagauz language, communicative exercises, interactive learning, speaking, topics of speech situations, social environment, communication.*

### **РЕЧЕВЫЕ УПРАЖНЕНИЯ ДЛЯ ФОРМИРОВАНИЯ СПЕЦИАЛЬНЫХ КОММУНИКАТИВНЫХ КОМПЕТЕНЦИЙ В УСЛОВИЯХ РАЗВИТИЯ ДИАЛОГИЧНОЙ РЕЧИ НА ГАГАУЗСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ**

В статье автор описывает важность и особенности речевой ситуации, отмечает ее роль в формировании коммуникативной компетенции на гагаузском языке. Автор подчеркивает целесообразность интерактивного обучения. В статье подробно обозначены характеристики микро- и макроситуаций, в разрезе тематических единиц. Здесь делается акцент на развитие говорения, как продуктивного вида речевой деятельности, через который выполняется устное вербальное общение. Целью обучения говорению на уроке гагаузского языка и литературы обозначается формирование таких речевых навыков, которые позволили бы учащемуся использовать их во внеучебной речевой практике на уровне общения в социальной среде. Тематика речевых ситуаций и усваиваемых диалогов должна охватывать тот круг жизненных ситуаций, который характерен для условий повседневной деятельности учащихся в школе, дома, на улице и т.п.

**Ключевые слова:** *речевая ситуация, гагаузский язык, коммуникативные упражнения, интерактивное обучение, говорение, тематика речевых ситуаций, социальная среда, общение.*

#### **Introduction**

The communicative orientation of teaching and developing speech in the Gagauz language is associated with the problem of speech development and language use, which comes from linguistics, and puts the theory and practice of language teaching, the very use of language, and its functioning at the center. With this approach, the educational process should be as close as possible to the conditions of natural communication, since language is used to solve communicative problems.

#### **Research**

Schoolchildren master the Gagauz language as a means of communication and must be able to use it in oral and written forms. Students must master four types of speech activities: speaking, listening, reading and writing, as well as three associated aspects of language – vocabulary, phonetics and grammar. It is very important to master all forms of communication and all speech functions in order for the Gagauz language to become a means of interpersonal communication.

The formation of communicative competence in the Gagauz language is the main goal of training in the discipline „Gagauz Language and Literature”, which includes several components:

- *communication skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing;*
- *linguistic knowledge and skills in mastering this language building material for generating and recognizing information;*
- *knowledge about Gagauz literature, cultural and national characteristics of the Gagauz people to provide a socio-cultural background, without which the formation of communicative competence is impossible.*

The purpose of teaching speaking in the Gagauz language and literature lesson is to develop such speech skills that would allow the student to use them in non-educational speech practice at the level of communication in a social environment. It is impossible to learn speaking without immersion in *real situations*, and not just by composing standard dialogues on a certain topic. A very effective teaching method is the **communicative (speech) situation** [5, 98].

Having studied various technologies for teaching and developing dialogical speech, we came to the conclusion that teaching dialogical speech using a series of exercises makes it possible to master the skills and abilities necessary to implement dialogical speech in a communication situation in accordance with the communicative tasks of students, taking into account the specific conditions of communication, as well as relying on different types of interpersonal and inter-role interaction among students.

Modeling speech situations creates an environment for real communication, involving students in a communication process that is as close as possible to natural conditions. The use of speech situations when teaching communication in the Gagauz language ensures the natural need for multiple repetition of language material and creates conditions for the development of skill of its competent selection, preparing students for spontaneous communication. The expected volume of the produced utterance varies from 5–7 to 20 lines of dialogue, which is determined by the goals and type lesson.

When teaching the Gagauz language and literature, the following groups of real speech situations can form the basis of situational communication:

- *coming late, absence or illness of students,*
- *presence or absence of visual aids,*
- *change of classroom,*
- *doing homework,*
- *new information from the teacher;*
- *relationships between students,*
- *birthdays;*
- *sudden change of weather;*
- *current everyday questions: how to call the post office, where to buy a jacket, how to cook a dish;*
- *problems of a domestic or technical nature;*
- *an event or holiday in the village and in the gymnasium school;*
- *cultural and regional issues;*
- *funny, sad or unexpected cases.*

Such *real* speech situations are stimuli for speech activity. But they do not fully solve the problem of developing students' communicative competence, since they do not cover all areas of speech communication [6, p. 158].

Therefore, the formation of communicative competence of students in grades 5-9 is directly related to the development of the following communication skills in students:

- a) in accordance with the specific communication situation, speech task and communicative intention, students must **understand and produce** statements in the Gagauz language;
- b) carry out** their speech and non-speech behavior, taking into account the rules of communication and the national and cultural characteristics of the Gagauz people and the Gagauz language;
- c) independently improving the level of proficiency in the Gagauz language, students must **use** rational methods of mastering the Gagauz language.



It is also important to develop students' general linguistic, intellectual, cognitive abilities, mental processes that underlie mastery of foreign language communication, as well as students' emotions, feelings, their readiness to communicate, a culture of communication in various types of collective interaction.

The first stage is training in dialogue, which has the nature of a small-step action based on a *micro-situation*. To improve a one-step speech act, it is necessary to develop the ability to express one's thoughts through statements in certain types of relationships. This skill has three components:

- a) *reaction to the situation with a supporting utterance;*
- b) *understanding a reactive utterance based on the situation;*
- c) *reaction to a supporting utterance, based on the situation and using functional and structural connections.*

Students need to be taught not only to respond to a supporting utterance, but also to present it, start a conversation based on the situation or the goal set by the teacher, and establish connections between the situation and the statement. Starting a conversation is particularly difficult for students, as it requires the ability to independently find the subject of conversation. Dialogue can begin with a message, a question, an incentive. Therefore, *microsituations* should be selected in such a way as to train students in each type of supporting utterance [3, p. 78].

In the lower grades, an easier beginning of a conversation is practiced - a question or an incentive. At the middle stage, in the gymnasium level in grades 5-9 - a message. The supporting utterance must correspond to the situation, be justified, and encourage the interlocutor to express response judgments.

Speech exercises are designed to ensure the formation of independent dialogical communication skills. To achieve this goal, situational visualization (reproductions of paintings, drawings, slides, classroom objects) is widely used.

A significant place in teaching dialogue is occupied by asking questions. For example, the teacher pronounces the sentence: *Benim var dostum. (I have a friend)*, and addresses the students with the task: *Kurun soruları: Nesoy onun adı, kaç yaşında, neredä yaşêr. „Ask his/her name, how old he/she is, where he/she lives...” (oyun „Yıldız patlaması”)*

When performing preparatory exercises for the development of speech reaction, the following types of tasks are offered:

- *Gösterin kendi kayıllunızı işidilmiş iş için (Express agreement with what you heard);*
- *Cuwap edin kafadarın soruşuna hem kendiniz dä koyun ona bir soruş ... : (Answer the interlocutor's question and, in turn, ask him/her a question), etc.*

An indispensable condition for performing these exercises is the presence of a communicative attitude towards:

- a) expression of agreement/disagreement, doubt, surprise;
- b) making a request, advice, proposal;
- c) message;
- d) clarification, explanation, addition;
- e) expression of regret, gratitude;
- f) denial.

In addition to traditional forms, group work is organized. For example, the “*Dialogue*” exercise. The essence of this exercise is for each group to jointly search for an agreed solution. For example, while consolidating knowledge about nouns, this technique was used to test students' abilities to find a noun in a sentence. The work was organized in such a way that in groups, students paired up and engaged in dialogue.

According to our observations, schoolchildren enter into dialogical contact, they are “talkative”, and are practically devoid of any feeling of awkwardness in connection with an unsuccessful statement. Students of this age readily answer, often in detail, but usually do not show initiative in conducting dialogue in educational conditions. They easily connect to game situations, begin to fantasize, and actively engage in dialogue.

To teach dialogical speech based on situations, educational and communicative speech exercises are used, which allow building dialogic unities, i.e. observe stimulus utterances and response utterances.

So, for example, the teacher invites students to build a dialogical unity according to the model „Happy Birthday - Gratitude”. Here the teacher invites the children to remember the forms of congratulations they know. Children name: *bütün canımdan* (from the bottom of my heart), *bütün ürektän* (with all my heart), *kutluca olasin* (congratulations), *dillerim* (wish you), *dua ederim* (I wish, I pray for...). Forms of gratitude are also named: *Çok saa olasin!* (Thank you very much!); *Bütün ürektän şükür deerim!* (Thank you from the bottom of my heart!); *Saa ol!* (Thank you!/Be healthy!); *Şükürüm sana* (Very grateful to you!).

In language exercises, asking questions, as a rule, is not communicatively determined. In the process of performing such exercises, students asked questions about the content of the text/sentence they listened to or read, about the plot of picture, drawing, etc.

Using the interactive technology „Star Explosion”, the teacher invites students, based on the content of the work, drawing, situation, to create questions that begin with the proposed question word: *Yıldız patlaması*” (Kim ..? Neçin ..? Neredä ..? Nezaman ..? Kaç kerä ..? Nekadar ..?) [4, p. 276].

For example: the teacher says „*The holidays will begin soon...*” (*Tezdä çekedecek kanikullarınız!*) and suggests finding out everything that the students are interested in about the holidays: *When will they start?* (*Nezaman onnar yollanaceklar?*), *How long will they be?* (*Nekadar vakit onnar olaceklar?*), *When will they finish?* (*Nezaman onnar biteceklär?*), etc. [8, p. 295]. Training in dialogue, therefore, implies both training in speech actions in typical, repeating conditions, which develops readiness for action, and accumulation of experience of independent orientation in a variety of speech situations that require elements of creativity, self-expression, and own vision of the situation. Only a complete combination of these two aspects of teaching speech interaction in the lessons of the Gagauz language and literature can ensure practical knowledge of the Gagauz language.

The situation should arouse in students the need for communication, on the basis of which motives and goals that are truly significant for the student arise. This is the main task and the main difficulty of teaching dialogue at the stage when the mechanism of dialogue has already been prepared and it is necessary to give the formed skills and abilities an outlet in speech.

An interactive approach to teaching is appropriate here, which implies the direct involvement of students in discussions, debates, discussion of problems, and therefore in **dialogue**.

It is impossible to teach speaking without teaching communication, without creating conditions for verbal communication in lessons. The content of communication in Gagauz language lessons is the following topics- „*Tradițiyalar hem adetlär*” („*Traditions and customs*”), „*Musaafirlik*” („*Hospitality*”), „*Kiyat hem bilgi*” („*Book and knowledge*”), „*Dostluk*” („*Friendship*”), „*Benim ayläm*” („*Family*”), „*Zanaat insanın yaşamasında*” („*Profession in a person's life*”), etc. And also speech situations – „*musaafirliktä*” („*being a guest*”), „*panayırda*” („*at the market*”), „*lafkada*” („*at the shop*”), „*komuşularda*” („*at the neighbors*”), „*maaledä*” („*in the street*”), etc. [1, p. 78]. Meanwhile, in real life we discuss not themes, the so-called topics, but issues, so the teacher must teach children spontaneous speaking, unprepared in advance. Examples of speaking tasks: *Lafedelim insanın giyimneri için. Angi rubaları giyyer karılar, angılarını – adamnar. Evelki hem zamandaş giimnilär. Moda, estetika, fayda soruşları*.

Problems discussed in communication can be different: „*Haliz dostun nesoydur kaliteleri?*” („*What should a true friend be like?*”), „*Nedir o hatır gütmäk adama?*” („*What does it mean to respect a person?*”), „*Nedir o olmaa serbest?*” („*What does it mean to be free?*”), „*Ne läüzüm adama, ki olmaa kısmetli deyni?*” („*What does a person need to be happy?*”), etc. [8, p. 14].

The topics of learned dialogues cover the range of life situations that are typical for the conditions of students' daily activities at school, at home, in the street, etc.

The topic should be current. In a Gagauz language lesson, it is natural to talk about what is currently the subject of conversation at home, during recess, after school and corresponds to the intended topic.

## Conclusion

The central methodological device of the communicative method is the speech situation. Actively addressing speech situations increases the desire of students to contact each other and the teacher, thereby creating conditions for speech partnerships and destroying personal barriers in communication; helps

relieve anxiety and create psychological readiness for communication; makes it possible to adapt to the Gagauz language environment. Speech situations are used at all stages of the lesson, when consolidating already studied conversational topics or repeating them, which indicates the effectiveness of situational speech activity to facilitate the process of mastering speech material.

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## **MODELING SPEECH DEVELOPMENT IN GAGAUZ LANGUAGE (DIALOGICAL SPEECH LEVEL) IN GYMNASIUM CYCLE STUDENTS**

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The article examines the concept of speech development in the Gagauz language (level of dialogic speech). The author presents the basic principles and concepts of speech development in the Gagauz language. The characteristics of technology for teaching dialogue in the Gagauz language are presented. The article sets out the requirements for the content of training and stages of training. The article emphasizes that dialogical communication is social from all points of view, since it includes establishing contact, perceiving the personality of interlocutor, orientation in the situation, maintaining the level of relationships, and socially established forms of reactions in dialogue. The author draws attention to the presence of different teaching technologies, but emphasizes, taking into account the specifics of proficiency and use of the Gagauz language as a language of communication, that: teaching speaking the Gagauz language should be built taking into account two fundamental approaches: „bottom-up” and „top-down”.

**Keywords:** *dialogue, concepts of speech development, Gagauz language, learning technologies, communication environment, learning stages, text, educational dialogue.*

### **МОДЕЛИРОВАНИЕ РАЗВИТИЯ РЕЧИ НА ГАГАУЗСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ (УРОВЕНЬ ДИАЛОГИЧЕСКОЙ РЕЧИ) У УЧАЩИХСЯ ГИМНАЗИЧЕСКОГО ЗВЕНА**

В статье рассматривается понятие развития речи на гагаузском языке (уровень диалогической речи). Автор представляет основные принципы и концепты развития речи на гагаузском языке. Представлены характеристики технологии обучения диалогу на гагаузском языке. В статье изложены требования к содержанию обучения и этапам обучения. Здесь делается акцент на то, что диалогическое общение социально со всех точек зрения, поскольку включает установление контакта, восприятие личности собеседника, ориентировку в ситуации, поддержание уровня отношений, социально установленные формы реакций в диалоге. Автор обращает внимание на наличие разных технологий обучения, но с учетом специфики владения и использования гагаузского языка в качестве языка общения, выделяет: обучение говорению на гагаузском языке должно строиться с учетом двух основополагающих подходов: «снизу-вверх» и «сверху-вниз».

**Ключевые слова:** *диалог, концепты развития речи, гагаузский язык, технологии обучения, среда общения, этапы обучения, текст, учебный диалог.*

#### **Introduction**

Didactically competent organization of speech situations, educational dialogues, reading fiction in the Gagauz language in order to instill in students the ability to read creatively, the ability to think in images, to see text and subtext, and to understand the inner world of an artistic image determines the disclosure of their intellectual and creative capabilities, the development of their oral and written speech skills. This may help erase the persistent opinion that the native language is the language of outgoing generation.

Today there is a problem of preserving, developing the language and teaching schoolchildren their native language. The identified problem in itself is not new, but time presents new rules due to today's realities.

It can also be noted here that the use of modern means of communication expands the opportunities for adolescents to communicate in the Gagauz language with their peers from other countries of the Turkic world, as a result of what their speech needs significantly increase, but adolescents do not always have enough means to express them in the Gagauz language [4, 35]. In this regard, the purpose of the study is to develop a concept for the development of speech in the Gagauz language, to identify the didactic prerequisites for the theory and methodology of preserving and developing the Gagauz language in the context of globalization.

## Research

When organizing educational activities aimed at developing speaking skills, including dialogical communication, the teacher must be guided by modern approaches to teaching. Some traditional approaches to teaching speaking pay too much attention to the grammatical correctness of speech, which results in problems, difficulties in learning the Gagauz language, and reluctance to speak for fear of making a mistake.

The main reasons for the difficulties that arise when performing speaking tasks are: the teacher's too close attention to mistakes, lack of motivation, lack of necessary support (linguistic and psychological). The reasons for unsatisfactory proficiency of dialogical speech in the Gagauz language by students in grades 5-9 can also include:

- a) *discrepancies in the linguistic characteristics of dialogue in the Gagauz and Russian languages;*
- b) *complexity of the structural-grammatical and intonation-semantic characteristics of dialogical speech;*
- c) *lack of Gagauz speech environment;*
- d) *lack of development of methods for teaching Gagauz dialogical speech to Gagauz students.*

The study was aimed at developing a model of speech development in the Gagauz language. To achieve the greatest efficiency and effectiveness of language education, preference was given to such a model of teaching dialogical coherent speech, which, along with the development of motivation to learn, would allow the use of language as a means of communication in all spheres of life.

The research materials make it possible to identify the fundamental principles of the development of a student's speech activity in the lessons of the Gagauz language and literature, which are the following: communicative principle, differentiation, programming, multi-level principle, problem-solving, continuity and succession of activity, developmental education principle, principle of relationship between language theory study and speech acquisition [5, 65]. As an object of assimilation when teaching dialogical speech in the Gagauz language, there should be considered units of material (standard phrases, supra-phrasal unities, as well as varieties of dialogical utterances, i.e. speech samples), actions of forming speech messages and operating actions (pronouncing the necessary phrases, their transformation, use in conjunction with other sentences, etc.) [6, 75].

Thus, when teaching the Gagauz language to students, it is necessary to develop their speech skills in using linguistic elements and teach them to use these skills to independently formulate dialogical statements, taking into account various communication situations, i.e. develop their communicative competence.

One of the most important principles for organizing speech material when implementing communicative skills is the situational-thematic principle, which allows you to bring the educational process closer to real communication in the Gagauz language. The implementation of situational-thematic principle when selecting didactic material allows the teacher to create an atmosphere of speaking in the lesson and to use the life experience of students in the Gagauz language. „*Nesoy paalılıklar var insanın yaşamasında?*” („*What values are there in a person's life?*”), „*Neçin yaşamakta lâüzım kanonnar?*” („*Why are laws necessary?*”), „*Nedir o zamandaş vakıdı?*” („*What does modernity mean?*”), „*Kimdir gagauz?*” („*What does it mean to be a Gagauz?*”) [7, 290].

Teaching dialogical speech as a form of social behavior is one of the fundamental concepts. Dialogue communication is social from all points of view, since it includes establishing contact, perceiving the personality of interlocutor, orientation in the situation, maintaining the level of relationships, and socially established forms of reactions in dialogue.

## Contents of Teaching Dialogical Speech

Dialogue as a means of developing communicative competence requires the inclusion in the content of language knowledge training, familiarization with culture, national traditions and values, skills and abilities necessary for communication in the family, with friends, in the social environment of the compact inhabitancy of the Gagauz people.

To determine the content of training, it is advisable to include situations from areas of communication close to students. When teaching the Gagauz language communicatively oriented, it is necessary to pay special attention to the following areas:

- a) the sphere of spiritual culture (science, school, sports, literature, music, traditions, holidays, painting, leisure);
- b) service sector (consumer services, trade, catering, transport, healthcare, museums, clubs, library, cinema, theater, media);
- c) socio-political sphere (family, classmates group, village, city, republic, nature);
- d) sphere of material production (agriculture, industry, construction).

In recent years, research has emerged in two directions in teaching dialogue. Proponents of the first direction propose to work on the formation and development of the necessary skills and abilities in the process of teaching dialogical speech in the following sequence: from memorizing ready-made dialogues to situational conversation. This task can be accomplished by performing a number of exercises aimed at activating patterns learned in dialogue. Representatives of the second direction propose to prepare students for more independent dialogue. E.I. Passov believes that teaching dialogical speech should begin with familiarization with various types of dialogues, which are minimal semantic segments of dialogue [3, p.129]. We adhere to the point of view, the essence of which is the consistent and conscious assimilation of dialogical forms. This organization of exercises, in our opinion, brings speech activity closer to the process of natural speaking.

In primary school, students acquire basic dialogical speech skills, which find their expression in situational dialogue. Primary education methodologists recommend the following sequence in teaching dialogical speech:

1. *explanation of the situation;*
2. *demonstration of a sample dialogue;*
3. *reading the pattern by persons;*
4. *training exercises* [1, p. 75-76].

In the gymnasium cycle, training in this type of speech expands. Dialogue develops and improves both in terms of speech content and linguistic design. Therefore, at this stage it is advisable to use the following system for teaching dialogical speech in the Gagauz language:

1. *familiarization with a sample dialogue selected in advance and presented in a magnetic recording or an expressive reading of the dialogue by teacher;*
2. *performing preparatory, training-speech and speech exercises,*
3. *drawing up a structural diagram and determining the structural and semantic features;*
4. *working on content;*
5. *producing dialogue.*

It is also important to note that modern methods pay sufficient attention to regional studies information necessary for understanding and correct production of speech, since „as the second language is mastered, a deep process of assimilation of national speech and social historical experience occurs, and there is achieved an understanding of the specifics of human behavior of that social system, which the bilingual person gradually enters” [2, p. 13].

Therefore, when determining the content of training, it is necessary to highlight from the entire variety of material what is of the greatest value for introducing students to the culture of Gagauz people, since, only in this case, mastering the Gagauz language as a means of communication will be tantamount to mastering the culture of Gagauz people.

### **Technologies for Teaching Dialogical Speech**

Teaching dialogue in a „top-down” manner is most optimal for teaching standard or typical dialogues.

**Algorithm** for a teacher’s work when teaching dialogue using a „**top-down**” approach [3, p. 87]:

- *Select or compose sample dialogues using speech cliches and models of speech interaction typical for a given situation.*
- *Determine the sequence of presentation of various typical dialogues in the process of studying the topic.*
- *Familiarize students with new words and speech structures of the presented dialogue.*
- *If necessary, comment on the sociocultural features of verbal communication within a given situation.*
- *Read the dialogue or play the recording.*

- Organize the work with the text of dialogue, aimed at its full understanding and memorization, as well as the partial transformation, taking into account already familiar synonymous models.

- Partially modify the speech situation in order to introduce an element of authenticity into the solution of a speech problem, modeling the combination of utterances from various standard dialogues in students' speech.

„**Bottom-up**” dialogue teaching assumes that students do not have an initial model dialogue because:

1. the students do not know how to read and cannot use the model;

2. the level of speech development is quite high, so a single sample is no longer needed;

3. the intended dialogue is a type of free dialogue, and the pattern will only hinder the initiative and creativity of students.

In this case, we are talking not just about using dialogue, but about teaching a dialogical form of communication, therefore, students need to improve the following dialogical skills and abilities:

- ability to ask different types of questions;

- answer questions posed logically, consistently and clearly;

- use various response utterances in the communication process, showing interest, attention and active participation in the conversation;

- use various ways to implement speech functions, such as expressing agreement or disagreement, doubt, satisfaction, requests, etc.

Learning to speak the Gagauz language should be built taking into account both directions. The National Curriculum – 2020 defines the specific competences of the subject “Gagauz Language and Literature”, which are the immediate goal for achievement, a certain standard and product of speech activity, for the implementation of which models for the development of communicative competence in the Gagauz language are being developed for gymnasium cycle students. Therefore, the model for the development of dialogical speech in the Gagauz language should be aimed at the formation of specific communicative competences, that is, teaching students not only questions and answers, but also composing response statements, exchanging opinions, picking up the thoughts of interlocutor, etc. Thus, it is necessary to learn consistently: listen and understand dialogical speech in the Gagauz language; pronounce dialogue utterances correctly; build a dialogue similar to the example; build a dialogue yourself [2, 35].

## Conclusions

In the process of teaching dialogical speech to students, as school practice shows, it is necessary to use a situational method of presenting, consolidating and activating speech material. It is based on taking into account the psychological characteristics of human activity and the linguistic characteristics of this type of speech activity. The process of mastering dialogical speech should be provided with methodological means that contribute to the development of students' specific communicative (dialogical) competence in the Gagauz language, the concept of which includes mastery of the norms of behavior accepted in a given linguistic society, knowledge of the customs and traditions of the Gagauz people, that is, the ability to use the rules of interpersonal etiquette and communication.

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## PROCEDURAL KNOWLEDGE IN DEVELOPMENT OF SCIENTIFIC THINKING IN TEACHERS: CERTAIN EXPERIMENTAL SEQUENCES

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This paper analyzes the role of procedural knowledge in the development of scientific thinking and the formation of teaching staff. Procedural knowledge involves skills and procedures, i.e., how we perform certain activities or tasks. Procedural knowledge, in essence, is application-level competences that are related to practical skills and „know-how” in a particular domain. These types of knowledge are essential for the functioning of scientific thinking in complex problem-solving. The article presents the results of a study conducted on a sample of teachers. The study demonstrates that the development-efficiency of scientific thinking among teachers can be facilitated by the exploration of a specially developed training program, focused on the consolidation of declarative knowledge/ competences at the level of knowledge, the systematic involvement of metacognition and the stimulation of procedural competences development at the level of integration.

*Keywords: procedural knowledge, scientific thinking, teaching staff, development.*

### CUNOȘTIINȚELE PROCEDURALE ÎN DEZVOLTAREA GÂNDIRII ȘTIINȚIFICE LA CADRELE DIDACTICE: UNELE SECVENȚE EXPERIMENTALE

Articolul pune în discuție rolul cunoștințelor procedurale în dezvoltarea gândirii științifice și în formarea cadrelor didactice. Cunoștințele procedurale implică abilități și proceduri, adică modalitățile în care realizăm anumite activități sau sarcini. Cunoștințele procedurale, în esență, reprezintă competențele la nivel de aplicare, care sunt legate de aptitudinile practice și know-how-ul într-un anumit domeniu. Aceste tipuri de cunoștințe sunt esențiale pentru funcționarea gândirii științifice în rezolvarea problemelor complexe. În articol sunt prezentate rezultatele unui studiu realizat pe un eșantion de cadre didactice. Studiul demonstrează că dezvoltarea-eficientizarea gândirii științifice la cadrele didactice poate fi facilitată de explorarea unui program formativ special elaborat, axat pe consolidarea cunoștințelor declarative /competențe la nivel de cunoaștere, implicarea sistematică a metacogniției și stimularea dezvoltării competențelor procedurale la nivel de integrare.

*Cuvinte-cheie: cunoștințe procedurale, gândire științifică, cadre didactice, dezvoltare.*

#### **Introduction**

Procedural knowledge represents one of the three main categories of knowledge, along with declarative and conceptual/theoretical knowledge, addressed by cognitive psychology and cognitive education theory, especially when we approach the development and efficiency of scientific thinking in students and adults (focused on its professionalization ) [1]. These categories of knowledge are defining for the understanding and application of information in different fields, including in the professionalization of teaching staff, since they, by carrying out the interconnection *declarative knowledge-procedural knowledge-conceptual knowledge*, ensure the formation-deepening of the human cognitive system, therefore they are the basis of the scientific thinking development [1; 10]. *Procedural knowledge* includes both *problem-solving techniques* and methods, scientific research strategies, and in pedagogical sciences they appear as decisive components of *the architecture and technology of educational process*. The targeted knowledge, in essence, is developed through practical actions (exercising) and direct experience, when it is necessary to solve certain problems of various nature [ibidem].

In the given context, the moment becomes opportune to elucidate the definition of scientific thinking, which we elaborated on the basis of study, analyzes and synthesis carried out on established researches,

carried out by the scientists: D. Kuhn [appud 16], R. Raul and L. Elder [13], C. Zimmerman [appud 16], J. Dewey [appud 16], K. Dunder, [appud 13]. E. Joita [7], etc. Thus, *scientific thinking, in our view, represents a higher mental process, intentional and consistent, which manifests itself in complicated/problematic existential situations (socially, personally, educationally, professionally, etc.), which require the utilization of scientific knowledge, cognitive and metacognitive skills; optimal exploration of all operations and forms of thinking within which the person tests hypotheses, heuristic strategies; makes inferences, syntheses, conclusions, predictions and argues pertinently the actions performed.*

Reiterating, we mention that the repetition and application of theoretical knowledge in different real contexts has an essential role in forming, consolidating, but also perfecting procedural knowledge. The role of procedural knowledge in the development of scientific thinking consists in strengthening practical-scientific competences and applicable skills in solving various scientific and existential problems. As previously reported, this type of knowledge is based on theoretical acquisition, valorizing the human experience and repeated practice, and its acquisition includes thoughtful, systemic and systematic practice in various contexts. Therefore, scientific thinking requires a deepening of knowledge, exploration of reflection and accumulation of experience through the application of procedural knowledge. In the given case, compliance with the criterion of scientificity in relation to procedural knowledge represents the defining elements that condition the development of scientific thinking. The targeted process is carried out due to ensuring methodological rigor, paying particular attention to both the theoretical study, conceptualization, as well as the collection, analysis and interpretation of observable and measurable data, which allow the realization of scientific syntheses, conclusions and predictions. Therefore, ensuring methodological rigor cannot be achieved outside of *procedural knowledge* and the exploration of *empirical/experiential nature of the research*, which represents another criterion of scientificity. The scientific approach is based not only on theoretical and experimental investigations, but also on empiricism, that is, on the analysis of experiential plan, of observations, data collected and processed. So, the information comes not only from the theoretical research, the analysis of the accumulated experience and the experimentation carried out in accordance with the object and purpose of the research, but also from the reflection on the side of the investigated matter. Falsifiability, in this context, means that through procedural knowledge, any person, *a subject of scientific thought*, can validate these elements, experimenting, analyzing and objectively interpreting the results obtained and the observations made. Summarizing the foray made, we conclude that scientific research seeks to respect objectivity and neutrality, trying to minimize subjective influences and unargued personal opinions in the process of research and professional activity, emphasizing the role of procedural knowledge.

### **Certain Theoretical Aspects of Procedural Knowledge**

*The theory of action*, developed by P. Y. Galperin [21], as a component that continues *the theory of cognitive development*, proposed by L. S. Vygotsky [20], focuses on the analysis of relationship between thinking and practical activity, arguing that cognitive development occurs in the context of human actions and activity. L. S. Vygotsky highlighted the importance of social and cultural environment in the cognitive development of individual, emphasizing the role of social interaction and language in the formation of thought. P. Y. Galperin extended this theory by introducing the concept of *action's stages* and emphasizing how individuals learn to think and solve problems through practical activity.

In essence, *action theory* claims that the process of cognitive development is closely related to how a person learns, acts and interacts with the environment, and through practical actions and activities the person *builds, consolidates and validates his/her cognitive and metacognitive knowledge and skills.*

From the perspective of researcher P. Y. Galperin [20], *the mode of action* represents a system of operations that ensures the solving of tasks of a certain type. The mode of action includes the following functional aspects: *of orientation*, which prepares the subject for carrying out the activity; *of execution* and ensures the transformation of the objects of activity; *of control*, which allows checking the correctness of application of the strategies for solving tasks and correlating the products of activity with the desired ones, i.e. with the purpose of activity, which already denotes the presence and activation of the elements of scientific thinking. Thus, the content of learning includes the knowledge intended to be assimilated and the types of actions and

activities based on them. Pedagogical experience demonstrates that all the information, processes, actions, instructions of the teaching staff can be well defined, being, in fact, oriented towards the development and exploration of the person's cognitive system, which explicitly contributes to the development and efficiency of scientific thinking. In a neurocognitive aspect, these actions will only constitute an explicit, declarative form of knowledge (competences at the level of knowledge). If they will not be converted and valorized in practice in the form of practiced, realized and consolidated procedural knowledge [5], then, in the knowledge of case and based on the experiential study, with certainty we can mention the fact that the pedagogue does not focus on the development of scientific thinking of students.

From *the perspective of cognitive psychology* [2; 4; 11] and neurodidactics [12], *procedural and declarative knowledge* are mediated by *strategic knowledge*, which controls the latter through the formation and ranking of procedural knowledge [8]. According to the vision of researcher J. R. Anderson [2], *the acquisition of procedural knowledge* occurs when a balance occurs between the detailed procedures that support learning subjects in the specific contexts of solving certain problems and instructive tasks, which are impossible to use without assimilated and realised declarative knowledge. R. McCormick [10], considers that *solving problems* does not necessarily represent a higher order procedural knowledge, but is an element that cannot be neglected in determining the ability *to acquire declarative knowledge in close connection with procedural knowledge* or by prior internalization of a means efficient acquisition of this knowledge. In the given case, the problem of assessment of the procedural knowledge is addressed, but also of their role in the context of assessment of the ability to think scientifically.

The individual's mental processes are conditioned by many factors: intention/goal, context, action, tools, previous experience and interactions with the environment. Thus, the mental activity of generating and solving problems can be carried out separately, but it can also take place simultaneously. Everything will depend on the task the disciple has received. When the task of learning and consolidating efforts to generate and solve problems is placed in the center of attention, then the individual will act, operationally, valorizing on both declarative and procedural knowledge, already acquired. Since it is often difficult to delimit procedural knowledge from declarative ones, including meta-knowledge, in the educational process we operate with objectives versus competences at the level of knowledge, at the level of application and at the level of integration [6], which ensures the elaboration and the effective utilization of didactic design and of course the achievement of concrete results in terms of competence training focused on the development-efficiency of scientific thinking (for students and adults).

As part of the research carried out, the theoretical study allowed us to develop an educational construct, which, from a methodological point of view, would contribute to the development of scientific thinking.

The process of designing and solving problems in neurodidactics [12] is considered as the only way to promote procedural knowledge and appears in many school programs, where various technologies related to each discipline exist and are proposed. From the perspective of cognition, the declarative knowledge, the objects, the tools, *the resolute strategies* that can be applied, including the process of elaborating - solving problems in the educational framework, interacting with issuing and validating hypotheses, with the valorization of metacognitive skills, in essence, are the basis of the development of thinking scientific [1, 7, 12, 13, 16]. One of the current challenges for teachers is confronting the question of when the subject of scientific thinking, be it a student or a teacher, must pass from creativity, the generation of new ideas to the evaluation of each one or to their selection in accordance with certain criteria (imposed by the concrete discipline, research methodology, etc.). Obviously, declarative knowledge, from the point of view of pedagogy, represents not only the assimilation of information, but implicitly also includes the process of memorization, analysis, synthesis, internalization and formation of the first level of the human cognitive system, which is manifested and externalized through *competences at the level of knowledge* [7]. In this context, the technology of development of the scientific thinking is outlined, starting from the perspective of *cognitive education theory*, which correlates with *the optimizing principles and epistemological conditions of neurodidactics* [12, p. 20-22] by expanding and deepening the four levels of the human cognitive system [apud 7], also taking into account the efficiency of two directions: *scientific education vs education for science and the systematic exercise of creativity and metacognition*. The latter, in the view of I. Neacșu,

also emphasizes complementarity at the level of problem-solving, when the subject of scientific thinking uses systematization, combinatorics and communication, thus activating the left hemisphere [12]. These skills, materialized in the form of *procedural knowledge*, serve teachers as methodological support for the development of scientific thinking in students. Both directions can be exploited by teachers by exploring *the Theory of Inventive Problem Solving – TIPS*, developed by G. Altshuller [19], the essential algorithm of which is a complex program, structured and focused on compliance with the legalities of development of the technical systems and designed to analyze and solve inventive problems. This is where the operations of identifying and resolving contradictions, analyzing the initial situation and choosing or developing a strategy for solving a problem are valorized; synthesizing methods, means, including ways to find and apply the most effective solutions to various types of problems; accumulating and processing the best solutions, generalizing and optimizing them to explore them in solving other problems.

As for the development of metacognition, then we mention the fact that we will focus on consolidating and perfecting *both of its constituent components*, that is, *metacognitive knowledge* (declarative knowledge) and *metacognitive skills* (procedural knowledge). Valorizing these two directions of educational technological intervention would allow the full use of procedural knowledge with significant contributions to the further development of scientific thinking.

The purpose of this article is not to put procedural knowledge in the foreground in the development of scientific thinking or to expose its development algorithm, but to nuance their role in the development of scientific thinking in teachers and the possibility of their exploitation in the educational system through the prism of development of the scientific thinking in students.

Next, we propose for analysis the research of involvement of the procedural knowledge within a complex pedagogical experiment, which targeted several aspects regarding the development of scientific thinking among teachers.

All these aspects and sides of knowledge are nothing but a facilitation of scientific knowledge that is mediated by scientific thinking and helps teachers to be more effective in their professional activity [16].

The purpose of this article is not to put procedural knowledge in the foreground in the development of scientific thinking or to expose their development algorithm, but to nuance their role in making the scientific thinking of teachers more efficient and the possibility of exploiting procedural knowledge in the educational system through in terms of the development of scientific thinking in students. Next, we propose for analysis a sequence of the research carried out regarding the involvement of procedural knowledge within a complex pedagogical experiment, which aimed at several aspects regarding the development of scientific thinking among teachers.

### Research Methodology

This study shows how teachers' procedural knowledge can contribute to the development of scientific thinking and the transfer of these cognitive skills to students.

**The purpose of research** lies in the experimental verification of the contribution of procedural knowledge in the development of scientific thinking among teachers.

**Research hypothesis:** The development and efficiency of scientific thinking in teaching staff can be facilitated by the exploitation of procedural knowledge.

**Research sample:** The study involved a sample of 288 subjects, teachers from Romania and the Republic of Moldova. Of these, 62 come from rural areas, and 226 from urban areas, representing various levels of education, including primary, secondary and high school. The teachers cover a wide range of subjects, including foreign languages, Romanian, chemistry, biology, psychology, history, geography, mathematics, physics, computer science, physical education and others. (In particular, 139 subjects are from Romania, and 149 are from the Republic of Moldova).

For the data collection, we used a *questionnaire-application to evaluate the scientific thinking of teachers*. The third part of the questionnaire, which refers to procedural knowledge, included a rating scale from 1 to 5, evaluated by experts using the Delphi method [9]. This method provides answers with intermediate options, and in this case, we applied a rating framework *with five options: unsatisfactory, poor, sufficient,*

*good, very good.* This approach allows for more subtle nuances to be captured than a simple binary answer (yes/no), which makes the Delphi method effective in data collection in the field of psychopedagogical research. Teacher evaluation focused on specific descriptors and was conducted using the expert evaluation method. 5 experts participated in this evaluation, who were familiar with the answers based on the descriptors presented by the researcher A. Afanas [apud 18, p. 92], to ensure the reliability of data. The evaluation method by means of the valuation of experts is a technique for obtaining additional results from a group of experts versed in the researched issue. This contributes to the formalization of procedures for collecting, summarizing and analyzing the opinions of specialists-experts, transforming them into the most appropriate and efficient form for making an informed decision [23].

In this vein, we make a clarification that expert evaluations can be used at any stage of the study: in determining the purpose and objectives of the study itself, in building and testing hypotheses, in identifying problematic situations, in the course of interpreting any processes, events or facts, to justify the nature of using certain tools in the process of developing recommendations, etc. *Expert evaluation methods are used in situations where the choice, justification and evaluation of decisions cannot be made only on the basis of precise calculations* [ibidem]. We reiterate that the Expert method is a valuable technique for obtaining and comparing qualitative opinions and assessments from a group of experts. By using this method, one can benefit from the expertise and specialized knowledge of practitioners in the field to address complex issues and make informed decisions [23]. However, the expert method also has some limitations. The process can be time and resource consuming as it may involve repeated data collection and analysis by experts. Also, the results obtained may be influenced by the subjective selection of experts and the way in which the questions or statements in the conducted survey are formulated.

In essence, the application of any research method requires the observance of certain rigors, the application of the respective method is no exception.

So, we investigated the following aspects as follows:

***The relevance and logics of answer:*** aims at the importance of opinions presented, their impact on the development of scientific thinking, understanding the meaning, the ability to analyze, compare, concretize, classify, synthesize, generalize, etc. and think about its scientific content; to order the answer in a logical form, coherent with pertinent arguments.

***The depth and originality of answer:*** demonstrates the capacity for reflection, original judgment and to understand the essence of scientific material; the reference to the appreciation and issuing of value judgments, conceptualizations in relation to the subject in question; the ability to penetrate into the essence of subject addressed.

***The significance and correctness of answer*** aims at the ability to provide logical, correct, valuable answers, by highlighting important ideas and theses; awareness and exploitation of denotative and connotative meaning [15, 16, 17, etc.].

## Results and analyses

We performed a complex analysis of the data obtained from the subjects on two main axes consistent with the experimental design. We compared and highlighted the differences between subjects in the control group (CG) and those in the experimental group (EG) in two distinct phases: before and after the experimental intervention (Test and Retest). We also compared subjects in the experimental group (EG) at the two measurement times (Test and Retest) and subjects in the control group (CG) at the same two times.

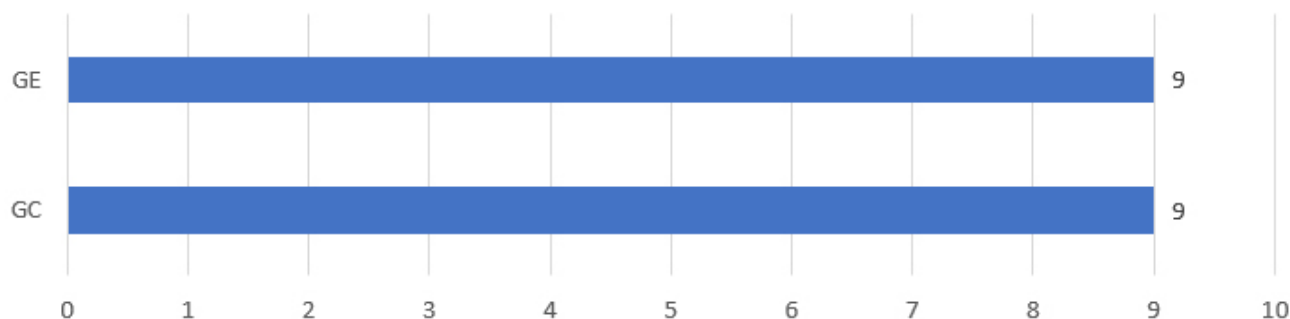
In parallel with the logical analysis and the description of obtained results, we performed non-parametric inferential statistical analyzes for the independent samples and for the paired samples, according to the first axis.

This approach allowed us to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of training program on the subjects and to assess whether there are significant differences in the development of scientific thinking among teachers in the control and experimental groups. Also, to evaluate the effectiveness of the scientific thinking training program, we calculated *the effect's size* for the investigated variables, because, in the context of controversy related to *the null hypothesis* significance testing procedure, the APA (American Psychological Association) requires the calculation and reporting of the effect size as a mandatory requirement [3].

In order to compare the level of scientific thinking among teachers from the control group (CG) and the experimental group (EG), we used a scale made up of 9 items that focused on topics of application and integration of knowledge regarding scientific thinking and its peculiarities. This section focuses on determining *the quality of procedural knowledge*. This allowed us to identify why teachers are capable of providing practical information regarding the development and efficiency of scientific thinking.

In the experimental research we used *the U-Mann Whitney Test* in order to verify the homogeneity of the control and experimental groups. The sample did not identify significant statistical differences between the control group (CG) and the experimental group (EG) in *the procedural knowledge* variable ( $U=9865,000$ ,  $p=0.437$ ). The graphic representation can be seen in Figure 1.

**Fig. 1. Median of Scores for CG/Pretest and EG/Pretest on Procedural Knowledge Variable.**



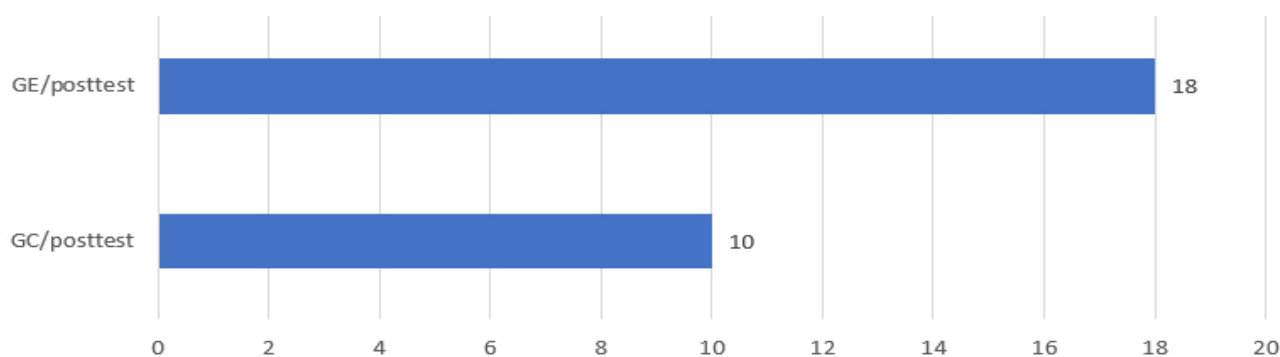
The median of scores at pretest stage were the same for the experimental group (EG) and the control group (CG), both having a median of 9.0 and 9.0, respectively. The next step focused on identifying differences between EG and CG after the experimental intervention at the post-test stage.

**Table 1. Analysis of Group Differences by Means of U-Mann Whitney Test**

Test Statistics <sup>a</sup>	
	Procedural Knowledge
<b>Mann-Whitney U</b>	4842.500
Wilcoxon W	15282.500
Z	-7.945
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	<b>0.001</b>
a. Grouping Variable: EG/CG (Group)	

*The U-Mann Whitney test* allowed us to identify significant differences between the Control Group (CG) and the Experimental Group (EG) in *the procedural knowledge* variable ( $U=4842.500$ ,  $p=0.001$ ). The graphic representation can be seen in Figure 2.

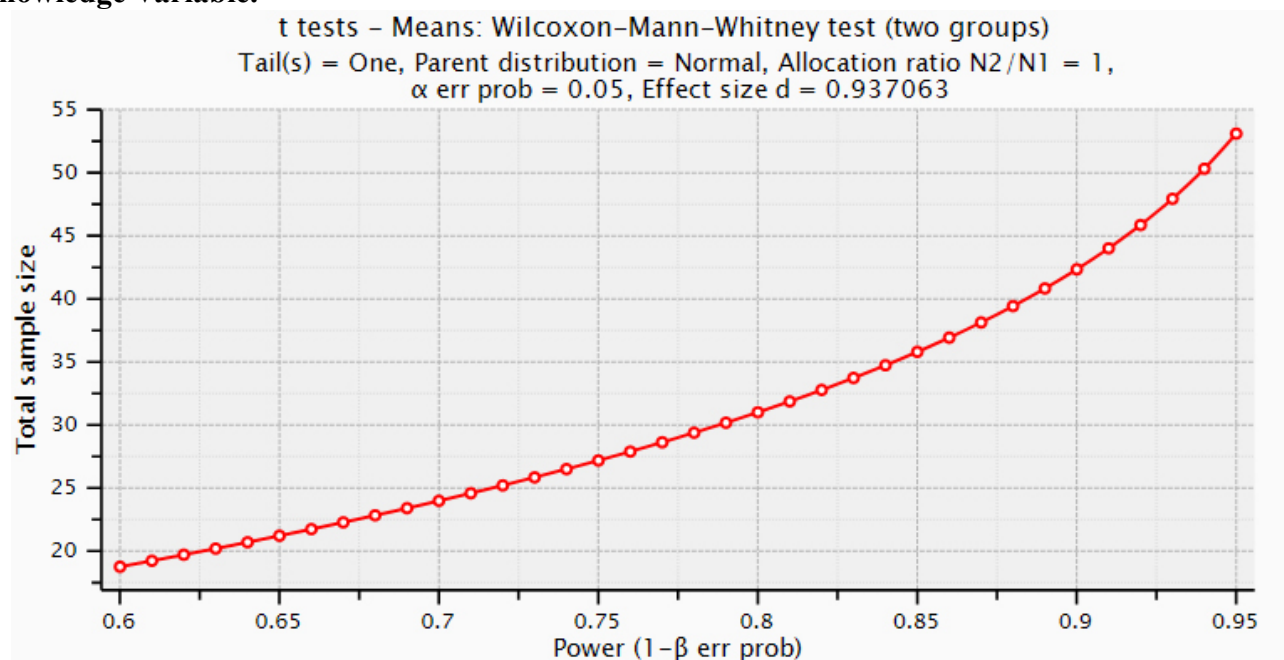
**Fig. 2. Median of Scores for CG/ Posttest and EG/Posttest on Procedural Knowledge Variable.**



The median of scores on the procedural knowledge variable for EG/posttest were significantly higher (median = 18.0) compared to CG/ posttest (median = 10.0).

The effect size of the experimental intervention on *the third part of the questionnaire* can be visualized in Figure 3 and indicates that the training intervention has the following consequence: *an obvious increase in procedural knowledge* ( $d = 0.93$ ).

**Fig. 3. Graphical Representation of Confidence Intervals for Effect Size Indices for Procedural Knowledge Variable.**



The obvious increase in *procedural knowledge* is manifested through the development of metacognitive skills and transversal competences/ at the level of optimal integration in the formal and non-formal educational process through the development-application of planning, monitoring, evaluation, regulation, restructuring, interpretation, generalization, argumentation, prediction strategies of complex educational phenomena (in fact, constitutive elements of scientific thinking). More precisely, the teaching staff has become much more confident in solving pedagogical problems and dilemmas, including the various tasks that require the teaching staff in the position of creative and reflexive executor, efficient organizer and well-versed expert. At the same time, the significant increase in procedural knowledge was manifested through the following:

**Independence:** The possession of procedural knowledge led to an increase in the level of self-actualization and professionalization, to the manifestation of metacomprehension (knowledge of one's comprehension processes) and intellectual autonomy.

**Logics and creativity in carrying out tasks:** Advanced ability to consistently and coherently develop and apply judgments and reasoning; ensuring the cause-effect relationship in carrying out pedagogical tasks; the manifestation of multiple intelligences, the utilization of convergent and divergent thinking, etc.

**Efficiency in execution:** Teachers have become better able to develop assignments with fewer errors and in a shorter time due to knowing the correct procedures and appropriate techniques.

**Adaptability:** Deep understanding of procedures allows them to be adapted to varied or unexpected situations without affecting the quality or effectiveness of tasks.

**Quality improvement:** The deeper (complex) the knowledge of the procedures was, the more teachers were able to perform tasks with a higher quality, avoiding errors or unexpected difficulties.

**Developing strategies:** Teachers developed their own strategies to approach tasks and procedures in a more effective and creative way, based on their knowledge.

**Knowledge transfer:** Teachers were able to more effectively apply procedural knowledge in similar situations or in other fields, transferring declarative/theoretical knowledge and acquired skills.

**Development in expertise:** During the course of experiment and constant practice, teachers have reached a high level of competence and expertise in a certain field and in solving certain types of problems. Increasing procedural knowledge is not only about learning existing procedures step by step, but also developing the ability to adapt them, understand the context and find innovative solutions in various situations.

The next sequence of the experimental method materialized in making comparisons for paired samples by means of the Wilcoxon test.

In order to investigate to what extent the changes listed above are due to the training program/ development and streamlining of scientific thinking among teachers, the results obtained in the EG in the pretest and posttest, as well as the results in the CG in the pretest and posttest stage, were examined.

**Table 2. Analysis of Differences in EG for Procedural Knowledge Variable by Means of Wilcoxon Test<sup>a,b</sup>.**

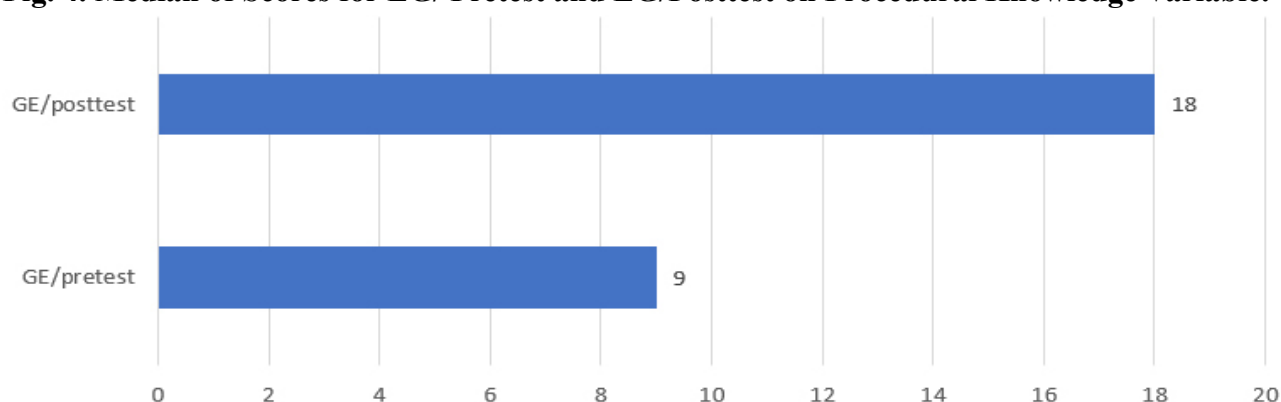
Test Statistics <sup>a,b</sup>	
Procedural Knowledge	
Z	-10.884 <sup>c</sup>
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.001
a. EG/ CG (Group) = EG	
b. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test	
c. Based on negative ranks.	

By means of the Wilcoxon statistical test, the differences in EG are compared between the measurements made before the intervention for each separate subscale of the test for evaluation of the scientific thinking in teaching staff, the segment dedicated to procedural knowledge and those made after the experimental intervention.

Statistics and p-values are presented as follows: (Z=-10.884 and the asymptotic (2-tailed) p-value is 0.001.)

Negative Z-statistics suggest that posttest measurements are generally lower than pretest measurements for each individual subscale. Extremely low p-values less than 0.05 (all are 0.001) indicate that the observed differences are statistically significant, meaning that the probability of obtaining the observed differences by chance is very small.

**Fig. 4. Median of Scores for EG/ Pretest and EG/Posttest on Procedural Knowledge Variable.**

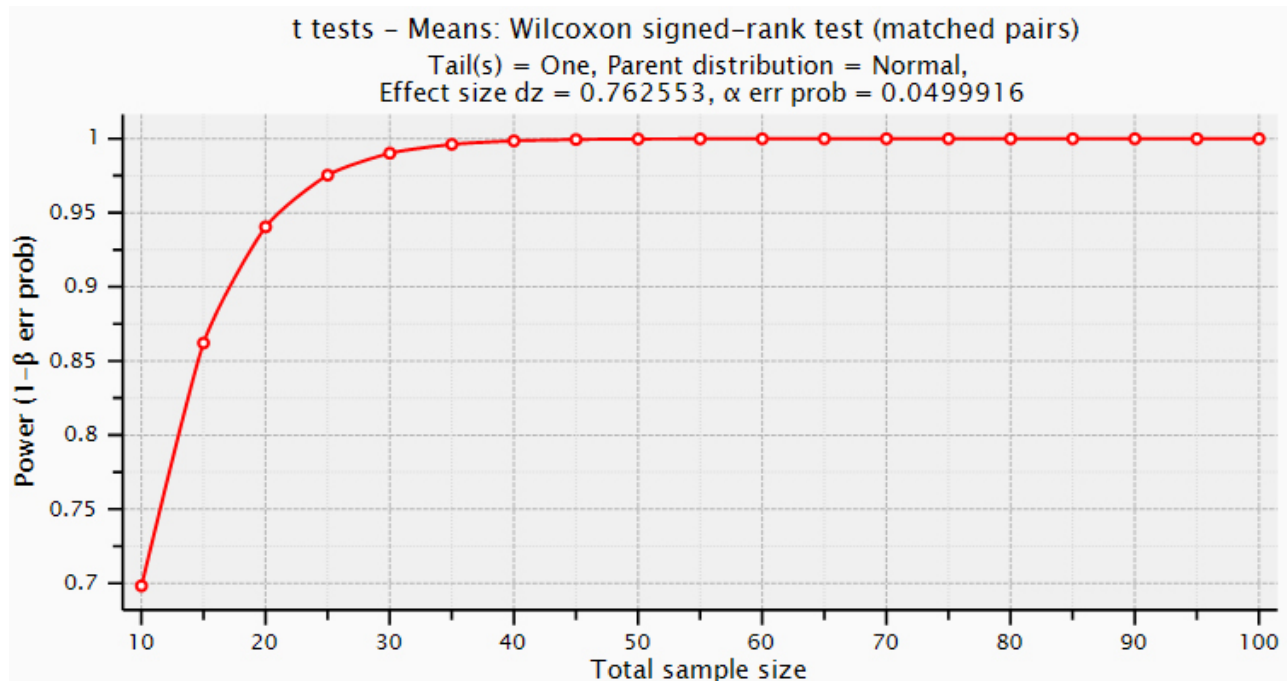


The median of scores for the *procedural knowledge* variable within the experimental group (EG) were analyzed at two different times: pretest and posttest. The results indicate the following significant trends: the median posttest scores (median = 18) were significantly higher than the pretest (median = 9), indicating a significant improvement in *procedural* knowledge performance.

These observations suggest that the experimental intervention had a significant positive impact on the development of scientific thinking among teachers in the experimental group (EG). For a more comprehensive perspective, it is recommended to consider other factors and the corresponding statistical analysis, which are not presented in this article.



**Fig. 5. Graphical Representation of Confidence Intervals for Effect Size Indices for Declarative, Factual and Conceptual Knowledge Variable.**



The effect size of the experimental intervention on *the first part of the questionnaire* can be visualized in Figure 5 and indicates that the training intervention has the following consequence: an obvious increase in procedural knowledge, a significant effect of the experimental intervention ( $d=0.76$ ) with a level 95% confidence.

Overall, these results indicate that, at the specified sample size, with the established significance level and specified effect size, the probability of detecting the desired effect is close to 95%, thus reflecting adequate test power.

**Table 3. Analysis of Differences in CG for Procedural Knowledge Variable by Means of Wilcoxon Test<sup>a,b</sup>.**

Test Statistics <sup>a,b</sup>	
	Procedural Knowledge
Z	-1.095 <sup>c</sup>
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.273
a. GE/GC (Group) = CG	
b. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test	
c. Based on negative ranks.	

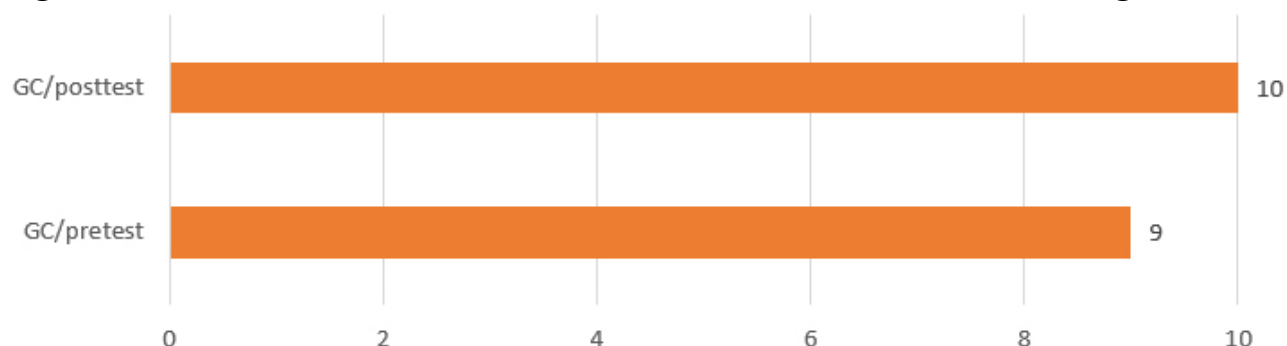
For the procedural knowledge variable, we calculated the Z-values, obtaining  $Z = -1.095$ , and the asymptotic p-value (2-tailed) is 0.273. The Z value is close to zero, suggesting that there are no significant differences between pretest and posttest measurements for this procedural knowledge subscale within the control group. Also, p-values are greater than 0.05 in all cases, indicating that the observed differences are not statistically significant.

In conclusion, the results reflected in Table 4 suggest that there were no changes in the posttest measurements compared to the pretest measurements in the control group (CG).

We analyzed the median of scores for the procedural knowledge variable within the control group (CG) at two distinct stages: pretest and posttest. The results showed that the median of scores remained constant between the two stages: Median pretest (CG): 9, Median posttest (CG): 10. Therefore, the scores in the

control group did not register significant changes between pretest and posttest for the variable procedural knowledge with reference to the development of scientific thinking. This indicates that the control group did not show significant improvements in the development of procedural knowledge related to scientific thinking compared to the experimental group.

**Fig. 6. Median of Scores for CG/ Pretest and CG/Posttest on Procedural Knowledge Variable.**



Overall, the results suggest that the experimental intervention had a positive impact on the development of scientific thinking in terms of procedural knowledge among teachers in the experimental group (EG). On the other hand, the constant results in the control group (CG) indicate that this group did not register significant improvements in the given knowledge related to the development-efficiency of scientific thinking during this period.

### Conclusions

Following the experimental approach, we came to the conclusion that the development of scientific thinking in pedagogues requires the simultaneous activation of procedural knowledge related to scientific thinking. Procedural knowledge, which refers to the practical, complex applicability of theoretical information and their awareness, has a fundamental role in the development of scientific thinking in teachers. This knowledge enables teachers to understand and apply concepts, principles and heuristic strategies in different teaching areas. Procedural knowledge provides a solid foundation for operationalizing scientific thinking in order to obtain relevant results regarding various contexts addressed in everyday life. This knowledge can help teachers convey accurate information to students and strengthen their understanding of scientific topics and beyond. Procedural knowledge is essential to the development of scientific thinking because it enables teachers to make connections between ideas and think critically in the scientific context. The way in which declarative knowledge interacts is achieved through independence in task performance and fluency in execution, better adaptability, the ability to qualitatively transfer knowledge, development in expertise. The development of scientific thinking in teachers is not possible only through knowledge, but through the simultaneous development of procedural knowledge. These three types of knowledge work together to provide teachers with a solid foundation for understanding, applying, and communicating scientific thinking to students. These conclusions emphasize the importance of the diversity of knowledge in the development of scientific thinking among teachers and highlight the need for a comprehensive approach in their training.

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## THE ROLE OF MOTIVATION IN DEVELOPING RESEARCH SKILLS: AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVE

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This article explores the development of research skills in students within the context of an interdisciplinary approach. Research skills refer to students' ability to conduct research, analyze information, and solve complex problems. The interdisciplinary approach integrates multiple disciplines into the learning process, providing students with a broader perspective and fertile ground for the development of research skills. Motivation plays an essential role in this process, and the relevance of the subject to students' individual interests can be a significant source of motivation. Teachers, as mentors, have an impact on students' motivation by providing guidance and positive feedback. Effective time management and the promotion of reflection on research experiences complement this framework for the development of research skills. Through the interdisciplinary approach and active involvement of teachers, students become capable of tackling complex issues, exploring the world with curiosity, and developing essential skills for their future success.

**Keywords:** *research skills, interdisciplinary approach, subject relevance, mentoring teacher, time management, reflection, development, students, learning process.*

### MOTIVAȚIA ȘI COMPETENȚELE INVESTIGAȚIONALE: O PERSPECTIVĂ INTERDISCIPLINARĂ

În articol se analizează dezvoltarea competenței investigaționale la elevi în cadrul unei abordări interdisciplinare. Competența investigațională se referă la capacitatea elevilor de a efectua cercetări, analiza informații și rezolva probleme complexe. Abordarea interdisciplinară integrează mai multe discipline în procesul de învățare, oferind astfel o perspectivă mai amplă și un teren fertil pentru dezvoltarea acestei competențe. Motivația joacă un rol central în acest proces, iar relevanța subiectului pentru interesele individuale ale elevilor poate reprezenta o sursă puternică de motivație. Profesorii au un impact semnificativ în această ecuație, fiind mentori și furnizând îndrumare și feedback pozitiv pentru elevi. Gestionarea eficientă a timpului și promovarea reflecției asupra experiențelor de cercetare completează acest cadru de dezvoltare a competenței investigaționale. Prin abordarea interdisciplinară și angajamentul activ al profesorilor, elevii devin capabili să abordeze probleme complexe, să exploreze cu curiozitate și să dezvolte abilități esențiale pentru succesul lor viitor.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *competențe investigaționale, abordare interdisciplinară, motivație, relevanța subiectului, profesor mentor, gestionarea timpului, reflecție, dezvoltare, elevi, proces de învățare.*

### Introduction

Tackling the issue of student motivation in enhancing investigatory competency represents a key concern within the contemporary educational framework. Investigative (research) competence requires active involvement of students in research, analysis, and deep understanding of study subjects, making motivation an important component of this process. The interdisciplinary approach in education is the subject of differing opinions, attracting both supporters and critics. Supporters believe that this method can motivate students to engage in learning school subjects, while critics argue that the interdisciplinary approach only creates an illusion of motivation [6]. Given this controversy, the question arises regarding the relationship between the interdisciplinary approach and the development of students' investigative competencies.

Implementing the interdisciplinary approach involves using multiple sources of different information, requiring students to solve numerous smaller problems before addressing the central question. Solving these problems will trigger emotional reactions that will prompt the student to choose between achieving smaller goals (in this situation, their activity will be fragmented, less cohesive, and dispersed) and tackling broader issues (activity will become more focused and oriented towards larger objectives) [2].

Student motivation can be considered the engine that fuels the learning process. In this context, the importance of motivation is particularly significant, as it influences how students engage in research activities, assimilate knowledge, and develop the necessary skills to become efficient investigators [5]. We will try to examine some key aspects that underline the relevance of motivation in developing research competence.

1. **Energy and perspective.** Motivation provides students with the necessary energy to actively engage in the research process. When motivated, they approach tasks with enthusiasm and dedication, which increases the chances of success in investigations.

2. **Desire to explore.** Motivation fuels the desire to explore the world around them. Motivated students are more likely to seek answers to questions, investigate phenomena, and engage in autonomous learning activities.

3. **Data collection and analysis.** When students are motivated, they become more attentive to details and more efficient in collecting and analyzing data. Motivation drives them to dedicate their time and effort to deeply understand the subject of investigation.

4. **Resilience to obstacles.** Motivation helps students overcome obstacles and face challenges that may arise in the research process. They are less likely to give up in the face of difficulties.

5. **Autonomy and responsibility.** Motivation promotes learning autonomy. Motivated students are more willing to take responsibility for their own research process, which develops self-regulation and planning skills.

6. **Sustainable learning.** Motivated students tend to assimilate knowledge in a deeper and more durable manner. This means that the investigative competence developed in the context of motivation is more likely to be transferred and applied in other areas and situations.

**Personal relevance** is an important aspect in the equation of student motivation in developing investigative competence. This factor is closely linked to how the subject of study connects to the individual interests and aspirations of the students. The interdisciplinary approach proves to be a valuable tool in developing this crucial aspect of motivation, as it allows students to explore and discover their personal passions within the context of developing investigative competence. The interdisciplinary approach introduces themes and concepts that can be directly related to the individual interests of students. When students see that study subjects are relevant to what they are passionate about, they are more motivated to engage and investigate in depth. Through the interdisciplinary approach, students can explore issues and situations that have real-world relevance. This realistic context makes research activities more meaningful and purposeful, which enhances motivation to achieve results. The interdisciplinary approach gives students the freedom to explore their personal passions within the research activities. This encourages them to become curious investigators and seek answers to the questions that fascinate them the most. When students can see how investigative competence can contribute to achieving their personal goals and aspirations, they become more motivated to engage in the learning process. They perceive investigative competence as a powerful tool to pursue their dreams and make a difference in the world.

The development and implementation of research activities within the educational process require a careful and strategic approach to ensure they are truly beneficial for students. One of the key aspects in this regard is ensuring that research activities are thoughtfully designed to represent challenges that are appropriate to the students' development level. This involves several essential elements:

1. **Complexity Level:** Research activities must be tailored to the developmental level and cognitive maturity of students. It's important that challenges are not too difficult, which could lead to frustration, or too easy, which could generate boredom. By carefully assessing the abilities and knowledge of students, the optimal level of complexity can be established.

2. **Relevance and Context:** To spark interest and motivation in students, research activities must be perceived as relevant to their lives. This may involve linking themes to current topics, personal experiences, or individual interests. When students perceive that what they are learning has relevance for their future development, they are more willing to actively engage in the research process.

3. **Clear Objectives and Expectations:** Students must clearly understand the objectives of research activities and the expectations regarding what they need to achieve. Objectives should be well-defined and measurable, so students know exactly what is expected of them. This helps them direct their efforts appropriately.

4. **Constructive Feedback:** An important part of designing research activities is providing constant and constructive feedback to students. This feedback helps them understand where to direct their efforts and correct any potential errors or misunderstandings.

5. **Flexibility:** Designing research activities must also account for the individual variability of students. Students have different learning paces, and some may require more support or additional time to achieve the set objectives. Flexibility in approach can ensure that all students benefit from challenges that are appropriate to their development level.

**The role of the teacher** in developing students' investigative competence. Teachers are not just transmitters of knowledge but also mentors and guides on the students' journey of discovery and investigation. We will discuss several essential aspects of the teacher's role in stimulating students' motivation in this context. Teachers should provide guidance and suggestions in selecting research topics, formulating research questions, and finding relevant resources. This guidance helps students start the investigation process with confidence. Teachers need to serve as models of curiosity and a desire for intellectual exploration. By demonstrating their own investigative abilities and passion for learning, they can inspire students to develop their own investigative competencies.

**Teacher feedback** also plays a key role in maintaining students' motivation. By providing positive and constructive feedback on students' progress and efforts, teachers encourage them to continue developing in the area of investigative competence. Teachers must be flexible and adapt their approach to the individual needs of students. Each student has their own pace and level of development, and teachers need to be aware of this and provide the appropriate support.

**Encouraging autonomy for student motivation.** Teachers can encourage students to take control over their own learning and investigative process, allowing them to choose topics that they are passionate about and to develop their own research strategies. Teachers need to create a learning environment where students feel safe to explore new ideas and make mistakes. This environment encourages intellectual risk-taking and the courage to investigate in depth.

**Efficient time management aspect in the development of students' investigative competence.** This skill facilitates the investigation process and contributes to maintaining motivation throughout the entire process. Students must learn to allocate their time appropriately to achieve their research objectives. Proper planning of research activities, setting realistic deadlines, and organizing available resources are key aspects in efficient time management. Additionally, developing prioritization and concentration skills can help students focus on the essential aspects of the investigation and avoid wasting time on less relevant activities. Teachers and parents can play a significant role in developing students' time management skills by providing advice and support in this regard. Students' ability to manage their time efficiently will help them stay motivated and succeed in their project activities. Efficient time management is an important skill in interdisciplinary projects. These projects often involve collaboration among students from different disciplines, which can generate a variety of tasks and deadlines. To maintain motivation and efficiency in such projects, students must learn to organize and manage their time strategically. In the context of interdisciplinary projects, planning becomes a priority. Students need to clearly identify the project's objectives, set deadlines for different stages, and allocate time accordingly. Effective communication and collaboration with their project partners help them to avoid overlapping activities and ensure that each team member contributes to the project's success.

It's important to promote reflection on individual research experiences which helps to develop students' investigative competence and maintain their motivation for further investigations. Reflection facilitates a deeper understanding of the research process, allowing students to identify both their strengths and areas needing improvement [1, p. 353].

This process encourages them to evaluate personal skills, recognize individual achievements, and strengthen their confidence in their own abilities, which in turn supports the desire to continue exploring and learning. Additionally, reflection helps them identify and overcome obstacles or challenges encountered during investigations.

**The teacher's role** in this process is to provide constructive feedback and encourage students to docu-

ment and share their thoughts and feelings about their research experience. It contributes to their development as investigators and maintains motivation for future investigations. If in the scientific field the main objective is the acquisition of new knowledge, in the context of education, the purpose of research activity lies in developing a functional research competence for students, as a universal way to explore reality, developing the ability to think investigatively, and stimulating the student's personal position in the educational process through the acquisition of new subjective knowledge (i.e., knowledge obtained independently, which is new and personally significant for each student) [7].

**In conclusion**, the development of investigative competence within an interdisciplinary approach amplifies the learning process, equips students with the necessary skills and motivation for sustained inquiry and knowledge acquisition. It is important for educational systems to advocate for this capability, securing their proficiency and achievement in a constantly evolving world.

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## THE THEORETICAL APPROACH TO LEARNING STYLE

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It is noted that each student prefers different learning styles or learning techniques. Students prefer to learn in different ways: some like to study alone, to act in a group, others to sit quietly aside and observe others, and others prefer to do a little of each.

At the beginning of the process of formal education (school), the expectations from children and their parents are high. One of the factors that influence school performance is represented by the student's preferred learning style. The learning style is a manner to learn specific to each student.

When you know your learning style very well, the adaptation becomes easier, learning becomes more efficient and pleasant, tasks being easy to accomplish.

**Keywords:** *students, learning style, personal developments, teaching profession.*

### ABORDAREA TEORETICĂ A STILULUI DE ÎNVĂȚARE

Este remarcat faptul că fiecare elev preferă diferite stiluri de învățare sau tehnici de învățare. Elevii preferă să învețe în diferite moduri: unora le place să studieze singuri, să acționeze în grup, alora să stea liniștiți deoparte și să-i observe pe ceilalți, iar alții preferă să facă câte puțin din fiecare.

În debutul copiilor în procesul de educație formală (școala), așteptările din partea acestora și a părinților lor sunt mari. Unul din factorii care influențează randamentul școlar este reprezentat de stilul de învățare preferat de elev. Stilul de învățare este o manieră proprie fiecărui elev de a învăța.

Când îți cunoști foarte bine stilul de învățare, adaptarea se face mai ușor, învățarea devine mai eficientă și mai plăcută, sarcinile fiind ușor de realizat.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *elevi, stil de învățare, dezvoltare personală, cadru didactic.*

### Introduction

Learning has been and continues to be the focus of attention of specialists in the field of educational sciences and psychology, due to the complexity of the process and its essential role in the formation and development of personality.

Various explanatory theories of the learning process can be found in the specialized literature, which include various data and conclusions. These theories explore a wide range of perspectives, starting from classical stimulus-response approaches and reaching humanistic, social, cognitive and constructivist aspects of learning. These theoretical paradigms represent the foundation for the development and implementation of didactic practices in varied educational contexts.

At the human level, the learning process reveals its multiple valences, being both informative and formative. In this perspective, we understand learning as a complex approach to knowledge and life, emphasizing the human ability to acquire new skills to better adapt to changes in the environment. At this level, the concept of learning acquires a psycho-pedagogical dimension and refers to the process of knowledge assimilation, acquisition of skills and development of intellectual abilities [7].

In addition, the individual discovers a fundamentally new way of accumulating and transmitting experience through social interaction. Thus, we can affirm that learning, through its contents, influences behavior modification, being influenced by individual experience. This involves, on the one hand, a cognitive aspect, which includes understanding, information processing and compliance with norms, and on the other hand, a practical aspect, which includes the acquisition of practical skills, the formation of habits and adaptation to social behavior patterns [9].



The fundamental purpose of every educational process is to explore and effectively exploit the learning resources available to students. Among these essential resources is learning style, which influences how knowledge is directed and assimilated, as well as how the student interacts with his teachers and peers. The style differences approach is essentially an approach to the diversity of human capacities to search for, organize, interpret, imagine, and ultimately reuse information. In the pursuit of knowledge, students use these capacities in various ways and proportions [3].

In the opinion of A. Kolb, the learning style designates the concrete ways through which the individual reaches changes in behavior through lived experience, reflection, experiment and conceptualization [8].

Learning style is a construct that, together with learning preferences and cognitive styles, can be included in the umbrella term „personal style” [14].

It should be noted that a minimal definition of learning styles can be found in Honey, P. and Mumford, A. „a description of the attitudes and behaviors that determine an individual’s preferred way of learning [6, p. 34].

„Learning outcomes depend on the conditions in which students study” estimated Bates and Sangr [1].

In the research carried out by Hall and Villareal, they emphasized the fact that in describing the most useful activities carried out in education, students tended to refer to these activities from the perspective of their own learning preferences: „I am a visual/ tactile learner... I have to show me” [5].

„Learning styles, also called cognitive styles, represent those cognitive, affective and generally psychological characteristics that indicate the ways in which people who learn, perceive, interact and respond to the learning environment. It represents all the cognitive characteristics that have a determining role in the learning process” [4, p.76-77].

Learning style is also defined according to Pritchard, such as: a certain way in which an individual learns; a mode of learning, an individual preference or best way of thinking, processing, and demonstrating that information has been assimilated and thus learning has occurred; an individual’s preferred means of acquiring knowledge and skills; habitual habits, strategies or mental behaviors regarding learning, as a particular way of thinking about the educational process that the person has [13, p.41].

Their learning styles have a significant relationship with knowledge performance, namely that students with assimilative and convergent learning styles have better results in computer-assisted learning; on the other hand, divergent and accommodative students have better results in instructor-assisted learning.

Generalizing various opinions, we will conceive it integratively: learning style as a superordinate concept, consisting of personal cognitive, affective and psychic characteristics that influence the way individuals perceive, interact and respond to the learning environment, and which, together with the preferences of learning and cognitive styles, fall under the general term of „personal style”.

The large number of models and theories is justified, since the theoretical premises from which their authors start are different. An extensive study, a critical analysis of learning styles is carried out by Coffield, F., Moseley, D., Hall, E. and Ecclestone, K.

In this context, we would like to mention that none of the analyzed models is perfect or complete, each of them managing to capture and satisfactorily model certain aspects and less others. Each theory has its explanatory value, strengths and weaknesses, the images offered being complementary.

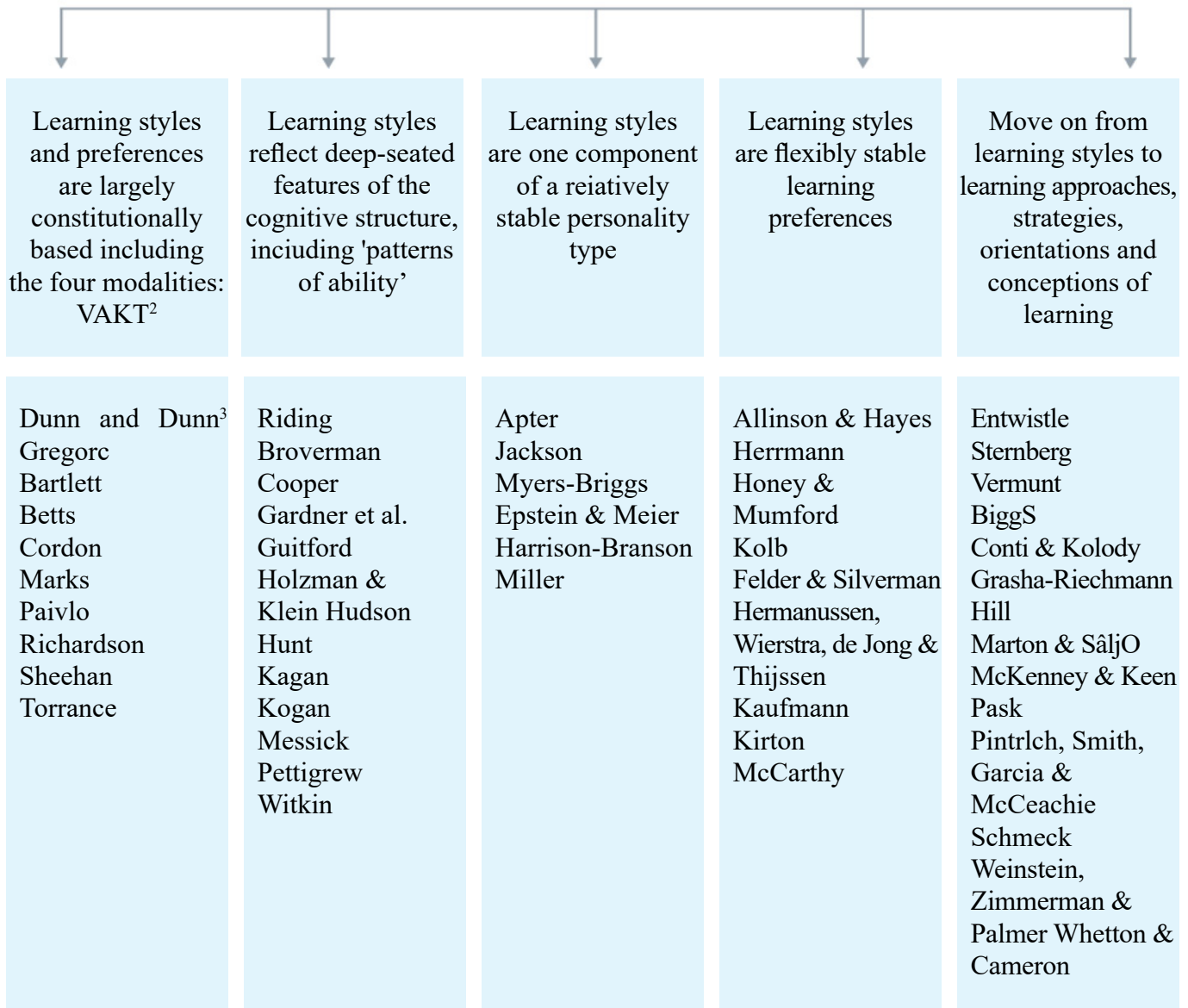
Starting from the theoretical contributions made in the field, the authors carried out an examination of the most influential theoretical models and instruments of learning styles with a special emphasis on validity and support with practical applicability. Figure no. 1 below represents the synthesis made by the authors after examining 71 models regarding learning styles [2]

In this context, the models considered by the authors to be significant are identified, models that have been classified into five large „families”.

Within these models, the most significant differences observed at the individual level are determined by psychomotor peculiarities. Research shows that several characteristics influence a student’s strategy: attitudes, motivation, culture, beliefs, age, learning style, tolerance for ambiguity, and „each characteristic develops in its own way, with unequal accumulations over units of time” [11, p. 61-62].

In the given study, we intend to analyze the models and learning styles that we expect to apply in our research.

Fig. 1. Families of learning styles [2].



Vermunt proposed a model that was grounded in modern constructivist perspectives, aiming to provide a deeper and more integrated understanding of the learning process. According to his view, the learning environment and the student's learning experiences influence the development of learning styles. Thus, they interact with environmental conditions, causing the individual to adopt different approaches to learning. The established learning styles in turn interact with the environment, thus determining the choice of specific approaches to the learning process by the individual [15].

One of the most influential models of learning styles is the one created by Dunn and Dunn. It combines elements of internal determination with those of external determination. In essence, this model states that there are five lines that determine learning styles: the influence of the environment; the influence of the emotional (motivation, persistence, responsibility, conformity/ non-conformity, the need for structure); group influence (preference for individual or group work, with or without an authority figure); the influence of physiological elements (preference for visual, auditory or kinesthetic, favorite moments of the day); the influence of psychological elements (analytical, global, impulsive or reflexive information processing models) [apud 12, p. 66].

D. Kolb identifies four learning styles: accommodative style, convergent style, divergent style, assimilative style. Each learning style designates concrete ways by which behavior changes are reached through lived experience, reflection, experiment and conceptualization. Each learning style designates concrete

ways through which behavior changes are reached through lived experience, reflection, experiment and conceptualization [8].

We emphasize the fact that when we talk about the problem of learning styles, we focus less on what is achieved and insist on how school learning is achieved.

Honey and Mumford highlight 4 distinct learning styles. The four learning styles described by the authors are: active style, reflective style, theoretical style and pragmatic style. Knowing the specific student's style, the teacher can choose the teaching methods and adapt the learning process so that the assimilation of new information and skills becomes easier and more efficient [6].

The classification of learning styles developed by Honey and Mumford distinguishes between the following four styles:

*The active* – If this style characterizes you, you like to be the center of attention. You put a lot of enthusiasm into practical activities. As soon as an activity is finished, you want to immediately start a new one, without stopping and analyzing what you have done and what you have learned. The study that involves the following methods suits you best: training, projects, role play and outdoor learning.

*The Reflective* – You learn best by standing back and viewing experiences from a number of different perspectives before jumping to a conclusion. Take your time to analyze your newly acquired knowledge before you start putting it into practice. The following study methods suit you best: group discussions, feedback from others, mentoring, observation, film and video.

*The theorist* – If you are a theorist, you prefer to learn by asking questions and constantly looking for the logic behind assumptions and concepts. Enjoy intellectual challenges. You have a logical and rational approach and tend to be objective. The most suitable study methods for you are: research, reading, distance learning, continuing education, learning in traditional classrooms, lectures, questions and answers.

*The Pragmatic* – The Pragmatic is always looking for a connection between learning and the practical application of the acquired knowledge. You like to experiment with ideas: Do they work in practice and how? [6].

Nevoit identifies for each learning style – active, reflective, theoretical and pragmatic – the main blockages that students can encounter and suggests some solutions that teachers can approach, to improve or improve these sensitive aspects.

In the active learning style, the most common obstacles that can prevent the development of this knowledge are: the fear of failure or the fear of making mistakes, anxiety, the feeling of obligation to do what you don't want, lack of self-confidence, thinking too carefully about certain things .

Proposed solutions include new activities, things that have not been done before, at least occasionally, activating curiosity, practicing problem solving in groups, changes in activities during classes; discussions; communication of ideas, solving exercises using repetitive techniques, allowing mistakes, stimulating critical thinking.

Regarding the reflective style, the main obstacles are determined by insufficient time given to planning and thinking, the obligation to quickly change the activity, impatience, lack of control and lack of orientation on the finality, students paying more attention to the work itself than to obtaining the result. Teachers can improve these aspects by practicing careful writing, drawing on the board to perform certain tasks, developing protocols, gathering information through observation, oral communication, investigation, adding new information, allowing time for creative thinking, providing thinking models, introducing a stage of reflection in each action, awakening the joy of knowing, activating and maintaining interest, the teacher's oral presentation.

For students who have a predominantly theoretical learning style, they may face the following obstacles: the impulse to stick with first impressions, preference for intuition and subjectivity, disapproval of structured and organized approaches, excessive dependence on others (teachers or colleagues), preference for spontaneity and risk, the inability to convert thoughts into action and the inability to complete and perform work. The suggestions offered refer to the careful reading of theorems and problems; analyzing complex situations; anticipating obstacles and finding solutions to overcome them; summarizing theories; formulating conclusions; practice formulating questions; perseverance; memorization practice and automation; application of concepts.

The pragmatic learning style can raise certain problems for students, such as: overthinking about useful things, lack of vision about the usefulness of what is learned, not completing subjects, distraction and lack of concentration. Possible suggestions for remedying these problems consist of self-correction and self-assessment, asking for help from experienced people, experiments and observations, studying the techniques used by other people, role-playing, exercises and using images [11].

So, it can be said with certainty that every student has his own learning style. The way in which he adapts the learning methods to his own style will determine the achievement of optimal results.

We cannot ignore another model of learning style – the Felder-Silverman model. This model, putting in parentheses the conditions in which the educational act is carried out, takes into account four types of information processing: active, reflective, practical, abstract [16]. Each of these types has a manifest preference for a particular type of approach to new information.

The active learner prefers to manipulate and try to work with information, to experiment, while the reflective learner tends to focus on theoretical aspects, to speculate on possible outcomes.

Another discrimination is related to the difference between those who learn intuitively and those who are focused on sensing concrete elements (sensing vs. intuitive learning). In essence, if students focused on the concrete are more connected to the aspects encountered in everyday life, they are intuitive, they have a strong emphasis on theory, on creativity.

The third tier is related to the difference between students who prefer visual learning versus those who prefer written text

The fourth level is related to the way of analyzing the acquired information – students focused on sequential learning tend towards an approach with small steps, on a formal logic and easy to decipher, while students with a global approach approach the analysis of information in a way holistically, but have difficulty explaining how they solved the problem.

We also mention the following styles identified by Albert Canfield:

- 1) Social – that prefers group learning activities;
- 2) Independent – likes to achieve goals alone;
- 3) Applied – prefers learning activities directly related to real world experiences;
- 4) Conceptual – gets involved in verbally structured tasks;
- 5) Neutral – usually has learning difficulties, does not prefer any of the above modalities;
- 6) Mixed styles – based on combination of strategies: social/ applied, social/ conceptual, independent/ applied, independent/ conceptual.

In agreement with the ideas presented previously, we confirm that experiential learning is oriented towards affirming the student's individuality in the learning process.

We can conclude that by identifying students' learning styles, teachers will optimize their teaching methods according to students' learning styles, they will really clarify their students' needs and, last but not least, they will have better results in teaching and implicitly, school satisfaction will increase.

We also mention that the inclination a person shows towards a learning style can be based on the environment in which he grew up or previous life experiences. Depending on these external factors, the student can develop skills specific to a certain style. We can highlight the fact that a person's learning style is determined by his intellectual abilities and therefore knowing his own style is particularly important.

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## PSYCHOLOGICAL CLIMATE OF CLASS – FACTOR FOR PREVENTION AND REDUCTION OF SCHOOL AGGRESSIVENESS

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Current research and studies demonstrate that the problem of bullying-type aggressiveness in school is worsening internationally as well as nationally. Various factors that lead to aggressiveness and violence among students are extensively analyzed, including non-vulnerable factors. In recent decades, the focus has been on addressing the problem of bullying in school that is becoming complex and difficult to realize. In the given article, an attempt is made to address the issue of reducing and preventing student aggression by valorizing the values and functions of the students' class and, above all, the healthy psychological climate. Namely the psychological climate creates a favorable environment for learning and education that strongly influences the behavior of students. The characteristics of psychological climate, the ways of forming a healthy psychological climate, principles and ways of valorizing the classroom climate in preventing and reducing aggressiveness and bullying-type aggressiveness in school are analyzed. Some forms and methods of carrying out this process were also described. The proposed concept opens up new perspectives for preventing and reducing aggressiveness, including bullying in educational institutions.

**Keywords:** *psychological climate, aggressiveness, violence, bullying, educational environment, emotional state, mental health, school performance.*

### CLIMATUL PSIHOLOGIC AL CLASEI - FACTOR DE PREVENIRE ȘI REDUCEREA AGRESIVITĂȚII ȘCOLARE

Cercetările și studiile actuale demonstrează că problema agresivității de tip bullying în școală se agravează pe plan internațional, dar și național. Se analizează pe larg diferiți factori care duc la agresivitate și violență a elevilor inclusiv și factorii nonvulnerabili. În ultimile decenii accentul se pune pe abordarea problemei bullyingului în școală care devine una complexă și greu de rezolvat. În articolul dat se încearcă de a aborda problema diminuării și prevenirii agresivității elevilor, valorificând valențele și funcțiile clasei de elevi și în primul rând climatul psihologic sănătos. Aname climatul psihologic crează un mediu favorabil de învățare și educație care influențează puternic comportamentul elevilor. Se analizează caracteristicile climatului psihologic, modalitățile de formare a climatului psihologic sănătos, principii și modalități de valorificare a climatului clasei în prevenirea și diminuarea agresivității și agresivității de tip bullying în școală. Se descriu și unele forme și metode de realizare a acestui proces. Conceptul propus deschide noi perspective de prevenire și diminuare a agresivității, inclusiv celei de tip bullying în instituțiile de învățământ.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *climat psihologic, agresivitate, violență, bullying, mediu educațional, stare emoțională, sănătate mintală, performanță școlară.*

### Introduction

In the last decades, the problem of violence, aggressiveness, including bullying in educational institutions has become a significant one on an international level but also on a national level. This is found in numerous educational policy documents (United Nations Organization, World Health Organization, Council of Europe), but also in various studies [1; 5]. The dimensions of factors that cause violence, aggressiveness, bullying-type aggressiveness, but also the factors to prevent and reduce these phenomena are extensively addressed. As a rule, the focus is on addressing community social factors and educational factors. Namely the collaboration between the school and the family can ensure a safer and more empathetic environment for all its members and, first of all, for the students. A favorable psychological climate in the classroom and in the school necessarily implies a safer and more favorable environment in this sense.

### **Psychological Climate of Class: Ways to Prevent and Reduce School Aggressiveness**

The psychological climate is part of the assembly of educational factors for preventing and reducing school aggressiveness, including bullying. The psychological climate in the classroom and in the school in general refers to the emotional and social environment created in the educational institution that influences the mental health, emotional state and learning outcomes of students. Psychological climate considers student interaction, student-teacher relationships, general classroom and school atmosphere, and institutional policies and practices.

There are also the school climate theories developed by Ron Avi Astur [apud. 1] and Jonathan Cohen who mention the importance of a safe and supportive psychological climate in diminishing and reducing school aggressiveness. Namely psychological climate involves creating an environment where all students feel safe, respected and engaged, and where tolerance and empathy are actively promoted. The creation of psychological climate is largely determined by the concept and functions of the class of students. In this context, education sociology approaches the class of students as a „social microgroup” with its own culture and a psychosocial climate determined by internal (student-student, teacher-student, student-teacher) and external relations. Cristea and Constantinescu propose several models for analyzing the class of students:

- **The functional-structural model** involves the realization of social roles and defines the class as a „socialization instance”, it anticipates the evolution of students’ personality in the context of these social roles. The realization of social functions largely determines the mode of social behavior, including the „aggressive-nonaggressive” dimension.

- **The socio-psychological model** approaches the class of students as a “microstructural, institutional group within the school, active and influential in an open psychosocial field resulting from the interaction between the people who compose it”. It has the function of orienting the relations from inside the class in the direction of assuring cohesion of the collective, regulating intra-individual relations, ensuring the social security of the class members in terms of „psychic comfort”. It is this function of the class that is aimed at reducing the aggressive behavior of students by creating a healthy psychological climate.

- **The socio-pedagogical model** is based on group theory, which involves approaching the class of students from the following perspectives: interactionist, dynamic, psychoanalytical. Namely interaction relationships ensure internal balance of the class and create a positive psychological climate.

- **The socio-communitary model** approaches the class of students from the perspective of establishing deontological and methodological relationships: recognizing the right of expression of all students, favoring the process of communication/mutual knowledge in group and microgroup conditions, promoting partnership relationships in the school environment [2].

The functions of students’ class in relation to the structural functional model, the socio-psychological model, the socio-pedagogical model, the socio-communitary model of the students’ class ensure the pedagogical and psychological conditions for the formation of student’s personality, but also for the prevention and reduction of violent and aggressive behaviors, including those of bullying. The effective performance of functions of the students’ class leads to the creation of a favorable educational environment and a healthy psychological climate. Analyzing the specialized literature we can identify characteristics and various features of the psychological climate of classes/schools.

- **Safety and security:** A healthy psychological climate in the school provides a sense of safety and security for both students and teaching staff. Students need to feel safe in order to focus on learning and development.

- **Emotional and social support:** Students and teachers should receive emotional and social support from colleagues, classmates and the school community as a whole. This support can help manage stress and emotional difficulties.

- **Open and respectful communication:** A healthy psychological climate in the school promotes open and respectful communication between students and between students and teachers. Students should feel free to express their thoughts and feelings without fear of judgment or negative reactions.

- **Positive interpersonal relationships:** The school atmosphere should favor the development of positive interpersonal relationships among students and between students and teachers. Healthy relationships can help improve self-esteem and develop social skills.

- *Inclusion and diversity*: A healthy school psychological climate is inclusive and recognizes diversity in all its forms. Students should feel accepted and valued regardless of their ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics.

- *Positive behavioral management*: Effective behavior management in the classroom and throughout the school is essential for a healthy psychological climate. Approaches based on rewards and positive encouragement are preferable to punishment and criticism.

- *Participation and involvement*: Students should be encouraged to participate actively in school life and feel involved in the decision-making process that affects them. This can improve the sense of belonging and responsibility.

- *Academic and emotional support*: Students should have access to resources and services that support them both academically and emotionally. School counseling, mentoring services and other forms of support can help manage difficulties and improve school performance.

These features help create a positive and stimulating learning environment where students can develop on all levels and reach their full potential. The formation of a positive psychological climate in the school involves a number of factors that can significantly influence the experience of students and teaching staff. Here are some key factors that contribute to creating such a climate:

- *Effective school leadership*: A strong and inspired school leader can set the tone for a positive psychological climate. Principals that promote a culture of respect, trust and collaboration can significantly influence the overall atmosphere of the school.

- *Community involvement and participation*: The wider school community, including parents, guardians and members of the local community, can play an important role in supporting and promoting a positive psychological climate. School-community collaboration can bring additional resources and support for students and teachers.

- *Positive relations between students and teachers*: Positive and respectful interactions between students and teachers are fundamental to the formation of a healthy psychological climate. Teachers who are empathetic, supportive and open to communication can contribute to students' self-esteem and academic success.

- *Promoting a culture of trust and safety*: Students need to feel safe and secure in the school environment in order to focus on learning and development. Implementing effective safety and conflict management measures can help promote a climate of trust and safety.

- *Managing behavior and conflict*: Effective management of behavior and conflict in the school is essential to maintaining a positive psychological climate. Approaches based on prevention, early intervention and peaceful conflict resolution can help reduce tensions and promote cooperation and mutual respect.

- *Promoting diversity and inclusion*: Schools should promote a culture of diversity and inclusion, where all students feel accepted and valued. Addressing issues of discrimination, bullying and other forms of exclusion can help create a more tolerant and fair environment.

- *Adequate resources and support*: Access to educational resources and counseling and emotional support services can be crucial to supporting the well-being and success of students and teaching staff. Investing in additional resources such as school counsellors, psychologists or social workers can provide vital support in managing individual difficulties and needs.

- *Promoting communication and collaboration*: Encouraging open communication and collaboration between students, teachers and parents can strengthen ties within the school community and help create a more stimulating and interactive learning environment.

These factors, together, can play a crucial role in the formation of a positive psychological climate in the school, contributing to academic success and the overall well-being of the school community.

### **School Aggressiveness as Social and Educational Problem**

The phenomenon of aggressiveness and bullying-type aggression is seen as destructive and violent behavior directed at people, behavior that aims to harm or hurt others. Aggressiveness can be viewed from several perspectives: ethological, psychological, social, pedagogical.



*The ethological framework* approaches aggressiveness as an appropriation characteristic of the animal world. In animals, aggression usually manifests itself in situations of danger. It is found that within human beings, aggressiveness has evolved from an innate trait to a formed destructive and violent behavior.

*The psychological framework* addresses the issue of aggressiveness as a response to frustration. Aggressiveness cannot occur without frustration as a motivational tool. Aggressive behavior can be generated motivationally by creating states of anger in people. Aggressiveness manifests itself in different forms; verbal; physical, emotional, social.

*The social framework* approaches aggressiveness as an interaction situation and an action through which prejudices are brought to others (physical, moral, social). Albert Nondura founded the theory of teaching aggressiveness, according to which aggressive behavior is learned in different contexts and through different methods, the class of students and the unhealthy psychological climate can be sources that promote aggressiveness in students [apud. 1].

*The pedagogical framework* approaches the problem of aggressiveness from the perspective of prevention, reduction in the case of existence of this phenomenon. Most researchers of school aggressiveness and violence focus on the prevention of aggressiveness and violence which can be achieved in three forms:

- primary prevention: the teaching staff values the functions of students' class, the formation of a positive attitude towards each student, the formation of self-confidence. In general, creating the psychological balance of the class is the most effective way to prevent aggressiveness and violence in students [1].

- secondary prevention: school psychologists, social workers, competent authorities are involved in solving cases of aggressiveness by the concrete students and removing the causes that brought the student/students to that behavior.

- tertiary prevention: direct support offered to students who display aggressive behavior including the bullying-type one.

Within these new forms of preventing aggressiveness in students, valorizing the class factor and healthy psychological balance alongside other factors becomes a significant and effective one.

### **Principles and Psychological Climate in Reducing and Preventing Aggressiveness and Bullying in School**

A positive psychological climate in the school can play a crucial role in reducing and preventing aggressiveness and bullying. By creating a safe, inclusive and empathetic environment, schools can reduce incidents of aggressive behavior and promote healthy relationships between students.

- *The principle of empathy and mutual respect.* A positive psychological climate can encourage the development of empathy and mutual respect among students. Through education and activities that promote understanding and appreciation of diversity, students can develop communication and conflict management skills that reduce aggressive tendencies.

- *The principle of emotional support.* Access to counseling and emotional support services can help students manage their emotions and cope with stress and anxiety, thereby reducing the risk of resorting to aggressive behavior or bullying. School counselors and psychologists can provide strategies and resources to address interpersonal conflicts and problems in a constructive way.

- *The principle of educating students and teaching staff.* Education and training opportunities for students and teachers can increase awareness and understanding of issues related to aggressiveness and bullying. Through educational programs and activities, conflict resolution skills, empathy and respect can be promoted, thereby creating a more peaceful and empathetic school environment.

- *The principle of parental and community involvement.* Involvement of parents and the community in efforts to prevent aggressiveness and bullying can be essential. Through collaboration and partnership between the school, parents and other community organizations, strategies and initiatives can be developed to promote healthy relationships and respect among students.

- *The principle of promoting culture of safety and responsibility.* A positive psychological climate in the school can promote a culture of safety and responsibility, where aggressive behaviors and bullying are re-

jected and sanctioned clearly and consistently. By setting clear expectations and involving the entire school community in promoting these values, tolerance for unacceptable behavior can be reduced.

- *The principle of monitoring and early intervention.* Careful monitoring of interactions between students and early intervention in the event of incidents of aggressiveness or bullying are essential to prevent conflicts from escalating and to protect victims. By implementing effective conflict reporting and management systems, schools can identify and address problems before they become serious.

Valorizing these principles, a positive psychological climate in the school can serve as a protective factor against aggressiveness and bullying, providing students with a safe and supportive environment in which to develop their potential and achieve their academic and personal goals.

### **Possible Activities and Methods of Valorizing Psychological Climate in Prevention and Reduction of Violence and Aggressiveness in School**

There are a variety of activities and methods that schools can implement to leverage the positive psychological climate in preventing and reducing school violence and aggressiveness.

1. Organization of educational programs and activities that increase awareness of issues related to violence and aggressiveness can be effective in preventing these behaviors. These programs may include class discussions, presentations, role plays, and other interactive activities that encourage students to reflect on the impact of their behaviors on others.

2. Developing social skills and conflict resolution techniques can help students manage stressful situations in a constructive and non-violent way. Through practical activities and role-play exercises, students can learn to communicate effectively, express their needs and find peaceful solutions in conflict situations.

3. Activities that promote empathy and mutual respect between students can help create a more empathetic and tolerant school environment. For example, collaborative team projects, discussions about diversity and inclusion or volunteering in the community can foster understanding and appreciation of differences among students and encourage positive relationships among them.

4. Establishing clear and transparent policies and procedures regarding behavior and conflict management can help prevent violence and aggressiveness in school. Students should be aware of the expectations and consequences associated with unacceptable behavior, and teachers should be prepared to intervene appropriately if necessary.

5. Creating a safe, inclusive and respectful school environment can discourage aggressive and violent behaviour. This may include implementing safety measures as well as promoting a school culture that celebrates diversity and encourages the participation and engagement of all students.

6. Parental and community involvement in violence and aggressiveness prevention efforts can be essential. Organizing educational events and programs for parents and the community can strengthen the partnership between the school and families and support joint efforts to prevent behavior problems.

7. Close monitoring of student behaviors and interactions can help identify and intervene early in the event of problems or conflicts. Teachers and school staff should be trained to recognize signs of aggressiveness or bullying and intervene appropriately to prevent situations from escalating.

### **Psychological Climate of Class Vs Manifestation of Aggressiveness by Students**

Establishing the interaction between the psychological climate of the class (school) and the manifestation of aggressiveness by students requires a multi-aspect research despite the complexity of the factors that influence the interaction of psychological climate and school aggressiveness. Considering the content framework of the phenomenon of school aggressiveness and the psychological climate of the class (school), some variables of the interconnection of these phenomena can be deduced: safety and emotional support; open and respectful communication; cohesion and collaboration; positive interpersonal relationships; inclusion and socialization; the frequency of aggression acts.

In relation to these variables, a questionnaire was developed for students and teachers and was applied in two lyceums (high schools) in Romania, with 55 students and 22 teachers as subjects. The results of questionnaire are presented in the following tables.

**Table 1. Students' Questioning Results.**

Questions	To a large extent	To a sufficient extent	To a small extent	Not at all
Do you think the psychological climate of class ensures your safety and emotional support?	30%	40%	25%	5%
Do you feel comfortable communicating with colleagues?	45%	45%	10%	0%
Do you think cohesion and collaboration among students ensures positive behavior?	60%	40%	0%	0%
Do you think the psychological climate of class favors interpersonal relationships?	70%	30%	0%	0%
Do you think the psychological climate is inclusive for all students?	35%	50%	15%	0%
Do you think the psychological climate of class can have a positive influence on the aggressive behavior of students?	10%	55%	30%	5%
Do you think the aggressive behavior of some students in class negatively influences the psychological climate?	80%	20%	0%	0%

**Table 2. Teachers' Questioning Results.**

Questions	To a large extent	To a sufficient extent	To a small extent	Not at all
Do you think the psychological climate of class ensures the safety (physical, psychological, social) of students?	70%	30%	0%	0%
Do you think the students in that class feel comfortable communicating with each other?	30%	50%	20%	0%
Do you think cohesion and collaboration among students ensures positive behavior?	80%	20%	0%	0%
Do you think the psychological climate of class favors positive interpersonal relationships?	70%	30%	0%	0%
Do you think the psychological climate of class is inclusive for all students?	60%	30%	10%	0%
Do you call for mechanisms to improve the psychological climate regarding the prevention and reduction of students' aggressiveness?	80%	15%	5%	0%
Does the aggressive behavior of some students negatively influence the psychological climate of class?	80%	20%	0%	0%

The analysis of collected data allows us to find that the students mostly appreciate - the psychological climate of the class in preventing and reducing the aggressiveness of students (certain students in the class). Almost 70% of students (to a large extent/to a sufficient extent) appreciate the psychological climate of the class as safe and only 5% of students mentioned that the climate does not ensure their safety and emotional support at all 70% (to a large extent) and 30% (to a sufficient extent) indicates that the psychological climate favors interpersonal relationships but also comfortable communication 45% (to a large extent) and 45% (to a sufficient extent). However, 30% of students (to a small extent) and 5% (not at all) found that the psychological climate of class cannot influence certain aggressive students, they show bullying-type aggressiveness. And practically 100% of students mentioned that aggressive students in the class strongly influence the psychological climate in the class.

Teachers' assessments of the role of class's psychological climate in preventing and reducing students' aggressiveness in relation to those of students are higher. They believe that 70% (to a large extent) and 30% (to a sufficient extent) the psychological climate of class ensures the physical, psychological, social safety of students. Although students had a different point of view 25% (to a large extent) and 5% (not at all). Teachers believe that most students 30% (to a large extent) 50% (to a sufficient extent) feel comfortable in communicating with each other, 80% (to a large extent) and 20% (to a sufficient extent) appreciate the important role of cohesion and learning effective among students as a factor in reducing and preventing students' aggressiveness. As in the case of students, teachers mention that the aggressive behavior of some students in the class has a negative influence on the psychological climate in general. The important thing is that teachers realize that by improving the psychological climate in the classroom, you can prevent and reduce student aggressiveness. This factor is not sufficiently explored by them. As a rule, students-aggressors are worked with individually.

The results obtained from this study convince us to formulate two particular conclusions:

1. The psychological climate in the classroom (school) must be seen as an important factor in preventing and reducing students' aggressiveness, including bullying-type one.
2. In order for the psychological climate of class to become an important factor in reducing and preventing students' aggressiveness, it must be continuously improved in relation to the peculiarities of manifesting aggressiveness by the students of class (school).

### **General Conclusions**

The analysis of theoretical dimensions regarding the construction of psychological climate of class (school) of students opens new research perspectives on this issue, including from the perspective of preventing and reducing school aggressiveness.

The analysis of conceptual dimensions regarding the prevention and reduction of school aggressiveness allows us to find that the functions of students' class and the psychological climate of class as a reflection of these functions are not fully utilized in solving the problems related to school aggressiveness, including the bullying-type one.

Effective polyaspectual utilization of the psychological climate in the context of classroom functions in the prevention and reduction of school aggressiveness involves deep knowledge of this phenomenon and the factors that cause it.

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## **AGGRESSIVE BULLYING-TYPE BEHAVIOUR: APPROACHES, CHARACTERISTICS, CONSEQUENCES**

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In this article, the problem of aggressive bullying behavior is addressed. The approach is based on the analysis of international policies in the field of preventing and reducing aggressiveness and violence in educational institutions promoted by the UN, the Council of Europe, UNICEF, etc. Emphasis is placed on the definition and characterization of key notions regarding the targeted issue: aggressiveness, violence, bullying and others. The consequences of aggressiveness and bullying-type aggressiveness in school are also extensively argued: psycho-physiological plane, psycho-somatic plane, including mental health, educational and school performance plane, legal norm plane. Some results of the express study on the manifestation of aggressive behavior by lyceum students: student-student, student-teacher, teacher-student and their involvement in acts of violence are also presented. The data obtained are commented on and corrective conclusions and general suggestions are made to prevent and reduce the phenomenon of aggressiveness and bullying-type aggressiveness.

**Keywords:** *aggressiveness, bullying, violence, aggressive behavior, aggressor, victim, deviance.*

### **COMPORTAMENTUL AGRESIV DE TIP BULLYING: ABORDĂRI, CARACTERISTICI, CONSECINȚE**

În articolul dat se abordează problema comportamentului agresiv de tip bullying. Abordarea se întemeiază pe analiza politicilor internaționale în domeniul prevenirii și diminuării agresivității și violenței în instituțiile de învățământ promovate de ONU, Consiliul Europei, UNICEF etc. Se pune accentul pe definirea și caracterizarea noțiunilor cheie privind problematica vizată: agresiune, violență, bullying și altele. Pe larg sunt argumentate și consecințele agresiunii și agresiunii de tip bullying în școală: plan psiho-fiziologic, psiho-somatic, inclusiv sănătatea mintală, plan educațional și al performanțelor școlare, plan al normei juridice. Se prezintă și unele rezultate a express-studiului privind manifestarea de către elevi-liceeni a comportamentului agresiv: elev-elev, elev-profesor, profesor-elev și implicarea lor în acte de violență. Datele obținute se comentează și se fac concluzii reflectivă și sugestii generale de prevenire și diminuare a fenomenului de agresivitate și agresivitate de tip bullying.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *agresivitate, bullying, violență, comportament agresiv, agresor, victimă, divianță.*

### **Introduction**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century is characterized by the increase in aggressiveness and violence at the global level, but also at regional, community, institutional level, generated by the contemporary world challenges: crises, wars, propaganda, extremism, etc.

- In this context, the issue of aggressiveness and violence has become a priority for several international organizations: the United Nations, the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the European Council, etc. We note only a few international turning points in addressing the issue of aggressiveness and violence, including at school.

- The Utrecht conference (1997) organized by the European Council with the theme „Safety in School”.

- World Congress (2001) organized by the European Observatory on „Violence in Schools and Public Policies”.

- Conference of the European Council (Brussels, 1998) with the theme „Violence in Schools: Awareness, Prevention, Penalties”.

- United Nations Global Study on Violence (2002).

- World Report on Violence and Health (WHO, 2002).

The problem of aggressiveness and violence is widely addressed and practiced in all European countries, including Romania and the Republic of Moldova. Here we can talk about the first national study „Violence in School”, carried out by the Institute of Education Sciences (2006). In 2007, the Romanian Ministry of Education elaborates the „Strategy Regarding Reduction of School Violence Phenomenon. The second Report developed by the Institute of Education Sciences in 2018 entitled „Nonviolent Learning Environment for All Children”, in which it is found that about 70% of all students have been subjected to violence or have been involved in a situation of violence.

In the Republic of Moldova, the problem of school violence is also in the sights of the government. In 2014, the Child Protection Strategy 2014-2024 and the „Intersectoral Cooperation Mechanism for Identification, Assessment, Referral, Assistance and Monitoring of Child Victims and Potential Victims of Violence, Neglect, Exploitation and Trafficking” were drawn up and approved. In the composition of these documents’ analysis, it is found that about 75% of the children were subjected to different forms of violence: psychological, physical. And 60% of the graduates were involved in a violent situation.

In all policy documents with reference to combating violence in school, but also in society in general, it is found that violence and aggressiveness damage health, emotional well-being, ability to learn and socialize. In other words, aggressiveness, violence and, above all, bullying have negative consequences on the student’s development and socialization. In this context, a contradiction is identified between the persistent promotion of policies to prevent and reduce aggressiveness and violence in school at all levels and the alarming growth of this phenomenon in educational institutions. This contradiction generates several problems, including of a scientific nature: what are the theoretical and methodological approaches to the prevention of violence and aggressiveness, such as bullying in educational institutions.

The aim of this study is to characterize the phenomenon of “bullying” and to study the consequences of this phenomenon as a premise for building a psycho-pedagogical mechanism to prevent aggressiveness and violence in school, including bullying.

### **Bullying-Type Aggressiveness as Pedagogical Problem**

In specialized literature we find a number of notions/terms that in one way or another reflect the meaning of aggressiveness: deviant behavior, school violence, bullying. Most authors believe that the difficulty of formulating a unitary definition of aggressiveness is related to the complexity of this phenomenon’s manifestation. It is obvious that the delimitation of these notions’ concept will create more objective premises to build a more effective mechanism for preventing and reducing the phenomenon of inclusive violence/aggressiveness such as bullying. It is known that violence, aggressiveness and bullying are deviations from established norms in the given society. This deviation from social norms/rules characterizes deviant behavior. Deviance has acquired dominant social and legal meanings.

Radulescu S. defines violence as „any social behavior and any social act that are different from the general behaviors and actions of the members of a society and that risk, through this difference, causing hostile reactions or sanctions from the collective [11]. Deviance is a concept that encompasses multiple behaviors of the individual categorized as deviations in relation to the social norm [6].

Aggressiveness is still a deviation from social, moral, behavioral norms, but similar to other human traits, it is a dynamic and complex behavior, which is based on biological mechanisms and the social environment. In this context, Mitrofan N. defines aggressiveness as „any form of behavior directed with intention towards objects, persons or oneself, in order to produce prejudices, injuries, destruction and damage” [9].

A more comprehensive definition of aggressiveness incorporates the connection between the psyche and the physical and highlights the psychological component of aggressiveness through the processes that are involved in the aggressive act. From this perspective, aggressiveness is defined as „a state of the psycho-physiological system, through which the person responds with a set of hostile behaviors in the conscious, unconscious and phantasmatic plane, with the aim of destroying, degrading, coercing, denying or humiliating a being or thing invested with significance, which the aggressor feels as such and represents for him/her a challenge”. In some situations, the motive that triggers the aggressiveness is at the level of the meanings that the individual attributes to the reactions of other people, situations, objects that represent a challenge for him/her.

Other authors define aggressiveness as “the tendency to attack either people or inanimate objects that stand in the way of the immediate, compulsive satisfaction of some needs or desires” [5]. „When it is manifested, aggressiveness gives rise to oppositional behaviors, marked of irritability, of intolerance. Being most often latent, it can be expressed through defiance, irony, causticity. Analyzing these definitions, we notice again that aggressiveness is seen as something that exists in our nature and can be expressed through different reactions, from a state of irritability, intolerance to malicious behavior towards others [3].

Aggressiveness manifests itself in different forms: physical (hits, injuries); verbal (threats, irony, nick-naming); affective (intimidation, indifference); social (gossip, damage to reputation).

In the school environment, the following forms of aggressiveness are distinguished: proactive aggressiveness/reactive aggressiveness; instrumental aggressiveness/hostile aggressiveness; affective aggressiveness/aggressiveness... Eibl-Eibesfeldt believes that aggressive behavior can be converted into ambition, courage, exploratory curiosity [3].

It is important to distinguish the notions of „aggressiveness” and „violence”, some authors believe that aggressiveness represents a subtype of violent behavior. Grădinaru T. and others use it as a synonym with reference mainly to the school environment. However, if we accept that aggressiveness is an innate drive, like hunger, fear (Lorenz, 1969), while human violence „is the form of manifestation of aggressiveness, which, as a social phenomenon, appears as a problem of ontology (it is taught life long) [13]. So, we can conclude that aggressiveness and violence can be diminished through education, learning and culture.

At the current stage, in the eyes of researchers and specialists in the educational field appears the problem of „bullying”, which is the most complex form of aggressiveness and violence. Craig and Pepler define bullying as „a repeated form of physical or verbal aggressiveness directed at a person or group of people where there is a power differential [2]. As a rule, bullying has the following characteristics:

- It has a systematic character and is carried out regularly;
- It is executed over a longer period of time;
- It aims either to harm or to gain image.

In other words, most authors who address the problem of bullying characterize this phenomenon as follows: exposure to negative actions, harmful actions, abuse of power, harassment, hostility, etc. Research on cyberbullying, violence on information technologies is also current. Willard Nancy states that cyberbullying consists of being mean to another person by sending or posting domineering material or engaging in other forms of social aggressiveness using digital technologies in one way or another. This type of violence turns into „real online social aggressiveness” [17].

The analytical framework of the problem related to aggressiveness, violence, bullying, creates pedagogical premises for the prevention and reduction of this phenomenon in educational institutions.

### **Some Characteristics of Manifesting Bullying-Type Behavior in Students**

The manifestation of aggressiveness, including bullying-type aggressiveness, largely depends on the student’s personality and the factors that influence this process: family, school, community. There are differences in the manifestation of aggressiveness in girls and boys. Girls are able to regulate emotions better, so aggressive manifestations are less than in boys. Boys show their aggressiveness predominantly physically, and girls verbally towards members of the same gender.

Manifestations of student aggressiveness are associated with the following conditions:

1. the existence of emotions or situations (anger, frustration, anger, abandonment, the need for revenge, etc.);
2. the existence of some models of violent behavior (in the family, in the group of friends, relatives);
3. the existence of conditions that facilitate the discharge of aggressiveness (noise, heat).

In this sense, a profile of the aggressor is also taking shape [6]:

- the inclination towards aggressiveness, latent or manifested, which is based on a background of hostility and denial of social values;
- the emotional instability resulting from a fragility of the ego and from deficiencies in education;
- the social maladjustment resulting from the exacerbation of the feeling of insecurity, which the individual seeks to suppress (for example, through vagrancy, avoiding organized forms of life and activity);

- the duplicity of conduct, reflected by the discord between the behavior preceding the wrongdoing and the behavior of relating to society through which he/she uncovers his/her illegalities;

- the existential imbalance expressed through passions, vices, perversions, absurd waste of money, etc.

Current approaches to aggressiveness, including bullying, pay a lot of attention to aggressiveness: low learning outcomes, educational failure, negative image, etc.

### **Consequences of Aggressive Bullying-Type Behavior**

Analysis of different studies [15; 16; 6; 1] allows us to find:

1. that the effects of aggressiveness can affect several segments of life, psycho-physiologically, educationally and legally;

2. if the violence and aggressiveness are serious and persistent over time.

The negative consequences are equally serious, primarily those related to the psycho-physiological sphere. As Limber S. states, „victimization is closely related to low self-esteem, high rates of depression and anxiety, and increased frequency of suicidal ideation [7]. Aggressiveness and especially bullying affects psycho-social health. Therefore, aggressiveness is considered as a destructive phenomenon. Victimized students can also carry the fear of bullying into adulthood. In addition to the psycho-physiological consequences of aggressiveness, those related to educational institutions are also strengthened: school adaptation, the attractiveness of studies, school performance.

Lessne and others state that school adjustment is associated with a reduced frequency of aggressiveness in students [8]. And others found that aggressive students are twice as likely to express their negative feelings, including towards attractiveness, towards school, than students who feel happy in school, have a good mood.

Aggressiveness and bullying-type aggressiveness also strongly affect school performance. A study conducted by Ortega R. and Lera M., (2000) and another study conducted by Skrxypiee G. (2008) demonstrated this fact: victims of aggressiveness showed a decrease in interest in learning, they recorded a high number of school failures, school dropout increased, the contexts of interaction and communication with other students were limited. Bullying also generates absenteeism which directly affects the learning process and results of students.

In this context, it is important to estimate the role of the learning environment and the psychological conditions in which students learn. The aggressive environment generates stress, anxiety, which affects students' learning and motivation to learn.

The consequences of bullying aggressiveness are also related to judicial norms. Farrington D. (1991) states that society is the biggest victim of bullying because school bullies are prone to acquiesce to their wives and children in adult life. He is of the opinion that bullying aggressiveness paves the way for delinquency and crime in the case of children who have a pro-violent attitude [4]. In general, the manifestation of bullying-type aggressiveness with serious consequences falls under the judicial rules, which are elaborated in most territories of the world, including in Romania and the Republic of Moldova. Knowing the phenomenon of bullying aggressiveness and the consequences of this phenomenon, we can build effective anti-bullying in school.

### **Express-Evaluation of Certain Aspects of Oppressive/Violent Behavior in School Environment**

Express-evaluation of school aggressiveness and violence in high school education is part of a larger study of the targeted issue. The purpose of this assessment is to identify some trends in the manifestation of aggressive behavior by lyceum students and to establish the consequences of these manifestations.

The following items were taken from the „Questionnaire for Evaluation of Violent Behaviors in School Environment”, developed by Sisan M. and Rosan A:

- what are the forms of violence that you observe in school/high school?

- what situations occur between your mates?

- have you personally found yourself in one of the situations below?

- what are the forms of violence/aggressiveness that your mates show towards teachers in school?

- in school, are you pressured by the violence of some mates/teachers?

The questionnaire was applied to 43 graduates from Romania.



**Table 1. Results Recorded For Question What are the forms of violence that you notice in school/high school?**

Item	Appreciation				
	Not at All	Very Rarely	Rarely	Often	Very Often
Violence between students	0	0	45%	35%	20%
Students' violence towards teachers	0	20%	20%	30%	30%
Teachers' violence towards students	0	50%	40%	10%	0

The analysis of the answers to the first question regarding the dominant forms of violence in school allows us to find that violence between students dominates (35% - often and 20% - very often) and student violence towards teachers (60% - often and very often) and more the violence of teachers towards students is rarely recorded, which is also natural. Although any warning from the teachers regarding the observance of some school rules was interpreted by the students as professional violence.

**Table 2. Results Recorded For Question What situations occur between your colleagues?**

Item	Appreciation				
	Not at All	Very Rarely	Rarely	Often	Very Often
Offensive expressions between students, with reference to different physical or mental traits	0	0	20%	40%	40%
Offensive expressions between students regarding the material, familiar situation	0	15%	60%	20%	5%
Swearing/bad language	0	0	16%	30%	54%
Arguments/conflicts	0	0	5%	30%	65%
Offensive expressions between students regarding ethnic belonging	0	20%	0	0	0
Fight between students	0	20%	50%	15%	15%

The answers to the question „what situations are manifested between your mates?”, lead us to the following findings and conclusions: 80% of students indicated that they were offended by other students regarding different physical or mental traits. There is a very large number of these students which indicates that the psychological climate is alarming. In this class there is also a high level of quarrels and conflicts between students, which are recorded between 84% and 95% - often and very often. At the same time, there is no record of a large number of insults, bad language, related to the students' material condition and ethnicity.

**Table 3. Results Recorded For Question What are the forms of violence/aggressiveness that your mates show towards teachers in school?**

Item	Appreciation				
	Not at All	Very Rarely	Rarely	Often	Very Often
Indiscipline	0	5%	50%	30%	15%
Absenteeism, running away from classes	0	25%	25%	40%	10%
Ignoring the message sent by the teachers	0	10%	40%	30%	20%
Helpless attitudes	0	30%	15%	35%	20%
Ugly verbal insults	0	40%	40%	15%	5%

Nonverbal aggressiveness	0	20%	30%	30%	20%
Tendency to hit	0	50%	40%	5%	5%

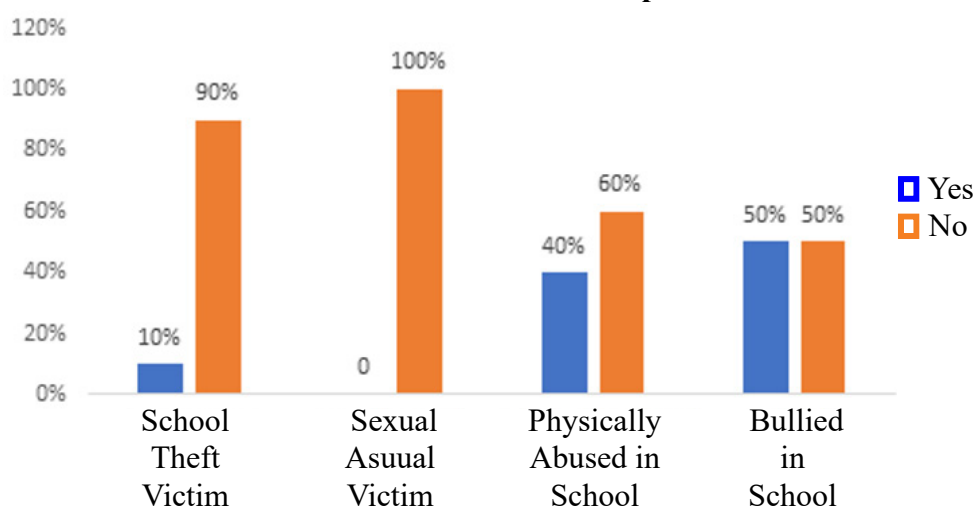
The results obtained after completing the items in the question related to the forms of violence shown towards teachers by students convince us that there are several contradictions between teachers and students regarding the understanding of violence. Many requests from teachers (such as to learn better or reproduce the material learned, etc.) are perceived by students as violence or punishment. However, the large number of students who show violence towards teachers is highlighted: running away from class 50% (often-very often), ignoring the teacher's message 50% (rarely-often), helpless attitudes 55% (often and very often). It is positive that the number of students who show verbal insults towards teachers is small.

**Table 4. Results Recorded For Question Have you personally found yourself in one of the situations below?**

Item	Appreciation	
	Not at All	Very Rarely
School Theft Victim	10%	90%
Sexual Assault Victim	0	100%
Physically Abused in School	40%	60%
Bullied in School	50%	50%

Analyzing the data in response to that question allows us to find that most students have not faced theft in school, sexual abuse. But half of the total number of students indicated that they were physically assaulted and bullied in school as a result these students cannot say that the school is dangerous or the psychological climate is favorable for them.

**Fig. 1. Answers to Question of Whether Student Was a Participant in One of Situations Presented.**



## Conclusions

Approaching aggressiveness and bullying-type aggressiveness from the perspective of phenomenon's complexity, in terms of the diversity of manifestation forms, causes and risk factors, as well as negative consequences, allows us to conclude that the phenomenon of bullying in school constitutes a challenge and a social problem, psychological and pedagogical. Knowing the forms and ways of manifestation of violence, aggressiveness, including bullying, by teachers and managers, will contribute to the search for new strategies to reduce and prevent this phenomenon. All educational actors will be aware of the multitude of consequences generated by aggressiveness and violence and will form a positive and active attitude towards this phenomenon.

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## THE STUDENT'S PERSONALITY FORMATION FOR THE UNDERSTANDING OF CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS IN THE CONTEXT OF NEW EDUCATION

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This scientific article offers a descriptive-analytical foray into the research theme „The student's personality formation for the understanding of contemporary problems in the context of new education”. The actuality of this approach elucidates the necessity of the new education process that has become a priority imperative in university education, centered on the learner/student, which presents the premises of a European-type education through the system of values it promotes. The purpose of the research aims at a descriptive analysis of the new educations as a factor of change through an axiological approach to the problem of the contemporary world in student training within university education. In this sense, the dimensions of the new educations at the international and national level were analyzed for the integral training-development of the student's personality. At the same time, it was determined the ways of implementing the new educations through methodological approaches within university education. The scientific results of the research are relevant by documenting university educational policies, specialized scientific literature with the possibility of implementing new educations in university education and from other specialties than Educational Sciences.

**Keywords:** *new educations, contemporary issues, training, student, learning, curriculum, university.*

### FORMAREA PERSONALITĂȚII STUDENTULUI PENTRU ÎNȚELEGEREA PROBLEMELOR CONTEMPORANE ÎN CONTEXTUL NOILOR EDUCAȚII

Prezentul articol științific oferă o incursiune descriptiv-analitică a temei de cercetare „Formarea personalității studentului pentru înțelegerea problemelor contemporane în contextul noilor educații”. Actualitatea acestei abordări elucidează necesitatea procesului *noilor educații* devenite imperative prioritare în învățământul universitar, centrat pe cel ce învață/student, care prezintă premisele unui învățământ de tip European prin *sistemul de valori* pe care le promovează. Scopul cercetării vizează o analiză descriptivă a noilor educații ca factor al schimbării printr-o abordare axiologică a problemei lumii contemporane în formarea studentului în cadrul învățământului universitar. În acest sens, s-au analizat dimensiunile noilor educații la nivel internațional și național pentru formarea-dezvoltarea integrală a personalității studentului. Totodată, s-au determinat modalitățile de implementare a noilor educații prin demersuri metodologice în cadrul învățământului universitar. Rezultatele științifice ale cercetării sunt relevante prin documentarea politicilor educaționale universitare, literaturii științifice de specialitate cu posibilitatea de implementare a noilor educații în învățământul universitar și de la alte specialități, decât Științe ale educației.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *noile educații, probleme contemporane, formare, student, învățare, curriculum, universitate.*

### Introduction

In the university environment, the current education process centered on the learner/student presents the premises of a European-type education through the system of values that it promotes, and through the type of adjacent academic institutions that it strengthens, through the predilection for culture and intercultural education through the quality the personalities they form.

European integrity has become a priority of educational policy. At the national level, these are being promoted through the new documents: curricula, professional qualification standards and types of diplomas awarded, new school textbooks and university course materials. Also through a series of measures already implemented such as: the reorganization of studies according to the Bologna Declaration; the introduction of elements of European studies in the pre-university and university curriculum; regulating the practice of universal extension through franchising; joining regional and cross-border projects; intergovernmental cultural and scientific exchange programs involving students, teachers and researchers.

The 21st century is dominated by research, innovation, creativity through new models and approaches to contemporary development. In the Republic of Moldova, learning itself acquires new values by capitalizing on the concept of permanent education or lifelong learning. The motto of the Club of Rome Report, the Limitless Horizon of Learning (The First Global Revolution), becomes current in the national space as well by formulating the broad spectrum of learning problems, which are proposed concrete solutions with the aim of helping people to adapt and prepare for change; the ability of each person to gain a global view of the world; training people to become operational and able to solve problems, quoted by L. Antonesei [apud 15].

Education tries to respond to the demands of social development through two directions [apud 9, p. 109]:

- *educational contents* – which facilitate the development of the curriculum by infusing, integrating new educations;

- *the philosophy of education* – which concerns the orientation, dimensioning and rethinking of educational processes, all for the best possible integration of the young generation in an increasingly complex and dynamic world.

In this sense, the purpose of **the research aims** at a descriptive analysis of the new educations as a factor of change through an axiological approach to the problem of the contemporary world in student training within university education.

In this sense, we specify the following **research objectives**:

- identifying the need to study the problems of the contemporary world from an axiological perspective of the premises of European-type education;

- analysis of the dimensions of the new educations at the international and national level for the integral training-development of the student's personality;

- determining the ways to implement new educations through methodological approaches within university education.

**The methodological framework** of the scientific research study focused on the documentation of educational policies, the specialized literature on descriptive analysis, pedagogical synthesis, the inductive and deductive method.

### **Axiology and the problems of the contemporary world**

In the postmodern period, the issue of human becoming, as an object of education, has become even more complicated, given the fact that becoming itself is today more unpredictable and more uncertain than ever, due to the difficulty of specifying social becoming to the world, in general, but especially, because of the great challenges facing humanity at the beginning of this millennium:

- the imbalance of the planetary ecological system and the danger of destroying nature through reckless and irresponsible human intervention;

- increasingly precarious human health, incurable diseases (SIDA, cancer, COVID-19, etc.), unhealthy lifestyles and destructive human vices (drug addiction, smoking, alcoholism, etc.);

- the poverty, squalor, undernourishment of more than a third of the planet's population and overproduction in the superdeveloped countries;

- intolerance, lack of understanding and cooperation, inter-ethnic and religious wars;

- the danger of destroying planetary life through a nuclear war, etc.

**The problem of the Contemporary World** is characterized by universality, globality and complexity, correlated with the paradigm of the complexity of education, gives education an increasingly complex note, and this complexity needs to be treated as such. At the same time, this complexity also requires a global and complex approach to the problems of education and human society, but reality shows us more and more clearly that the most effective solutions cannot be found through sequential, piecemeal approaches and engagements, but an approach is needed *holistic* in studying and decanting the most effective means of solving major global problems: environmental degradation, demographic explosion, proliferation of conflicts between nations, etc. facing humanity.

In order to solve the great problems of the contemporary world, UNESCO formulated the following nec-

essary *values* to be promoted in the 21st century: ecological balance and human responsibility in relation to nature; health consciousness and healthy way of life; economic prosperity and basic skills for all; democracy, tolerance and interculturality; media freedom and inviolability; planetary peace, etc., suggesting at the same time, the education strategies, but also the educational systems to approach the contents of learning in close connection with the problems of the contemporary world [apud 6, p. 15].

In response to the challenges of the contemporary world, at the end of the 20th century, another educational concept appeared, called „*new educations*”. By which it is requested that the great problems that have arisen at the world level are also solved by pedagogical means. Suggesting that for this purpose, the creation of *a unique educational environment* is needed, the renewal of the contents of education and the correlated achievement by all educational systems, including the university one, of the educational objectives / competences and strategies targeted by the respective concept.

In this sense, starting from the year 2000, the International Commission for the Education of the 21st century adopted the recommendation regarding *the promotion in each European state of an education for understanding the great problems of the contemporary world*, which includes not only structural, but also in terms of the education of base new educational contents related to *education for democracy, education for peace, education for the environment, multicultural education*, etc., given that one of the great challenges of the 21st century remains the need „*for each individual to master all the knowledge necessary to understand the world in which he lives*”, reported J. Delors [apud 6, p. 15].

We find that in the process of generating/developing the university curriculum, the importance of key trends and challenges of the time is emphasized, such as: globalization, efficient management of resources, economic and social changes, new informational and communication technologies, innovations. Thus [2, p. 4-5]:

- *the globalization* has caused the interdependence of economies, increased competition, migration, the need for highly qualified specialists, able to adapt to different conditions, etc.;
- *the digitization and expansion of information and communication technologies* has generated a change in the paradigm of knowledge and skills training;
- *financial crises and political/economic challenges* determine new values and educational opportunities, such as: education throughout life, education for all and for each, integral and integral development of the personality, education centered on the learner, etc.

Therefore, the development of the university curriculum is not a process isolated from the international and national context, from the social-economic and educational context. On the contrary, these factors, for the most part, determine the conception and methodology of resizing the university curriculum and by promoting *new educations* in response to the problems of the contemporary world. At the same time, through the document *The Reference Framework of the University Curriculum* [2], it will address the determining educational factors, but also the foundations/conceptual and praxiological foundations of the university curriculum in development.

The importance of education in the university environment becomes even greater in the conditions in which we are able to recognize that the solution of these problems is essentially linked to the philosophy of education, to the educational policies of the states of the world [16, p. 131-132]. Today's society needs to face a series of challenges, conditioned by several existing problems at the global level.

With the definition of the contemporary problem, characterized by globality, universality, complexity and priority character, the educational systems have built, as their own methods of response, the new educations or the new types of contents, according to the UNESCO programs [apud 14, p. 99].

### **The new educations: training values - integral development of the student's personality**

*The new educations* being aware of the problems and values of the contemporary world that represent the approach of the contemporary world for education, through a set of strategies and general objectives. At the same time, they respond to the imperatives indicated by *the problems of the contemporary world*: environmental crisis, globalization, poverty, unemployment, social failure, equal opportunities, human rights, democracy, etc. – these have also become problems of the education sciences, which have integrated them into what is called the *new educations*.

Dealing with *new educations* means defining education as a perennial value of pedagogical consciousness [apud 4, p. 3].

The triggering of the paradoxical situations in which it finds itself and the obstacles it faces, education is invited to prepare in an active, more constructive and dynamic manner, the future generation through students. In these conditions, *the new educations* come to prepare an appropriate, i.e. rational, behavior that partially mitigates *the shock of the future*. According to G.Văideanu's pedagogical understandings, *the new educations* aim at new specific contents, approached as concrete answers to each identified problem [18].

The student in the university environment is considered the main *subject* of education, and to a lesser extent the *object* of education. The student is given the opportunity to collect, select, research and organize knowledge by himself, according to his possibilities and according to the interests that motivate him. He actively participates in his own training, he is, to a large extent, his own educator, and the lecturer / university professor, also a *subject*, has more of a guiding, reflexive role, discreetly directing his training. The student has a certain independence, he can harmoniously develop his personality, without being constrained and forced to a common and uniform line of conduct and action.

Studentul în mediul universitar fiind considerat ca principal *subiect* al educației, și într-o măsură mai mică *obiect* al educației. Studentului i se oferă posibilitatea de a culege, selecta, cerceta și organiza singur cunoștințele, după posibilitățile sale, în funcție de interesele ce-l motivează. El participă în mod activ la propria formare, este în mare măsură propriul educator, iar lectorul /conferențiarul /profesorul universitar, tot *subiect*, are mai mult un rol de îndrumător, de ghid, reflexiv, direcționându-i în mod discret formarea. Studentul dispune de o anumită independență, își poate dezvolta în mod armonios personalitatea, fără a fi constrâns și forțat la o linie comună și uniformă de conduită și acțiune.

The student, as a subject of university education, is encouraged to form an integral personality through actions to achieve [cited 13, p. 26]:

- creativity and innovative spirit;
- personal initiative in researching and deepening different aspects of reality;
- active participation in one's own professional training;
- discernment, in the context of the challenges of the contemporary world;
- the ability to learn independently, but also to self-evaluate;
- the ability to make appropriate decisions as an active citizen;
- a dynamic, efficient and spontaneous mode of action, etc.

Education related to a world in permanent change requires, first of all, knowledge and reporting to general human values, which are universal, perennial values, transcendent to human consciousness and which are always reconstructed by each student or adult. V. Pâslaru claims that although there are values specific to nations, classes and social groups, local communities, families and individuals, they do not contradict general human values, but represent their very source [16, p. 172]. In this perspective, we reconfigure *the axiological referential of postmodern education*.

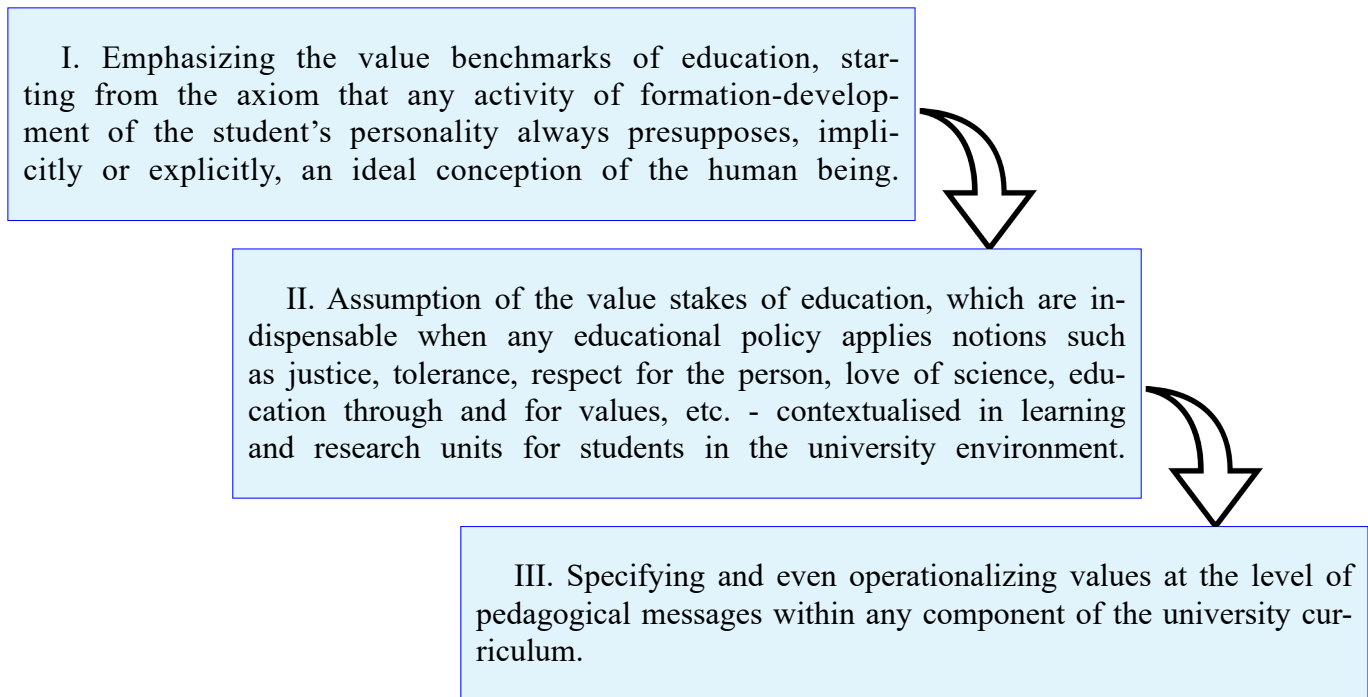
**Table 1. The axiological reference of postmodern education [apud 5, p. 238]:**

<b>Axiological criteria</b>	<b>Value categories</b>
<b>General human values</b>	- are the fundamental values of humanity: <i>Life, Truth, Good, Beautiful, Justice, Equality, Freedom, Sacred</i> , etc.
<b>National values</b>	- <i>the country, the people, the symbols of the state (anthem, coat of arms, flag), national consciousness, national culture, history, language, faith, popular traditions</i> , etc.
<b>Collective values</b>	- <i>values of the family, the class, the group of students, the school, the ethnic, social groups</i> , etc.
<b>Individual values</b>	- are defining for any human being: <i>identity (national/cultural), family, hometown, faith, friends, education, preferences, love, career</i> , etc.
<b>Educational values</b>	- established on all dimensions of education: <i>intellectual, moral, aesthetic, physical, technological</i> , etc.

<b>Curricular values</b>	- established by curricular areas and/or disciplines: <i>objectives, competences, purposes, contents, standards, technologies, etc.</i>
<b>Instrumental values or goals of education</b>	- are those close to the students through the disciplinary curricula: <i>knowledge, capacities, attitudes, abilities and/or school skills</i> (communication, reading, project development, research, posing and solving problems, etc.).

The contribution of the axiological referential to the improvement of the current educational process can be concretized in the following three directions of evolution of the education system elucidated by S. Cristea [10, p. 113], see figure 1.

**Fig. 1. Directions for the evolution of the university education system, adapted from S. Cristea.**



In the 21st century, these values of humanity preceded the global concept *Learning to live together* which determines the shaping of the directions of training and development of the student's personality through the new educations [apud 6, p. 11]:

- *Learning to learn* – means knowing how to accumulate throughout life the knowledge and information necessary for training and self-realization;
- *Learning to do* – obtaining some professional skills, but also some competences necessary for self-development and adaptation to the changing conditions of the modern world;
- *To learn to be* – the ability to self-edify the personality based on moral and social values, the ability to evaluate one's own actions and to be responsible;
- *Learning to live with others* – the understanding of the other from the point of view of tolerance, pluralism and respect, learning cooperation and social dialogue.

These value coordinates of the concept of learning represent a model adopted by all education systems in the European Union, including the one in the Republic of Moldova through the concept of *Learning throughout life*, which implies an education centered on the learner–student with the acquisition of indispensable skills for every European individual of the 21st century necessary for personal fulfillment and the development of professional activity throughout life.

*The new educations* derive from the types of education that have traditionally been established, presented in table 2, being in the form of recommendations and resolutions adopted by the ONU, UNESCO, the Council of Europe and various governmental organizations.



**Table 2. Dimensions of education achievable throughout life, also integrated in university teaching [8, p. 250].**

Classical dimensions of education	↔	The new educations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Intellectual education;</li> <li>- Moral education;</li> <li>- Aesthetic education;</li> <li>- Technological education;</li> <li>- Religious education;</li> <li>- Philosophical education etc.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Environmental education or ecological education;</li> <li>- Education for peace and cooperation;</li> <li>- Education for participation and democracy;</li> <li>- Health education;</li> <li>- Intercultural education;</li> <li>- Population or demographic education;</li> <li>- Modern economic and domestic education;</li> <li>- Education for human rights;</li> <li>- Education for change and development;</li> <li>- Communication and media education;</li> <li>- Education for technology and progress;</li> <li>- Nutritional education;</li> <li>- Leisure education, etc.</li> </ul>

The imperative and priority areas of up-to-date education are marked by new educations. Thus, an effective compatibility of the education systems of the European states would involve a suite of activities, in each country that accepts the European idea, designed on the correlated achievement of all the educational objectives indicated by the term „new educations” with the national educational objectives, through the *idea European* meaning the concept of economic, social, technical-scientific, cultural and spiritual unity of the peoples inhabiting the European space, each people maintaining their European identity and integration [4, p. 18].

The first common goals, provided in the European documents, were *education for democracy, lifelong education, multicultural education*, etc. Researcher V. Pâslaru, for the Republic of Moldova, along with *the new educations* nominated by UNESCO, it would be necessary to recognize, first of all, *education for identity* and *education for property*, as coordinates of the human ideal to get out of its two fundamental crises: *identity crisis* and *property crisis* [17, p. 21]. The list of *new educations* does not end here, but their proliferation creates difficulties for the authorities in terms of their inclusion in education plans.

*The new educations*, arising from real needs such as *education for change, education for peace, ecological education, democratic education, education for free time/leisure*, etc., they are adaptable to the level of each dimension of education, depending on their particularities but also on *life cycles* and the specific conditions of each educational system.

The need to ensure the integration of formal-nonformal-informal education [11] has become current in the paradigm of curricular reforms [3, p. 38-39]. Therefore, *the new educations* represent the desired expansion and deepening of the axiological dimension of „formal-nonformal-informal education in pre-university and university education” [1], through the prism of the curricular paradigm and within the university framework.

University content units regarding the conceptualization of *new educations* are valued through formal, non-formal and informal education and are already implemented at university level either in the form of mandatory, optional or free-choice subjects, or in the form of «diffuse contents» or distributed within the many practical or extracurricular activities exposed under *the new education* heading in table 2.

The methodology of capitalizing on *new educations* covers all their dimensions (intellectual, moral, technological, aesthetic, physical) and their forms (formal, non-formal, informal). The integration of *new educations* into university programs/curricula that are carried out based on the following approaches to designing the content of the academic education process:

Metodologia valorificării *noilor educații* vizează toate dimensiunile acestora (intelectuală, morală, tehnologică, estetică, fizică) și formele lor (formală, nonformală, informală). Integrarea *noilor educații* în programele / curricula universitară ce sunt realizate pe baza următoarelor demersuri de proiectare a conținutului procesului de învățământ academic:

- *the university disciplinary approach* – the approach to new educations within distinct university disciplines at the Department of Educational Sciences, USM (for example, in Cycle I, Bachelor's degree – the discipline *New educations. Intercultural education*; in the specialty „Psychopedagogy” is a mandatory discipline, but in the specialty „Psychology” – as an optional discipline; in the II Cycle, the Master's Program „Educational Management” – the discipline *Intercultural Management*, etc.);

- *the modular approach* – the creation of specific thematic modules, for example: *Intercultural education; Education for peace and cooperation; Leisure education; Human rights education*, etc., with a transversal approach, within traditional university disciplines;

- *the infusional approach and the transversal approach* – the transversal approach with other interuniversity fields, by „*infusing*» and *introducing messages* related to the specific skills and contents of the new educations within the classical disciplines or other university forms (student conferences, scientific forums with the participation of students; round tables with open themes to communicate online or offline about the current challenges of the current world problems with the participation of national and international students. [*apud* 7, p. 62])

The quality of student personality formation for understanding contemporary issues in the context of new educations, in our opinion, depends on several factors, which need to be taken into account in the process of new educations in the university environment:

- the student's personality;
- the personality of university teaching staff and didactic-scientific staff;
- the specifics of university activity;
- university didactic strategy;
- the university environment;
- accidental factors of the university environment, etc.

## Conclusions

In this line of ideas, we see the development of a new curriculum focused on the integral training-development of the personality of students and from other humanities specialties, through a transversal approach to the contents of university learning, which also includes topics related to the issues of the contemporary world through the dimensions of new educations, becomes a necessity and a priority for the system and process of university education in the Republic of Moldova, in the context of the historical leap from the model of the industrialized society to the model of the post-industrial, informational, knowledge-based society.

*The new educations* in relation to permanent education or lifelong learning, have the mission to reconsider university education appears as very important stages in the preparation of students as future professionals in the field of education sciences, psychology, psychopedagogy, etc. The student requires „to learn, to inquire how to learn and to become, in an ever-becoming world” [12, p. 32].

A possible evolution of education and the formation of the student's personality from the perspective of valorizing *new educations*, as responses to the challenges of the contemporary world, would be the orientation towards the holistic and axiological approach.

The need to capitalize on the methodology of *new educations* tries to display the answers specific to education, differentiated by approaches approached axiologically:

- enriching the contents of university didactics by introducing new educations;
- the modification of the procedural paradigms of the achievement of education in the university environment.

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*Presented on*

## USING EDUCATIONAL GAMES IN PREPARING CHILDREN FOR SCHOOL

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The didactic game has become an essential component in the early education process, representing an interactive and effective method for preparing children for school. A game is not only an enjoyable and fun activity for children, but also a powerful means by which they can develop the skills and knowledge needed to be successful in school and in life. Through playing, children can explore their curiosity, make independent discoveries, and actively learn without feeling pressured or obligated. This approach to learning helps children develop a sense of pleasure and satisfaction associated with learning, which can help maintain motivation and interest in school in the future. This article explores the crucial role that didactic games play in developing children's cognitive, social and emotional skills, preparing them for academic success and integration into the school environment. Through the diversity of didactic games, children are exposed to pleasant and stimulating educational experiences that encourage them to explore, learn and develop in a holistic way.

**Keywords:** *didactic game, early education, skills, learning, teacher.*

### UTILIZAREA JOCURILOR EDUCATIVE ÎN PREGĂTIREA COPILOR PENTRU ȘCOALĂ

Jocul didactic a devenit o componentă esențială în procesul de educație timpurie, reprezentând o metodă interactivă și eficientă de pregătire a copiilor pentru școală. Joaca nu este doar o activitate plăcută și distractivă pentru copii, ci și un mijloc puternic prin care aceștia își pot dezvolta abilitățile și cunoștințele necesare pentru a avea succes la școală și în viață. Prin joc, copiii își pot explora curiozitatea, pot face descoperiri independente și pot învăța în mod activ fără a se simți presați sau obligați. Această abordare a învățării îi ajută pe copii să dezvolte un sentiment de plăcere și satisfacție asociate învățării, ceea ce poate ajuta la menținerea motivației și a interesului pentru școală în viitor. Acest articol explorează rolul crucial pe care jocurile didactice îl joacă în dezvoltarea abilităților cognitive, sociale și emoționale ale copiilor, pregătindu-i pentru succesul școlar și integrarea în mediul școlar. Prin diversitatea jocurilor didactice, copiii sunt expuși unor experiențe educaționale plăcute și stimulatoare care îi încurajează să exploreze, să învețe și să se dezvolte într-un mod holistic.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *joc didactic, educație timpurie, abilități, învățare, profesor.*

### Introduction

The process of preparing for school is crucial in every child's life and can significantly influence their subsequent success within the education system. In this regard, the use of the didactic game has become an increasingly popular and effective method in early childhood education. Didactic games provide opportunities for learning through interactive and playful experiences, which are essential for the harmonious development of children before entering the formal school environment.

Preparing a child for entry into the formal education system is a complex process, involving a variety of cognitive, social, and emotional aspects. Approaching this process from a scientific perspective involves identifying and applying effective strategies to optimize the child's adaptation to the school environment and facilitate their academic and social success.

According to Georgeta Diac, preparing the child for school is „a desideratum of early education, due to multiple personal and social valences, involving an extensive effort, determined by the characteristics of early development, not only on the part of the educated, but also on the part of the educators” (Diac, 2016, p. 65).

Early childhood development is crucial for preparing a child for school and for their subsequent success in life. This sensitive period of life is marked by rapid growth and the formation of cognitive, social, and

emotional foundations. In this sense, school readiness must take into account the individual needs of each child and provide a stimulating and supportive environment that encourages their holistic development.

Preparation for school requires the integral development of the child, in order to ensure his or her success at the beginning of primary education and to be prepared to successfully fulfil the tasks and responsibilities specific to this level of education. It „must target the child in its entirety, on all levels of development, respecting its pace of development, the differences that make it unique, special” (Diac, 2016, p. 64).

Preparation for school covers several aspects, including school skills, the maturity required and the ability to adapt to the school environment.

Didactic games are an interactive and effective method to train and educate students. In Schaub and Zenke (2001, p. 161) didactic games are defined as „methods of learning and work, used with didactic intentions, which resemble board games in form, but that have a learning purpose in terms of thematic content”.

Educational games are designed to provide a pleasant and efficient learning experience, and by resembling board games, they become accessible and attractive to children. However, what sets them apart is the thematic content, which is structured around specific learning objectives and areas.

Through educational games, children can explore and practice skills such as mathematics, language, science, problem-solving, creativity, and social and emotional skills. These games can be adapted to meet the needs and developmental level of each child, offering differentiated and personalized learning opportunities. Moreover, educational games have the ability to stimulate imagination, curiosity, and exploration, which encourages engagement and motivation in learning. They can be used in various educational contexts, including schools, kindergartens, early development centers, and at home, to reinforce learning and enhance children’s educational experience.

Educational games represent a valuable tool in educators’ arsenal, providing an efficient and enjoyable way to encourage learning and development in children. Through them, children can develop skills and consolidate knowledge in an interactive and captivating manner.

The structural elements of the didactic game are: educational goals, content, didactic task, game rules, game elements, didactic material. For a playful activity to be effective, preschool children must follow the rules established for play, which represent „those internal or external regulations by which children’s actions are organized and correlated with each other” (Șchiopu and Verza, 1997, p. 106).

The Role of the Didactic Game in Preparing Children for School:

*Development of Cognitive Skills:* Didactic games are designed to stimulate various aspects of cognition, such as critical thinking, problem solving, memory, attention, language and math skills, fine motor skills, and social skills.

Here are some examples of didactic games and how they contribute to the development of cognitive skills:

- **Puzzles:** Puzzles help develop spatial thinking, problem-solving, and perseverance. They require planning, analysis, and strategy to fit the pieces in a proper way.

- **Logic games:** Logic games, such as Sudoku or chess, are great for improving critical thinking, problem solving, and concentration.

- **Word games and language puzzles:** Word crosses, riddles, and other games that involve word and language manipulation help develop language skills such as expanded vocabulary, grammar, and the ability to think creatively.

- **Mathematical games:** Games involving calculations, mathematical logic, and geometric models, such as Tangram or number games, help develop mathematical skills and logical thinking. By engaging in these games, preschoolers not only have fun but also develop their mathematical skills and logical thinking in an interactive and engaging way.

- **Building and creativity games:** LEGO and other building games stimulate imagination, problem solving and fine motor skills.

- **Memory games:** Games that involve memorizing sequences, such as Memory or Simon, help develop memory and attention.

- **Team games:** Games that require cooperation and communication between team members develop social and collaborative skills.

When used properly, didactic games can be powerful tools to increase motivation and engagement in learning while simultaneously improving participants' cognitive abilities. It is important that these games are adapted to the level of development of each individual and integrated into a balanced educational environment, including other learning methods and practical activities.

*Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)* is an essential aspect of children's and adults' development, helping them understand and manage their own emotions, develop healthy relationships, and navigate the social world in a positive and empathetic way. Didactic games can play a significant role in facilitating social and emotional learning, providing practical opportunities to practice social, communication and conflict resolution skills in a safe and fun environment.

Educational games encourage social interaction and collaboration among children. By participating in group games, children learn to work together, share, cooperate, and encourage each other. These experiences allow them to develop social skills and learn to interact positively with others. Through these games, children learn to express their thoughts, communicate their ideas, and listen to their peers. These communication skills are essential for building interpersonal relationships and for success in subsequent social interactions.

Some educational games are designed to promote empathy and emotional understanding. Through roles and played scenarios, children can learn to recognize and understand different emotions and perspectives of others. This helps them develop empathy and become more sensitive to the needs and feelings of those around them.

Educational games provide children with opportunities to practice peaceful conflict resolution and manage tense situations or disputes. By participating in games that involve collaboration or competition, children learn to negotiate, find creative solutions, and reach a consensus, thus contributing to the development of their conflict resolution skills.

Here are some examples of didactic games that contribute to the development of social and emotional learning:

- **Role-playing:** Role-playing games allow participants to assume different roles and interact in a simulated scenario. They provide opportunities to learn empathy, different perspectives and conflict resolution through hands-on experience.

- **Co-op gaming:** Co-op gaming involves players collaborating to achieve a common goal. They encourage teamwork, effective communication, and developing skills to consider the feelings and perspectives of others.

- **Problem-solving games:** Games that require problem-solving and decision-making provide opportunities to practice critical thinking and emotion management skills in complex and uncertain situations.

- **Communication games:** Games that focus on communication, such as question and answer games or improv games, can help participants develop active listening, clear expression and misunderstanding solving skills.

- **Stress and anxiety management games:** Games involving relaxation techniques, such as mindfulness or deep breathing, can help participants learn effective stress and anxiety management strategies in an interactive and enjoyable way.

- **Trust games:** Games that involve partnerships and trust exercises, such as trusting your eyes closed or trusting team games, can strengthen bonds and relationships between participants while developing confidence in oneself and others.

In general, didactic games can be adapted to encourage the development of social and emotional skills in a variety of contexts and can be integrated into educational programs or extracurricular activities to enhance the holistic learning and development of the individual.

*Increasing Motivation and Curiosity* through didactic games is essential to maintain engagement and involvement in the learning process. Didactic games can be used strategically to stimulate the desire to learn and explore, both in educational and informal settings.

These games not only delight and engage children but also stimulate them to explore, discover, and learn in a pleasant and captivating way. By integrating educational games into the preschool environment and

creating a stimulating and supportive environment, educators can encourage motivation and curiosity in children, thus promoting a positive attitude towards learning and discovery.

Here are some ways that didactic games can help increase motivation and curiosity:

- **Clear and relevant goals:** Didactic games should provide clear and relevant goals to arouse interest and motivation of participants. When objectives are well defined and linked to participants' interests and needs, they are more motivated to engage and continue their efforts.

- **Challenges and progressive difficulty:** Games should offer challenges adapted to the proficiency level of participants, giving them opportunities to develop their skills in a gradual way. The progressive increase in difficulty can maintain interest and stimulate curiosity to explore more.

- **Constructive feedback and rewards:** Positive feedback and rewards in the form of points, medals or other forms of recognition can be used to motivate and encourage participants to continue their efforts and improve performance.

- **Exploration and discovery:** Games should encourage exploration and discovery, giving participants the freedom to experiment with their ideas and solutions. This approach encourages curiosity and motivates participants to discover new information and improve their skills.

- **Competition or collaboration:** Depending on group preferences and needs, games can be designed to promote healthy competition or collaboration. Both competition and collaboration can stimulate motivation and curiosity, giving participants opportunities to demonstrate their skills and learn from each other.

- **Diversity and adaptability:** Offering a variety of games and activities tailored to individual interests and preferences can maintain participants' interest and curiosity over time. Flexibility and adaptability in approaching games can help increase motivation and willingness to learn.

It is important to highlight that increasing motivation and curiosity through didactic games requires attention to the individual needs and preferences of participants, as well as a creative and flexible approach to designing and implementing learning activities.

*Preparing for School Structure* through didactic games is an effective and enjoyable way to help children adapt to the school environment and develop the skills necessary for their success in this environment. Through games, children can learn social rules, develop basic academic skills and learn to work in a structured environment. Here are some examples of didactic games that can be used for this purpose:

- **Role plays:** These involve playing different roles, such as teacher, student or classmate. Through these games, children can learn to behave in a school environment, interact with other peers and develop their social and emotional skills.

- **Rules and routines games:** Games that involve establishing and following rules or routines can be used to help children understand the importance of structure and organization in the school environment. These games may include activities such as organizing a toy “class” or group games that require following clear rules.

- **Problem-solving games:** Games involving problem-solving can help children develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, essential skills in the school environment. These games can include puzzles, enigma or logic games.

- **Cooperative games:** Games that require collaboration and teamwork can help children learn to work together and develop communication and group work skills, which are important for success in the school environment. These games may include activities such as building a team puzzle or completing a common task in a limited amount of time.

- **Literacy and numeracy games:** Games that involve letter and number recognition, as well as learning sounds and basic mathematical operations, can help prepare children for academic learning in school. These games may include memory games with letters or numbers, games to associate sounds with letters, or activities that involve learning numbers and basic mathematical operations in an interactive and fun way.

Through these didactic games and other interactive activities, children can learn to adapt to the structure and requirements of the school environment in an enjoyable and stimulating way, preparing for their success in school and beyond.

### Conclusion

The use of didactic play in preparing children for school is an interactive and effective approach that promotes their holistic development before entering the formal school environment. Through the diversity of didactic games, children are exposed to enjoyable and stimulating educational experiences that prepare them for academic success and integration into the school community. It is essential that early childhood education recognises and harnesses the power of didactic play in supporting children's development in an integrated and harmonious way.

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## THE CAUSES AND EFFECTS OF SCHOOL DROPOUT FELT OVER TIME

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The article involves an analytical approach to the specifics of school dropout, the causes and effects produced, as well as possible suggestions for managing the large-scale phenomenon. The research methodology consisted in the study of specialized literature and the reflexive analysis of bibliographic sources, various statistical data, which allowed us to issue relevant conclusions and recommendations for its prevention and reduction at a systemic level. Being a complex phenomenon, school dropout manifests itself for various reasons, starting with personal or family problems, a difficult socioeconomic situation and continuing with important factors regarding the way the education system works. Depending on the determining factors, but also the extent of the manifestation, a series of undesirable effects are generated, with a weight on socio-professional integration difficulties. Thus, statistical data are reflected that confirm the acute need for systemic intervention on the treatment of the phenomenon in question, based on the educational actors and social institutions that have contact with the mentioned causes and effects. Systematic and orderly intervention refers in particular to the prevention of school dropout by motivating students, career guidance, carrying out attractive educational activities, involving digital technologies, but also reducing it, by establishing internal and external partnerships, analyzing the main causes, and determining the ways of reintegration into the educational process of young people who temporarily/completely left the educational institution.

**Keywords:** *school dropout, effects, young people, education, integration.*

### CAUZELE SI EFECTELE ABANDONULUI SCOLAR S-AU REIMSIT DE-A LUNGUL TIMPULUI

Articolul presupune o abordare analitică a specificului abandonului școlar, a cauzelor și efectelor produse, precum și a posibilelor sugestii pentru gestionarea fenomenului la scară largă. Metodologia cercetării a constat în studiul literaturii de specialitate și analiza reflexivă a surselor bibliografice, diverse date statistice, care ne-au permis să emitem concluzii și recomandări relevante pentru prevenirea și reducerea acestuia la nivel sistemic. Fiind un fenomen complex, abandonul școlar se manifestă din diverse motive, începând cu probleme personale sau familiale, o situație socioeconomică dificilă și continuând cu factori importanți privind modul de funcționare a sistemului de învățământ. În funcție de factorii determinanți, dar și de amploarea manifestării, se generează o serie de efecte nedorite, cu pondere asupra dificultăților de integrare socio-profesională. Astfel, se reflectă date statistice care confirmă nevoia acută de intervenție sistemică în tratarea fenomenului în cauză, pe baza actorilor educaționali și instituțiilor sociale care au contact cu cauzele și efectele menționate. Intervenția sistematică și ordonată se referă în special la prevenirea abandonului școlar prin motivarea elevilor, orientarea în carieră, desfășurarea de activități educaționale atractive, implicând tehnologii digitale, dar și reducerea acestuia, prin stabilirea de parteneriate interne și externe, analizarea principalelor cauze și determinarea modalității de reintegrare în procesul educațional a tinerilor care au părăsit temporar/complet instituția de învățământ.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *abandon școlar, efecte, tineri, educație, integrare.*

### Introduction

A significant issue which contemporary society is facing in the field of education is *school dropout*. Educational institutions of various levels are often neglected, due to the fact that school for many people is no longer regarded as a priority in the hierarchy of contemporary values. At the same time, a series of short-term courses (online or offline format) are launched, which sometimes gave young people faster financial remuneration than the long-term process of investing in their own development or obtaining professional skills. Although many young people manage to successfully go through the stages of the education system and continue their studies or work in specific fields, one of seven young Europeans leave education without acquiring the necessary skills or qualifications for an effective transition to the labour market and to be active in today's knowledge-based economy [8].

Today, both direct beneficiaries (children, pupils, students) and indirect beneficiaries (parents and society) no longer perceive education as a value in itself, and training is no longer considered essential for a prosperous future and for personality development.

**Research methodology consisted** in the study of specialized literature and statistical data on school dropout, but also in the analysis of specific contexts in the Republic of Moldova. Bibliographic sources and statistical data collected at national and international level, accompanied by contextual observations from our country, reflexively analyzed, allowed us to determine the causes and effects of this phenomenon, to issue relevant conclusions and recommendations for its avoidance and cutting at a systemic level.

### **Conceptual clarifications**

The notion of *school dropout*, also commonly called leaving school education, was introduced by the European Union to denote a long-term process of school disengagement, involving young people aged 14-24 who leave any type of education and vocational training without reaching a qualification (according to the ISCED scale). Unlike the dilemma of temporary dropout, which specifically involves a temporary interruption of studies, the phenomenon of school dropout matches with the final result of the young person's withdrawal from education [5].

At the same time, in other sources, a dissimilarity is made between the terms „*early school leaving*” and „*school dropout*”. The term „*early school leaving*” includes giving up all forms of education and professional training before completing upper secondary education or the equivalent in education and professional training (upper cycle of high school, grades XI - XII/XIII, preceded, as the case may be, by the year of completion) until „*school dropout*” is used with a narrower meaning: it refers to the interruption of a course in progress of general studies or vocational education and training [4].

According to the definition used in the EU, early school leaving can take many forms. It includes young people who left school before the end of compulsory education, those who completed mandatory education but did not obtain a qualification in upper secondary education, and those who followed pre- vocational or vocational training courses, which did not led to a qualification equivalent at upper secondary level [ibidem].

### **The roots of school dropout**

Young school leavers come from diverse backgrounds. Early school leaving is usually caused by a cumulative process of disengagement based on personal, social, economic, geographical, educational or family reasons. These reasons can be external or internal related to school processes and experiences, and are usually very specific to the individual. For many, dissatisfaction stems from a variety of reasons, such as: bullying, poor academic performance, unsatisfactory relationships with teachers, lack of motivation or belonging to so called ‘wrong groups’, and in other cases young people drop out of school because experiencing personal or family problems such as: use of illegal substances or homelessness. However, a significant part of the problem can be assigned to a lack of support and counselling, disinterest in education and post-secondary school programs, which often do not offer enough varied course options, alternative pedagogies, experiential learning opportunities or empirical or sufficient flexibility [8, p. 7].

In this context, **the causes of school dropout** can be evaluated from three perspectives [1]:

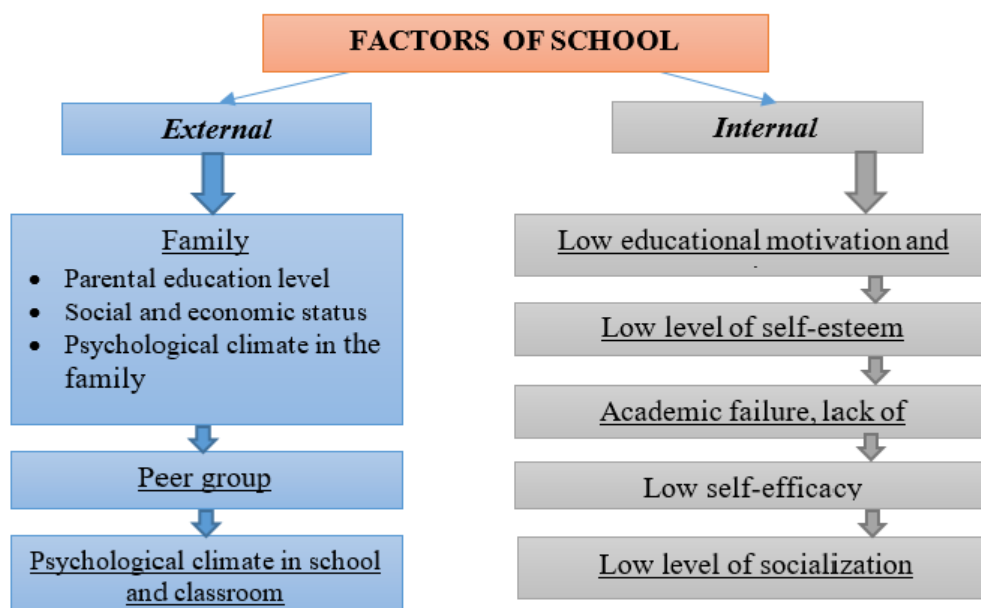
- 1. Psychological causes** – related to the student's personality and state of health: low school motivation, lack of interest, stubby confidence in school education, fatigue, anxiety, small self-efficacy, damaged self-image, feelings of inferiority, reduced social skills, passivity; refusal to adhere to a choice made by others (reaction to the pressure exerted by the wishes of adults);

- 2. Social causes** related to the family, the socioeconomic conditions of the family: poverty, indifferent or/oud careless parenting style, family disharmony, parents very busy or gone abroad;

- 3. Psycho-pedagogical causes** related to the specific school context (including the teacher-student relationship): group pressure, school overload, faulty student-teacher communication (irony, humiliation of the student), subjective evaluation, fear of evaluation, conflict with colleagues, educational practices perceived by students as unfair, frustrating, incompatibility between aspirations, learning needs and the edu-

cational offer of the school; form of defense – against excessively rigid and severe discipline, pro-dropout policies of the school for students in the final grades (in „elite” schools).

**Fig. 1. Taxonomy of school dropout factors.**



Another approach that explains the factors that cause school dropout, focuses on a system of core factors in interconnection and intercorrelation, which have a variable character, whose influence on the cause of school dropout is determined by the real contexts, but also by the individual particularities of dropout students. Below we present the taxonomy that classifies the respective factors [2, p. 56].

**Dropout rates** have grown during and after the pandemic, being recognized as the most relevant aspects of education due to their long-term effects on societal development and economic growth. Dropping out of school is a complex problem and cannot be solved by education policies only, although this is where they can be most influential. Effective strategies to reduce early school leaving must target education, youth and social policies adapted to local, regional and national conditions.

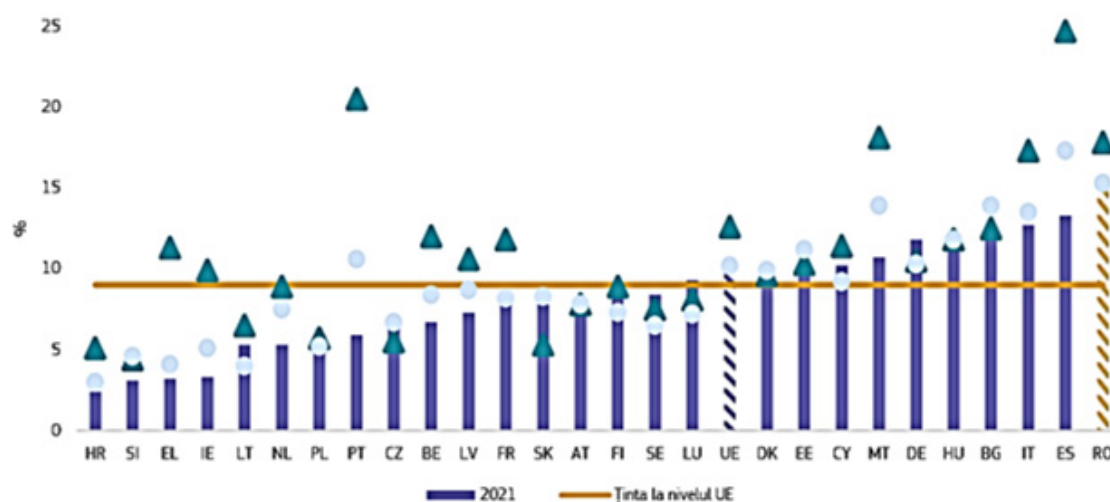
The comparative analysis of indicators on school leaving in European Union (EU) countries was carried out based on data from the Education and Training Monitor, the European Commission’s annual analysis of how education and training systems are evolving across the EU. The reports bring together the latest available data and other information, alongside updates on national policy measures. In general, for all EU countries, the target of the indicator of early leaving educational institutions (age 18-24 years) has been set to be <9% by 2030. Eurostat results for the year 2011, 2021 for the analyses countries compared to the EU average for these years, table 1.

**Table 1. Comparative analysis of SA in some EU countries and the Republic of Moldova for the years 2011, 2021.**

Country	Year 2011		Year 2021	
	% country	% EU	% country	% EU
Finland	9,8	13,2	8,2	9,7
Denmark	10,3	13,2	9,8	9,7
France	12,3	13,2	7,8	9,7
Austria	8,5	13,2	8,0	9,7
Romania	18,1	13,2	15,3	9,7
Moldova	20	13,2	19,0	9,7

According to Eurostat data, early school leaving continues to be a problem in Romania. According to the table below, in 2021, the rate of people aged between 18 and 24 who had not completed upper secondary education and were not following any education or training program (ELET – early exit from education and vocational training systems) improved slightly, reaching again the 2019 level of 15.3%. However, it remains significantly higher than the EU average of 9.7% [75, 112]. In order to look for solutions to reduce SA, it is necessary to analyse the reason for abandonment in Romania as follows: Students exposed at risk of dropping out tend to be more from disadvantaged schools in rural areas, which lack resources and experienced teachers (OECD, 2022). Many young Romanians leave the school system without acquiring the necessary skills to enter the labour market, with its needs rapidly changing. This makes it much harder for them to transition from school to paid employment (OECD, 2022).

**Fig. 2. The share of individuals who left school early in the years 2012, 2019, 2021 [6, p.5].**



In figure 2, we observe the dropout indicators for different countries, in relation to the European Union target (around 10%). For example, Romania exceeds this target by around 6%, while Finland, France, Denmark, Austria have an early school leaving rate of up to 10%. The statistical data attest to the need to involve the institutions of the Romanian state using a variety of mechanisms that would help in decreasing this rate.

Based on the secondary analysis of the data of the report of the National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova, regarding the transition from school to work from 2014-2015, it is shown that in the last decades among young people aged 18-24 the proportion of those who left early education system constitutes about 21-22%, holding a low level of education (at most secondary school) and not following any form of training (formal or non-formal) in the last four weeks preceding the interview. Near 20% of young people who left school early did so for economic reasons (including the inability to afford some school-related expenses or the need to earn money to support their family, etc.); about 15% stated the dropout of interest in school and 10.7% – the desire to start work, and every tenth because of learning difficulties [5].

### Management of school dropouts

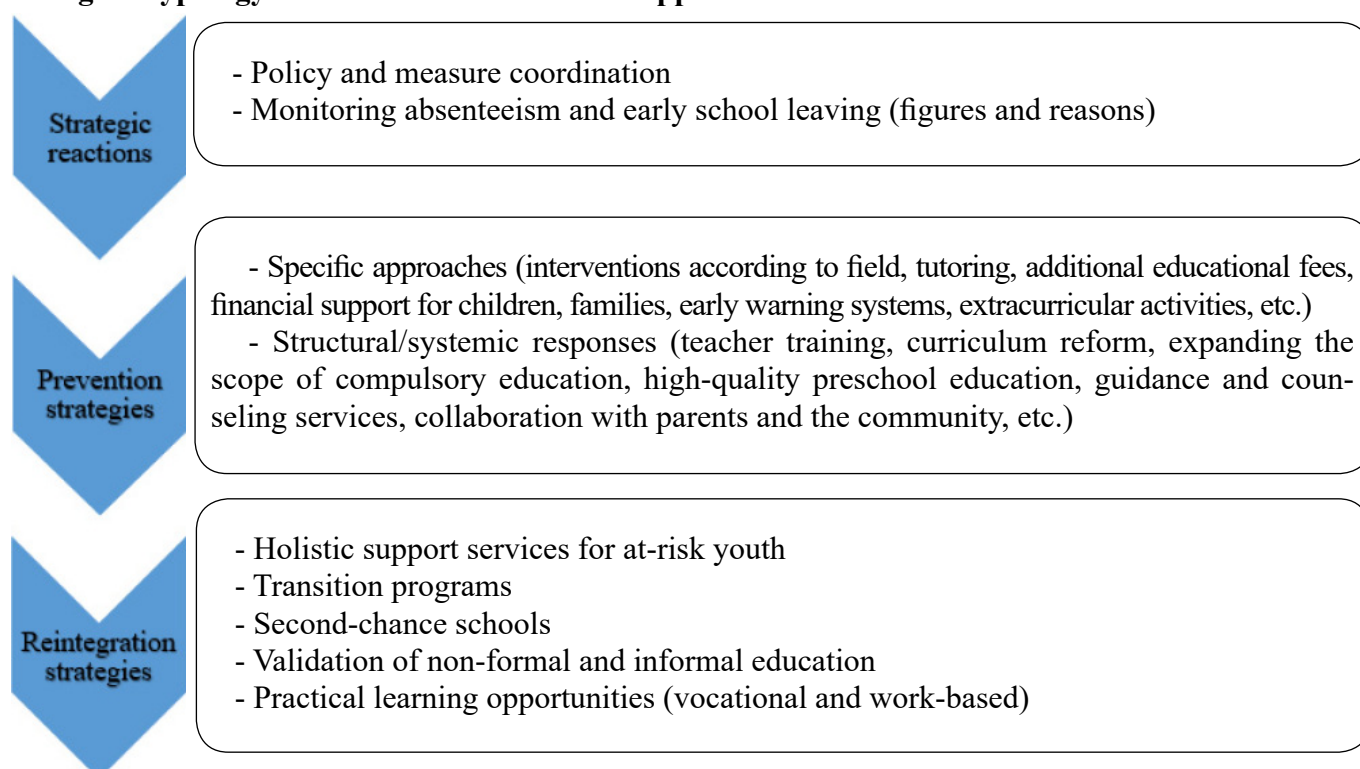
Each country has its own policy on how to respond regarding the approach to the phenomenon – school dropout. The reactions are based on values and perspective analysis, being influenced by the history and traditions of the respective countries. Furthermore, each early school leaver has a unique story and is within a specific context or ‘ecosystem’. Therefore, approachment to school dropout must be adjusted and tailored to each individual group or individual. Based on these causes, there could not be a right and unique protocol for reducing school dropout.

EU member states have had to develop prevention and control policies to reach the target of an average school dropout rate of less than 10%. It was desired to banish the favourable factors that determine early school leaving. In this regard, there were three main lines of action as follows:

- 1) prevention, which consists of a set of actions aimed at improving both access and equal participation in education for all children, regardless of context or financial situation; more specific programs to identify and support students at risk of dropping out must be implemented;
- 2) combating, by streamlining the school network for the reintegration into education of those who have already left school;
- 3) developing the educational system, the appropriate endowment of schools, complying with hygiene norms, ensuring the quality standards of educational services [9].

Thus, we present a kaleidoscope of policies, programs, projects and approaches of the EU countries, which can be divided into three broad categories: strategic reactions; prevention strategies; reintegration strategies, which are represented in figure 3.

**Fig. 3. Typology of the EU Member States' Approaches to AST.**



Thus, the involvement of the state in educational policies, through the creation of data collection and analysis tools, can contribute to the identification of pupils/students who accumulate absences and to understand the trends of absence, their motives. Addressing unexcused absences and avoiding subsequent negative consequences, such as: school dropout, requires the identification of students exhibiting absent behavior, which requires comprehensive and integrated development in educational data systems. Such systems must not only collect relevant data (for example, when students are absent, for what period, level and the characteristics of these young people), but also present the data in an accessible way, for example through an analytical dashboard that can highlight populations at risk to provide useful information that would justify policy interventions in a reasonable time. This would be a way to quickly identify which pupil/student type are more likely to be at risk of dropping out. These tools can help educational institution administrators instantly see which pupils/students are absent and how recent dropout data compares to previous weeks and months. The development of warning systems and targeted programs to address dropout with accurate and comprehensive information management systems, allow the analysis of the data to apply appropriate measures, addressing dropout and to help prevent more negative consequences such as school dropout. A common approach is to develop early warning systems based on administrative data that can alert school staff and parents that students are exhibiting behaviours that could lead to increased absenteeism and dropout [7].

Broadly speaking, *dropping out of school leads to short- and long-term consequences* such as unem-

ployment, social exclusion, poverty and health problems. The long-term effects of school dropout reflect, as we said earlier, on social development and economic growth. Dropping out of school represents a failure of the individual's social integration, and with the increase in the person's qualification level, the probability of being without a job decreases. Thus, an alarming increase in the number of unskilled workers causes great pressure on the social protection system that supports the unintegrated/out-of-school people, the increase in the delinquency rate, the exploitation of minors, and implicitly moonlighting.

One of the first effects of dropping out of school is the impact on the individual's personal life. Dropping out of education could lead to a drop in self-esteem and confidence in one's ability to succeed in life. Young people who leave school early can sometimes feel that they have missed important opportunities and that they no longer have a clear path for the future.

In addition, dropping out of school can influence an individual's subsequent career decisions and professional success. Without a proper education, access to well-paying and rewarding job opportunities can be limited, leading to long-term frustration and disappointment.

Dropping out of school makes it difficult for young people and adults to get a long-term job. As a consequence the state of poverty in their own families and the model of parents without education and without perspective are spreaded further. Outcomes of dropping out of school are felt at the economic level, affecting both individuals and society as a whole. Young people who leave school early are often less likely to get well-paid jobs and contribute to economic growth. This situation can lead to an increase in unemployment and dependency on social assistance, having a negative impact on the public budget and on other resources available for development and investment.

In the same vein, the lack of adequate education can affect competitiveness and innovation within an economy, as skilled human resources are an essential element in the process of development and progress. Dropping out of school can contribute to increasing social disparities and amplifying problems of exclusion and marginalization. Young people who are excluded from the education system may be less likely to integrate into the community and build healthy social and professional relationships.

This phenomenon can have a negative impact on social cohesion and solidarity within society. Lack of access to education for all citizens can create tensions and inequities in society, affecting interpersonal relationships and community cohesion.

Respectively, the increased prevalence, negative developmental consequences, and maladaptive social and behavioral risks associated with absenteeism are issues that the educational system cannot overlook. The etiquette of refusing school can affect a significant percentage of the number of students and can accompany difficulties in the short and long term: family conflicts, delinquency or occupational problems. At the same time, the high number of absences correlates negatively with school performance, which, over time, can have negative effects on integration into society [2, p. 13].

## **Conclusion**

To cut a long story short, we can mention that the phenomenon of school dropout is complex and affects multiple aspects of individual and collective life. There are multiple reasons that can explain the decision of some young people to give up education prematurely: personal or family problems, difficulties in the learning process or a difficult socioeconomic situation. Also important factors include the way the education system works, the atmosphere in the schools and the relationships between teachers and students. The effects of dropping out are felt over time and demonstrate that this type of behavior has serious consequences for both the individual and the community. First of all, those who leave educational institutions have neither the professional qualification indispensable for socio-economic integration, nor the moral and civic engagement necessary to fulfil the role of parent and citizen.

Secondly, not having a qualification, those who drop out of educational institutions become the future unemployed and represent, in the medium and long term, a source of difficulties for social development and economic growth, which exceed the investment required for initial training. Not the least to say that, innovation and economic growth are mostly based on the work done by competent employees. It is essential to adopt effective measures and policies to prevent and combat this phenomenon and to ensure access to

quality education for all members of society.

### Recommendation

For a better intervention, the planning and rigorous implementation of a complex institutional program is proposed, which involves a set of actions deriving from the educational policy documents at the national level and adjusted at the institutional level, with the aim of identifying the factors that favour the emergence of such risk situations at the school level, the prevention and, ultimately, solving of crisis situations with the effect of school dropout.

In the same context, we propose the following suggestions for different educational actors (teachers, managers, psychology, parents, etc.), acting individually or in teams, on which the prevention or reduction of the targeted phenomenon depends, such as:

- Modernization of school equipment. Equipping all classes with modern equipment contributes to the efficiency of the educational process. Students will be more engaged in lessons if they have access to up-to-date technology and resources.

- Employment of qualified teachers. Promoting the employment of teachers with high professional training is essential. These teachers can provide a quality education and inspire students to be present and engaged.

- Absenteeism monitoring. It is important to monitor students who are frequently absent from class. Identifying the causes of absences can help prompt interventions.

- To motivate students. The involvement of students in various socio-educational actions can motivate them not to be absent from classes. Extracurricular activities and interesting projects can make school more attractive.

- Collaboration with family. Contacting the family or guardian of the frequently absent child can help clarify the situation. Effective communication with parents is crucial.

- School partnerships. The partnership between principals and school psychologists can help to choose intervention/prevention programs or activities for students with high levels of absenteeism. Parental involvement in children's school life is also important.

- Psycho-emotional support. Socially vulnerable families need psycho-emotional support to overcome difficulties related to raising and educating children.

- Collaboration with mass media. Educational shows on various topics can help to raise awareness of problems related to school dropouts.

- Monitoring of vulnerable families. Identifying families with increased social risk and including them in social support programs can prevent school dropout.

- External partnerships. Collaboration with the police and social workers can help prevent and reduce dropout in the community.

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## INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS OF CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES WITHIN THE STUDENT GROUP

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An important aspect in the development of the child's personality is socialization. Early social skills are necessary for a child's psychological development as they begin to form positive relationships with adults and other children from an early age. The important role for achieving expected expectations belongs to the teaching staff, who, in the instructive-educational process, take care that all children behave well, and are accepted in the group of students.

The article presents the result of the sociometric study in the research cards of the problem of developing competence and communication skills in primary school students, in order to determine the evolution of interpersonal relationships within the group/class where there are students with learning difficulties. The study reveals the socio-affective structure of the group at a given time, for a given situation, in our case studying interpersonal relationships through the lens of communication between children with learning difficulties and typical ones. The construction of the sociogram is carried out progressively, implemented with the sociogram of the elections, later completed with that of the rejections. Based on the sociograms, we realize that within the group there is some homogeneity, the number of attractions exceeding the number of rejections.

**Keywords:** *competence, communication, development, individualization, learning difficulties.*

### RELAȚIILE INTERPERSONALE ALE COPILOR CU DIFICULTĂȚI DE ÎNVĂȚARE ÎN CADRUL GRUPULUI DE ELEVI

Un aspect important în dezvoltarea personalității copilului este socializarea. Abilitățile sociale timpurii sunt necesare pentru dezvoltarea psihologică a copilului, deoarece acesta începe să formeze relații pozitive cu adulții și cu alți copii de la o vârstă fragedă. Rolul important pentru atingerea așteptărilor așteptate aparține personalului didactic, care, în procesul instructiv-educativ, are grijă ca toți copiii să se comporte bine și să fie acceptați în grupul de elevi. Articolul prezintă rezultatul studiului sociometric în fișele de cercetare a problemei dezvoltării competențelor și abilităților de comunicare la elevii din ciclul primar, în vederea determinării evoluției relațiilor interpersonale în cadrul grupului/clasei în care sunt prezenți elevi cu dificultăți de învățare. Studiul relevă structura socio-afectivă a grupului la un moment dat, pentru o situație dată, în cazul nostru studiind relațiile interpersonale prin prisma comunicării între copiii cu dificultăți de învățare și cei tipici. Construcția sociogramei se realizează progresiv, implementată cu sociograma alegerilor, completată ulterior cu cea a respingerilor. Pe baza sociogramelor, ne dăm seama că în cadrul grupului există o oarecare omogenitate, numărul de atracții depășind numărul de respingeri.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *competență, comunicare, dezvoltare, individualizare, dificultăți de învățare.*

School is the space where the child is sent by parents (through an agreement or “social contract” with teachers) to get in touch with various types of learning experiences. Overcoming the obstacles proposed by the tasks and demands of curricular activities is an important and essential prerequisite for a new type of experiences, tasks and activities. It is certainly a pyramid (of students' personality) that is continuously being built and rebuilt, through restructuring and readjustments along the way. To the extent that the layers at the base of the pyramid are not well consolidated, there is a chance of an imminent collapse.

If we perceive school as the main instance of socialization of the child (the family being considered the first), school adaptation represents a particularization of the process of social integration of this category of children, a process that has a fundamental importance in facilitating further adaptation in community life by forming behaviors and attitudes, skills and social competences favorable to this process.

The need for communication is not innate. It occurs throughout life and functions, it is formed in the

practical interactions of the child with people in his environment. The child's need for communication with adults first appears as a biological need during the first two months of life, based on primary organic needs. Later, social needs arise, which refer to the need to accumulate new impressions. The criteria for analyzing the formation of the need for communication are: attention to the interlocutor; emotional attitude towards his actions; tendency to self-demonstrate; sensitivity to the attitude of the interlocutor. The need for communication in the child arises as a result of emotional communication with the mother, and with age it acquires an increasingly pronounced character. Subsequently, the child's development depends on the fact by what means this need is realized, what is the place and role of communication in his life, what is the social environment in which he communicates. Collaboration takes place in various forms during direct and indirect interaction, and is not always reduced to the process of communication [2].

Communication is a discipline of intersection, as noted by the authors in the field. It can only live by absorbing and using results, absolute, problem fields from neighboring disciplines. Even more so, when we talk about students with learning difficulties, the fields of communication cannot be studied outside of acquisitions in psychology, sociology, speech therapy, etc. [5]

Communication competence is one of the key competences stipulated in the Education Code, which is why its poor development creates serious learning difficulties in primary school children.

Thus, in our scientific approach we will focus on those competences that are directly formed in primary school students (grades III and IV).

Education Development Strategy for 2014-2020 „Education-2020”, (approved by GD of RM no. 944 of 14.11.2014 Education Code of the Republic of Moldova (Order no.125 of 17.07.2014) in the Official Gazette No. 319-324, art. No. 634 - educational policy documents of the Republic of Moldova, which served as an indicative basis in the expected research activity.

The problem of socialization, interrelation and school adaptation of children was investigated by several researchers from the Republic of Moldova, who elucidated various psycho-pedagogical aspects of it: N. Bucun, A. Racu, D. Gănu, V. Rusnac, J. Racu, L. Malcoci, A. Cara, O. Paladi, P. Jelescu, I. Negura, A. Bolboceanu, S. Cemortan, V. Pritcan, E. Petrov, G. Bulat, etc., emphasizing the importance of developing communication and socialization skills of children with learning difficulties.

At the same time, we find insufficiently investigated the problem regarding the development of communication and socialization competence in children with learning difficulties in general education institutions. I certainly believe that there is a need to investigate this issue, which is driven by:

- the large number of children with SEN, including those with learning difficulties, who, following the deinstitutionalization process, are part of the inclusion process in general education institutions;
- little complex research on this issue;
- implementation of contents of educational policies in order to develop inclusive education.

Therefore, a contradictory relationship is created in the theory and practice of education: on the one hand, the process of school inclusion and deinstitutionalization of children with SEN is actively and insistently promoted, and, on the other hand, the lack of complete research and models for developing communication skills of these children in inclusive school conditions is evident.

The purpose of the research is to develop and apply the pedagogical model for the development of communication and socialization competence in children with SEN, namely in children with learning difficulties, based on the study of their individual particularities. Achieving the goal requires achieving the following general objectives:

1. Identification of conceptual landmarks referring to individual particularities of communication and socialization of children with learning difficulties;
2. Establishing the particularities of communication in children with learning difficulties;
3. Elaboration of a pedagogical model for communication development in children with learning difficulties;
4. Experimental approval and evaluation of the efficiency of the Pedagogical Model for communication development in the activity of children with learning difficulties;

5. Elaboration of recommendations and conclusions for both teachers and their parents.

The important scientific problem solved lies in the theoretical and applicative argumentation of the efficiency of the communication process in children with learning difficulties based on the application of the Pedagogical Model of Communication Development, taking into account the fact that each child is unique.

Once the purpose and objectives of the observational experiment have been formulated, the theoretical concepts analyzed, we will have as starting point the formulation of the general hypothesis of the research: the development of effective communication and interrelationship competence in children with learning difficulties, will lead to facilitating their psychosocial adaptation, if:

- the scientific foundations of communication and their correlation with learning difficulties will be determined;
- the methodological benchmarks of the investigation to find the problem concerned will be determined;
- a pedagogical model for the development of communication in the activity of children with learning difficulties will be elaborated and theoretically and praxiologically substantiated;
- a program for training communication skills of students with learning difficulties in the classroom and their families will be developed and validated experimentally.

The development of communication competence and communication skills in primary school students will also determine the evolution of interpersonal relationships within the group / class in which there are students with learning difficulties. For these reasons, one of the techniques of the general research methodology that we will apply is the sociometric test, because knowing the collective of students does not only imply knowing the personality of its members, but much more.

The sociometric study has a triple orientation:

- First of all, the knowledge by the teacher / class teacher / psychologist of the affinities expressed by the group members and implicitly of the relationships within the class collective;
- Secondly, the students' better knowledge of their own positions in the group;
- Thirdly, improving communication relationships and the psychosocial climate of the school group through specific psychological actions.

According to J. C. Abric, the method of identifying and recording socio-affective relationships is simple. It consists of using a questionnaire that allows all members of the group to talk about the positive or negative relationships they maintain with others, each having to verbalize attitudes of choice and rejection in relation to his peers.

As we can see, the questions were formulated in the same way for both preferences and rejections: for example, name 2 colleagues from the given group with whom you would/would not discuss your favorite book.

Both positive and negative socioaffective indices will have 3 dimensions:

- number of elections/rejections received;
- number of choices/rejections made;
- number of mutual elections/rejections. [1, pp. 134-135]

For the finding experiment, in the process of applying the sociometric test, both the experimental sample and the control sample will be extended with a number of typical students, so that up to 10 students (2-4 students with learning difficulties and 4-6 typical students) will participate in the sociometric testing from each class.

The recording of individual responses to the questionnaire can be carried out in a sociometric matrix of choices and rejections.. Keeping students anonymous will be achieved by encoding their name and surname: Edî – student with learning difficulties and Et – typical student. Also, the Individual Fact Sheet of Attractions and Rejections of Students with Learning Difficulties and Typical Students will be completed.

The sociogram is the graphic representation of all socio-affective relationships that exist in the group. Its result reveals the socio-affective structure of the group at a given moment, for a given situation (in our case the study of interpersonal relationships through the prism of communication between children with learning difficulties and typical ones). The construction of the sociogram will be carried out progressively, starting with the sociogram of elections, later supplemented by that of rejections.

In the following we will illustrate the results collected in terms of the 4 samples (E1, E2, C1, C2) extended by the participation of typical students. The number of students in each class (experimental/control sample) will be 10 people.

As reference group will be taken the 2 experimental samples with students from grade III and IV (students with learning difficulties / typical students), analyzed on experimental subgroups from each class of students, according to logic: S1E1 – subgroup 1 of grade III of the experimental sample – 10 students (4 students with SC and 6 typical students); S2E1 – subgroup 2 of class III of the experimental sample, etc. The identification data of the 10 students were coded by  $E_{di1} \dots E_{di(n)}$  and  $E_{t1} \dots E_{t(n)}$ , where n is the number of pupils in the sample;  $E_{di}$  – student with learning difficulties;  $E_t$  – typical student.

According to the research methodology, the sociometric matrix presented below allows us to calculate sociometric indices that will measure the level of attractions and repulsions, the position occupied by each member of the group, the preferential status of students.

**Table 1. Attractions and repulsions, experimental subgroup S1E1.**

Students	$E_{di1}$	$E_{di2}$	$E_{di3}$	$E_{di4}$	$E_{t1}$	$E_{t2}$	$E_{t3}$	$E_{t4}$	$E_{t5}$	$E_{t6}$
$E_{di1}$	***							-		
$E_{di2}$	+	***	-					-		
$E_{di3}$		-	***	+	-			-	-	
$E_{di4}$				***			-	-	+	
$E_{t1}$	-	-	-	-	***		+		+	
$E_{t2}$	-	-	-	-		***			-	+
$E_{t3}$	-	-			+		***			-
$E_{t4}$	-	-	-	-	+		+	***	-	
$E_{t5}$		-	-	-	+				***	
$E_{t6}$	-	-						+		***
$\sum A / \sum R$	1/5	0/7	0/5	1/4	3/1	0/0	2/1	1/4	1/3	1/1
$I_{ss}$	1/9	0/9	0/9	1/9	3/9	0/9	2/9	1/9	1/9	1/9
$I_{sp}$	-4/9	-7/9	-5/9	-3/9	2/9	0/9	1/9	-3/9	-1/9	0/9

Where:

(+) – attraction;

(-) – rejection;

$\sum A$  – sum of attractions;

$\sum R$  – sum of rejections;

$I_{ss}$  – sociometric status index;

$I_{sp}$  – preferential status index.

If the sociometric status index ( $I_{ss}$ ) shows the position occupied by a person within the group, then the preferential status index ( $I_{sp}$ ) indicates the degree of integration of the individual into the group.

Thus, according to  $I_{sp}$ ,  $E_{t1}$  is preferred within subgroup S1E1, and  $E_{di2}$  is totally rejected within the group.

The calculation of the cohesion index of the experimental subgroup S1E1 - Ic, will demonstrate how cohesive this group is, applying the formula:

$$I_c = Rq/U_p$$

Where:

R - the number of mutual relations (9);

U – number of unilateral relations (24);

$p = k/N - 1$ ;  $q = 1 - p$ ; K – Number of choices allowed.

Applying the formula for calculating this index for our group S1E1, we notice that its value is quite small – 1.31 (Table 2).

$$I_c = (9 * (1 - 2/9)) / (24 * 2/9) = 1.31$$

A small cohesion index, as well as the number of mutual relations in rather small draws show us a weak cohesion of the group.

In the next step, the sociometric matrix of choices and rejections (S1E1) demonstrates to what extent attraction/rejection relationships between group members are constructed.

Applying the calculation algorithm described above to all experimental subgroups S1E1-S7E1, the following indices are obtained:

**Table 2. Cohesion index for subgroups of experimental sample E1.**

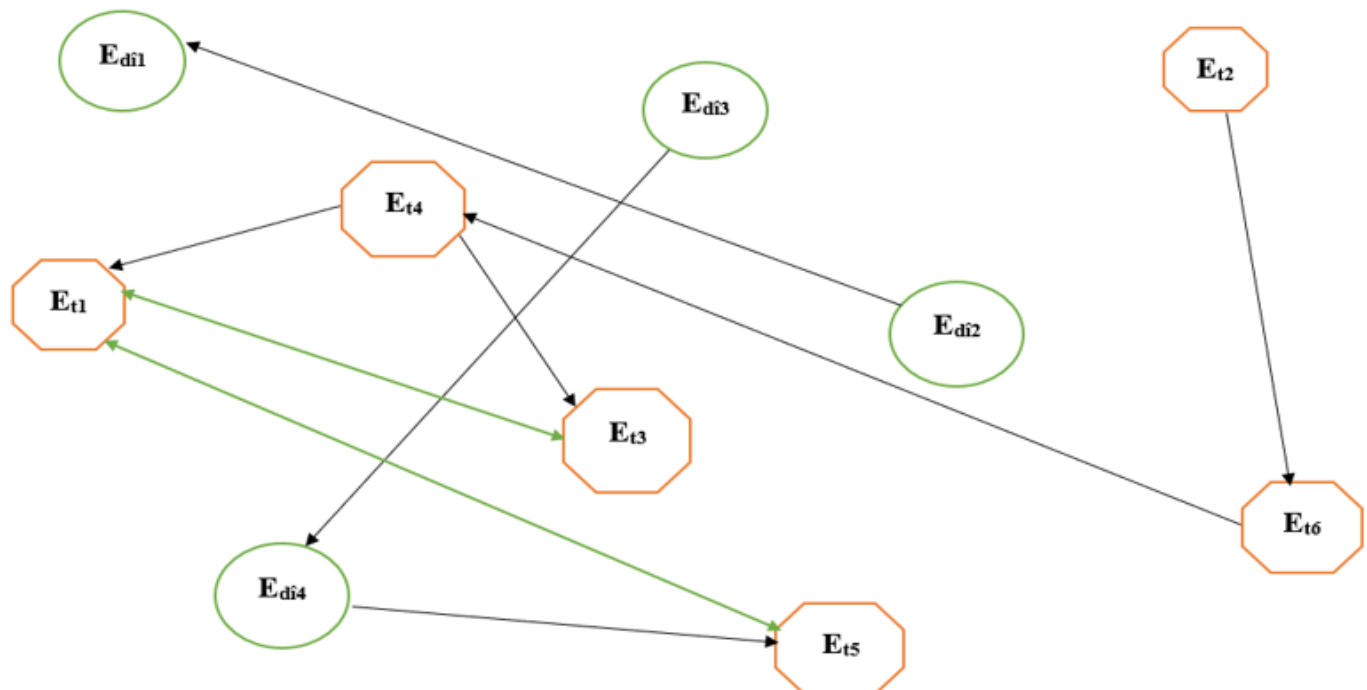
Sociometric indices	S1E <sub>1</sub>	S2E <sub>1</sub>	S3E <sub>1</sub>	S4E <sub>1</sub>	S5E <sub>1</sub>	S6E <sub>1</sub>	S7E <sub>1</sub>
Number of mutual relations, <i>R</i>	9	11	14	12	13	8	12
Number of unilateral relations, <i>U</i>	24	27	19	22	18	30	16
Number of elections allowed, <i>k</i>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Calculation coefficient, <i>p</i>	2/9	2/9	2/9	2/9	2/9	2/9	2/9
Calculation coefficient, <i>q</i>	7/9	7/9	7/9	7/9	7/9	7/9	7/9
<b>Group cohesion index, <i>I<sub>c</sub></i></b>	<b>1,31</b>	<b>1,42</b>	<b>2,57</b>	<b>1,91</b>	<b>2,52</b>	<b>0,93</b>	<b>2,62</b>

Table 2 reflects the relationships built between students both in teaching and extracurricular activities. Students opted for the options to *do/not do* projects with 2 of the colleagues of the given group; *discussing/not discussing* their favorite book; *communicating/not communicating* with their peers, etc.

The sociogram of choices of experimental subgroup S1E1 (Fig. 1) reflects, objectively, the following aspects:

- there are no seconded preferred pupils by all group members;
- there are only 2 mutual attractions established between typical students: E<sub>t1</sub>-E<sub>t5</sub>; E<sub>t1</sub>-E<sub>t3</sub>;
- there are 3 students who are not preferred (of these 2 students are with SC – E<sub>Di2</sub>; E<sub>Di3</sub>);
- microgroups of mutual attractions are not attested.

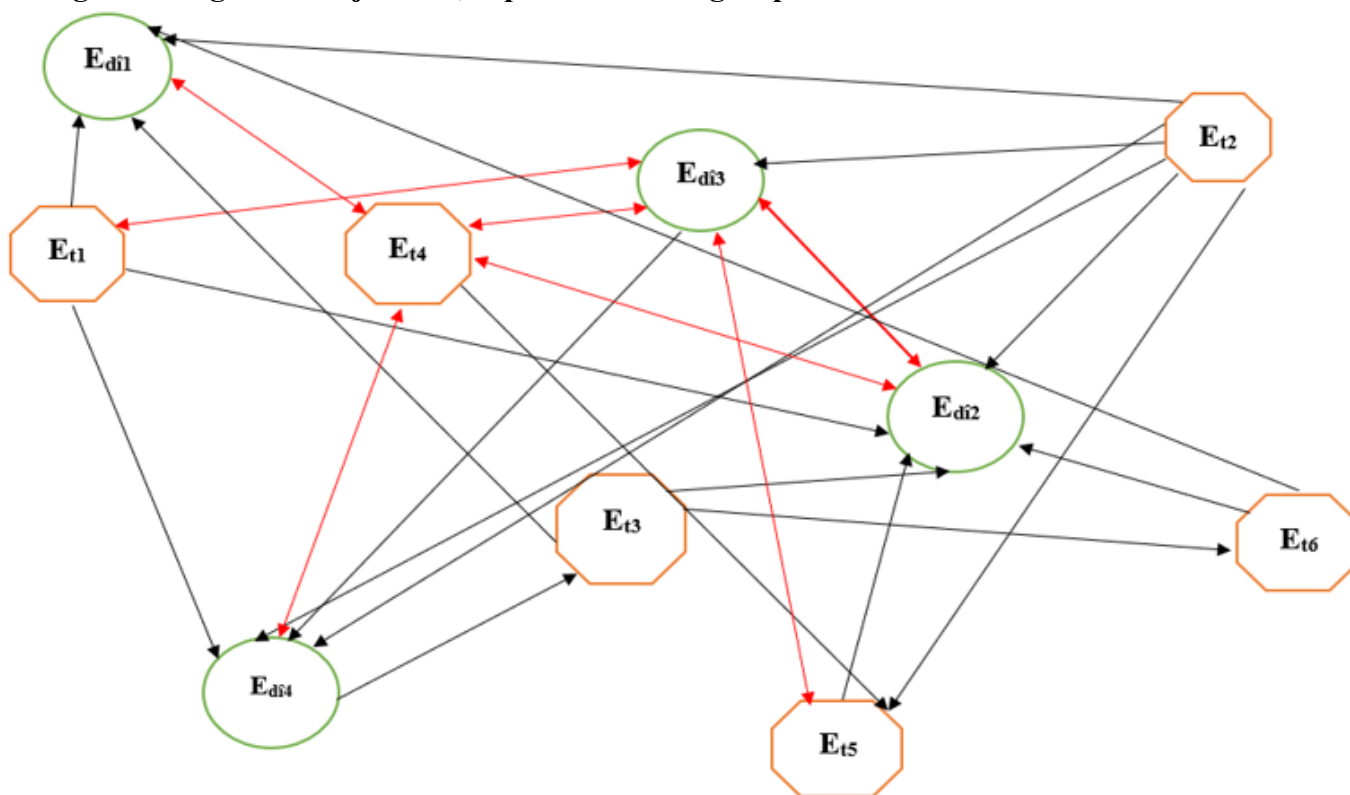
**Fig. 1. Sociogram of attractions, experimental subgroup S1E1.**



In the same context, the sociogram of rejections of experimental subgroup S1E1 (Fig. 2.) clearly illustrates the following aspects:

- according to the data from the individual sheets, the number of rejections within the group (31 rejections) exceeds about 3 times the number of elections (11 choices) (table 1);
- student  $E_{di2}$  is practically rejected by all group members, followed by  $E_{di1}$  - 5 rejections;
- there are 6 mutual rejections;
- $E_{t2}$  has an unclear position in this group, with zero attractions and rejections;
- among typical students there are also students with multiple rejections -  $E_{t4}$ ;
- members of the microgroup  $E_{th4}$  -  $E_{di2}$  -  $E_{di3}$ , repel each other.

**Fig. 2. Sociogram of rejections, experimental subgroup S1E1.**



As a result, from the analysis of all raw data collected, we deduce that the number of attractions per group compared to the number of rejections is higher – Table 3.

Thus, in the 7 experimental subgroups of the E1 sample, a total number of 145 attractions and 169 rejections are highlighted, of which 24.8% – attractions and 57.9% rejections are among students with CI.

At the same time, out of the 7 experimental subgroups, in 3 of them the number of attractions prevails over that of rejections – S3E1, S4E1, S7E1. In some experimental subgroups – S5E1, S6E1 some students with DF are preferred detached by their peers –  $E_{di1}$ ,  $E_{di2}$ .

**Table 3. Individual handouts of attractions and rejections of students with learning difficulties and typical students, subgroups of experimental sample E1 (third grade students).**

Students	S1E1		S2E1		S3E1		S4E1		S5E1		S6E1		S7E1	
	Number of attractions	Number of rejections	Number of attractions	Number of rejections	Number of attractions	Number of rejections	Number of attractions	Number of rejections	Number of attractions	Number of rejections	Number of attractions	Number of rejections	Number of attractions	Number of rejections
$E_{di1}$	1	5	2	2	0	1	0	2	6	1	1	5	2	2

E <sub>di2</sub>	0	7	1	5	3	0	1	1	1	0	6	0	1	2
E <sub>di3</sub>	0	5	0	3	1	6	1	7	0	3	0	7	0	3
E <sub>di4</sub>	1	4	1	8	0	4	4	0	1	8	1	4	1	3
E <sub>ti1</sub>	3	1	6	1	8	0	2	1	0	1	3	1	6	1
E <sub>ti2</sub>	0	0	1	2	1	2	7	0	2	2	0	0	1	2
E <sub>ti3</sub>	2	1	3	1	3	1	2	1	5	1	2	1	3	1
E <sub>ti4</sub>	1	4	0	2	0	2	3	1	0	7	4	1	0	2
E <sub>ti5</sub>	2	3	3	3	6	1	2	3	0	4	2	3	5	0
E <sub>ti6</sub>	1	1	2	3	6	2	6	2	1	1	3	2	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>19</b>

In the logical continuation of the research, the results obtained in the experimental sample E2 are of interest, where students are older (fourth grade) and the configuration of relationships has a completely different aspect.

According to the sociometric status index ( $I_{ss}$ ) and preferential status index ( $I_{sp}$ ), in this experimental subgroup S1E2, two students received no choice – Ed<sub>i3</sub> and Et<sub>6</sub>, and four typical students received 3-4 choices. However, Ed<sub>i3</sub> is not integrated into the group, having the lowest ISP of all group members – (-6/9).

**Table 4. Sociometric matrix of attractions and repulsions, experimental subgroup S1E2.**

Students	E <sub>di1</sub>	E <sub>di2</sub>	E <sub>di3</sub>	E <sub>di4</sub>	E <sub>ti1</sub>	E <sub>ti2</sub>	E <sub>ti3</sub>	E <sub>ti4</sub>	E <sub>ti5</sub>	E <sub>ti6</sub>
E <sub>di1</sub>	***	+	-			+			-	
E <sub>di2</sub>		***	-		+	+				
E <sub>di3</sub>			***		-		-	+	+	
E <sub>di4</sub>				***			+		-	
E <sub>ti1</sub>	+		-		***			+		-
E <sub>ti2</sub>		+				***		+		
E <sub>ti3</sub>			-		+	+	***			-
E <sub>ti4</sub>		-			+	-	+	***		
E <sub>ti5</sub>			-	+			-	+	***	
E <sub>ti6</sub>			-		-		+		+	***
$\sum A/\sum R$	1/0	2/1	0/6	1/0	3/2	3/1	3/2	4/0	2/2	0/2
$I_{ss}$	1/9	2/9	0/9	1/9	3/9	3/9	3/9	4/9	2/9	0/9
$I_{sp}$	1/9	1/9	-6/9	1/9	1/9	2/9	1/9	4/9	1/9	-2/9

Based on the sociograms presented below, we realize that within the group there is a certain homogeneity, the number of attractions exceeding the number of rejections, even if only 2 mutual relationships were formed, one of them being between a student with SC – Ed<sub>i2</sub> and a typical Et<sub>2</sub> student.

This is also confirmed by the group’s cohesion index, which has a rather high value – 2.96 (Table 5).

According to the data presented in Table 5, the comparative analysis per experimental group E2 (fourth grade students) demonstrates that:

- in 5 out of 7 subgroups, the number of attractions exceeds the number of rejections;
- in S3E2, the number of draws equals the number of rejections;

- in the 7 experimental subgroups of the E2 sample, a total number of 145 attractions and 119 rejections are highlighted, of which 24.13% - attractions and 51.26% rejections are among students with CI.

Fig. 3. Sociogram of attractions, experimental subgroup S1E2.

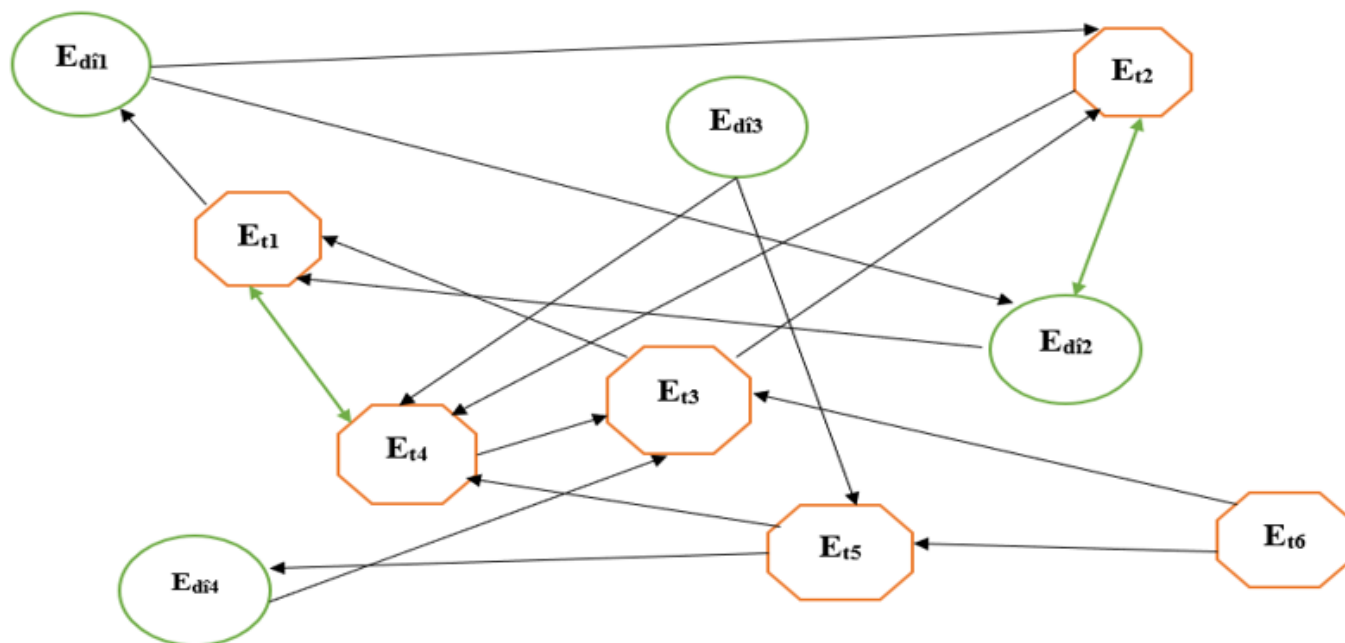


Fig. 4. Sociogram of rejections, experimental subgroup S1E2

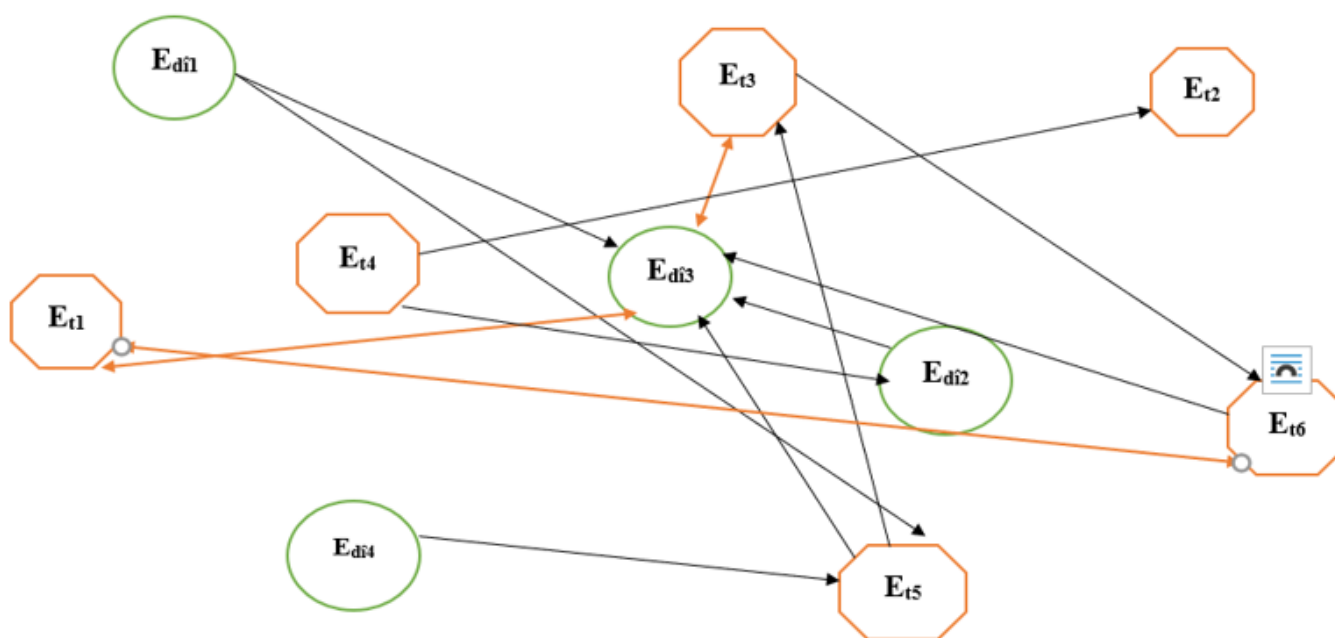


Table 5. Individual record of attractions and rejections of students with learning difficulties and typical students, subgroups of experimental sample E2 (fourth grade students).

Students	S1E2		S2E2		S3E2		S4E2		S5E2		S6E2		S7E2	
	Number of attractions	Number of rejections	Number of attractions	Number of rejections	Number of attractions	Number of rejections	Number of attractions	Number of rejections	Number of attractions	Number of rejections	Number of attractions	Number of rejections	Number of attractions	Number of rejections
$E_{d11}$	1	0	0	5	0	7	1	1	3	4	1	1	4	1
$E_{d12}$	2	1	1	0	1	4	2	1	2	0	1	4	2	1
$E_{d13}$	0	6	4	0	0	1	2	8	0	2	0	5	0	0
$E_{d14}$	1	0	0	6	2	1	0	1	2	1	2	0	1	0



$E_{11}$	3	2	7	0	2	3	4	1	3	0	2	5	2	4
$E_{12}$	3	1	0	0	5	1	5	0	3	1	0	0	3	1
$E_{13}$	3	2	4	1	6	2	2	0	3	0	2	1	8	0
$E_{14}$	4	0	2	2	2	0	1	1	2	1	1	3	4	1
$E_{15}$	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	4	1	0	4	0	2	3
$E_{16}$	0	2	1	4	1	0	1	0	3	0	2	1	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>11</b>

We note that the share of rejections of students with learning difficulties in grade IV ( $E_2$ ) is decreasing compared to the share of rejections of students with learning difficulties in grade III ( $E_1$ ): from 57.9% to 51.26%.

In the same context, according to the data in Table 6, it is shown that the group cohesion indices for the subgroups in  $E_2$  are very varied, the most related group being  $S6E_2$ , followed by  $S1E_2$  and  $S3E_2$ . The  $S7E_2$  group is quite dispersed, with few reciprocal relationships,  $I_c$  being equal to 1.27 – the smallest of the experimental samples.

**Table 6. Sociometric indices for subgroups of experimental sample  $E_2$ .**

Sociometric indices	$S1E_2$	$S2E_2$	$S3E_2$	$S4E_2$	$S5E_2$	$S6E_2$	$S7E_2$
Number of mutual relations, $R$	11	10	13	9	7	12	8
Number of unilateral relations, $U$	13	20	16	19	17	11	22
Number of elections allowed, $k$	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Calculation coefficient, $p$	2/9	2/9	2/9	2/9	2/9	2/9	2/9
Calculation coefficient, $q$	7/9	7/9	7/9	7/9	7/9	7/9	7/9
<b>Group cohesion index, <math>I_c</math></b>	<b>2,96</b>	<b>1,75</b>	<b>2,84</b>	<b>1,65</b>	<b>1,44</b>	<b>3,82</b>	<b>1,27</b>

**In conclusion**, we mention that the data presented represent for the teacher conclusive evidence for identifying **group communication networks**, the configuration of rejection, attraction and indifference relationships, the position and status of each student, especially the one with learning difficulties.

Based on a closed or defensive climate, communication effectiveness suffers, and behaviors that prevail in a closed communication environment make certain value judgments (students feel incompetent, inferior). In the context of inclusive education, the student with learning difficulties must be supported and encouraged by the teacher to reveal his/her personality, to capitalize and develop his/her potential.

The educational institution and teachers, in particular, are responsible, together with the family, for shaping personality and integration into social life.

In social interactions, qualities such as: respect, compassion and empathy are formed. At the same time, children train language skills and develop competence in solving interrelationship problems. It is certain that there are children who face difficulties in the socialization process, for whom social interactions are a real challenge.

These are children with special needs, who are usually shy, isolated for whom cognitive developmental delays, language disorders, behavioral disorders and emotional disorders are specific. In these cases, successful integration into a group of children. It can also be beneficial for cognitive development. Socialization is an important necessity for every child, both in the family and in the school institution, or in various social groups.

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## PROMOTING MULTILINGUALISM IN SCHOOL

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In this article, various models of motivation that influence the learning process are examined, with a particular focus on the field of foreign languages. Motivational structures, including academic self-efficacy, attributions, achievements, and internal motivational objectives, are presented as fundamental elements in promoting or hindering academic success. The diverse ways in which students can be motivated are analyzed, highlighting the importance of adapting motivation to the context, arguing that it may vary depending on the situation, context, and school environment. Definitions and understanding of adaptive and maladaptive motivational models are proposed, along with an analysis of their evolution over time. Research results are presented, indicating that beliefs associated with adaptive motivation, such as academic self-efficacy, lead to improved performance and achievements, while beliefs associated with maladaptive motivation, such as fear of failure, have negative effects on academic performance and achievements.

**Keywords:** *psycho-pedagogy, communication, multilingual education, teaching methods, educational methodology, multilingual study, motivation.*

### PROMOVAREA MULTILINGVISMULUI ÎN ȘCOALĂ

În acest articol sunt examinate diverse modele de motivație care influențează procesul de învățare, concentrându-se în special pe domeniul limbilor străine. Structurile motivaționale, incluzând autoeficacitatea academică, atribuțiile, realizările și obiectivele motivaționale interne, sunt prezentate ca elemente fundamentale în promovarea sau împiedicarea succesului academic. Se analizează diverse modalități în care elevii pot fi motivați și se evidențiază importanța adaptării motivației la context, susținând că aceasta poate varia în funcție de situație, context și mediu școlar. Sunt propuse definirea și înțelegerea modelelor de motivație adaptive și dezadaptive și analizarea evoluției acestora în timp. Sunt prezentate rezultate de cercetare care indică că convingerile legate de motivația adaptativă, cum ar fi autoeficacitatea, conduc la îmbunătățirea performanței și a realizărilor, în timp ce convingerile asociate cu motivația dezadaptativă, cum ar fi evitarea eșecului, au efecte negative asupra performanței și realizărilor academice.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *psihopedagogie, comunicare, educație multilingvă, metode de predare, metodologia educațională, studiu multilingv, motivare.*

### Introduction

Due to the intensifying processes of globalization, transnationalism and technological developments, awareness is rising of the need to learn different world languages, which may promote economic and professional leadership in the students' future. Multilingual knowledge is an essential component in the ability to take part in new and unique emerging markets in various international contexts and as such has the potential to advance society economically.

Emerging changes in ideology, alongside growing processes of globalization versus expressions of resistance by groups of immigrants and natives, have recently led certain researchers in the field of sociolinguistics to encourage a multilingual educational policy, which recognizes the linguistic diversity of the speakers permits the integration of this diversity in the curriculum and encourages learners to cultivate multilingualism. This turn in linguistic education in the last decade, known by several researchers as the multilingual turn [9], is also receiving increasing support from the research findings, which point to the advantages of bilingualism in cognitive and social dimensions and the encouragement of social tolerance in cultural and emotional dimensions [2].

A study was carried out on the promotion of a new multilingual policy in Israel based primarily on the recognition that languages are taught for different purposes [3]. And there are many deficiencies when it

comes to the training of teachers to teach foreign languages and, teaching methods of the languages, study materials that are updated and compatible with the context of language learning, assessment methods.

However, out of all the students in the education system today, there is a high proportion of immigrant students and children of immigrants, for whom different languages are part of their heritage - even if they do not master the languages of Burin. Indeed, there is enormous variation among students learning heritage languages in terms of language control, familiarity, literacy, etc. Thus, when we come to promote a new multilingual policy, it is of great importance to have a deeper understanding of the current situation regarding most of the languages currently taught in the education system, the characterization of the needs of the various languages, and the mapping of the main challenges facing language teachers.

**The concept today.** Educational linguistic policy encourages multilingual education as a central component of linguistic education, thereby promoting the equality of speakers of marginal languages and enriching the other students cognitively and socially. The core of a multilingual educational policy concerns the assimilation of knowledge and skills in different languages among students: both their mother tongues, global languages, both community languages and heritage languages [10].

Knowledge in each language does not have to be equal but should reflect specific goals for each language. This definition of multilingual education belongs to the field of sociolinguistics, and emphasizes the need for students to learn more than one language [4], to move between different languages through linguistic mixing – translanguaging – to promote students’ understanding, to enrich the linguistic repertoire and awareness the linguistic of all students through building links between similar patterns in different languages [6], indeed, the recognition of the importance of knowledge and skills in several languages – as opposed to only one language or even two – was accompanied by a change in emphasis from a monolingual educational policy to a bilingual educational policy and finally to a multilingual educational.

History shows that language use has many sides and is in constant development among individuals and societies. During the life of a single person – the use of language is related to personal choices, to the person’s personality and to the social contexts in which he is involved in the development of a society. Language use is influenced by the population that makes it up, from mutual effects of languages as well as from the different dynamics and the power relations between the various speakers [10].

**As a reflection of this use of language,** it is not surprising that throughout history we find hybrid versions and fusions of linguistic codes and dialects, which exist side by side in different locations in the world. All these result from the intensifying processes of globalization, immigration, transnationalism, and technological developments [4]. As a result of all of these, multilingual education is increasingly interacting with each other, and crossing the borders of nation states more frequently than before. This was also joined by certain changes in the political discourse and the socio-linguistic discourse, which permit and in part make the integration and fusion of languages, and multilingual education, a miracle. Also, the appearance of the concept of ‘linguistic rights’ in international legislative documents and legal decisions, which stems from the political struggles for the rights of various groups in democratic countries, has become more and more common, and requires multilingual education.

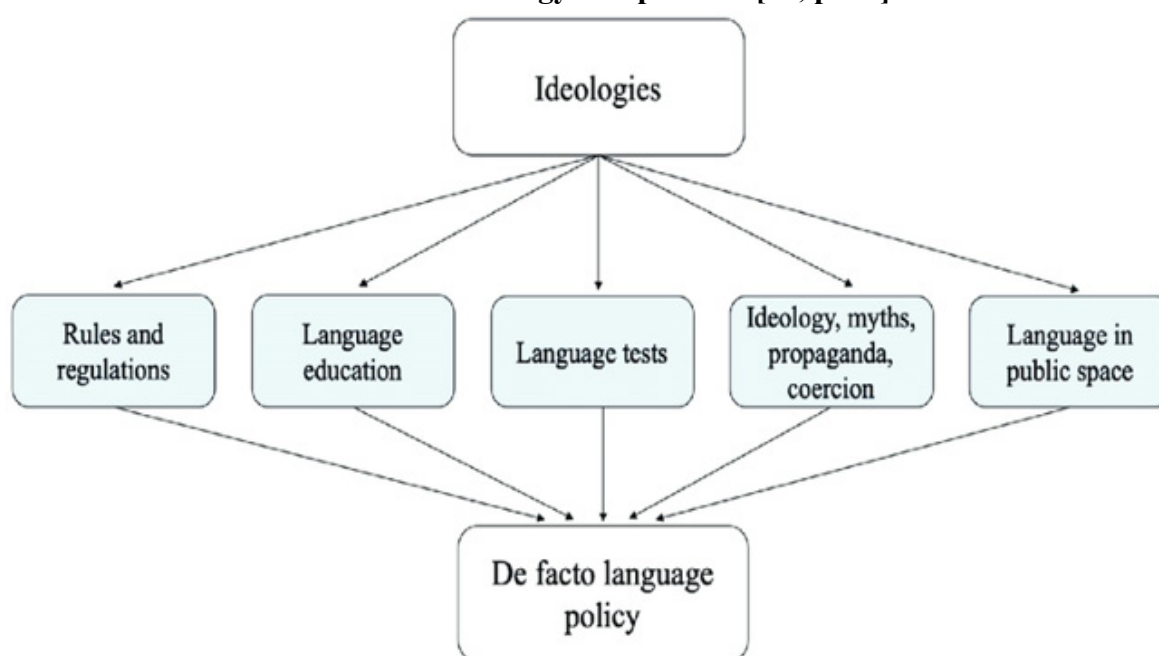
In recent years, with increasing perceptions emphasizing the many advantages inherent in multilingualism and the recognition of a complete linguistic repertoire, the assessment perspective on the centrality of the first language known since childhood and there is an explanation that it continues to form a basis for understanding it throughout many years, especially when the students are at the beginning of the process of acquiring the new language which, as I mentioned, takes a long time, and sometimes even for a lifetime. The use of bilingual tests, which include the new language along with the familiar language, allows multilingual students to achieve higher and express their academic knowledge in a more valid and accurate way – compared to monolingual tests, which rely only on the new language.

**Academic self-efficacy** – although knowledge and cognitive skills are necessary for language achievement and its absorption, they are not sufficient. Even when students know what they must do, they sometimes find it difficult to bring themselves to invest the necessary effort to deal with the complex demands of a task. To do this, students must believe that they can act effectively to achieve a goal or deal effectively with challenging situations. In the academic context, we focus on the student’s beliefs about his ability to

control linguistic issues in the language being studied, to successfully perform specific tasks in the language, and to regulate learning and learning activities of adaptive educational results such as higher levels of effort and persistence in difficult linguistic tasks.

Both in experimental studies and correlational studies, among students of different age groups and gender. Thus, it was found that high self-efficacy at age 13 was positively related to higher grades in high school and negatively to a low probability of dropping out of school. Also, high school students' sense of competence was found to be positively related to engagement in learning. A longitudinal study conducted among 436 students focused on the contribution of personality variables, self-esteem, and foreign language achievements. The data was collected in 8th grade, 10th grade and at the end of high school. It was found that for students who evaluate themselves well.

**Fig. 1. Political mechanisms between ideology and practice [13, p. 58].**



Moreover, having high self-efficacy and excellence in their academic performance, there is a higher probability of better academic performance compared to others who lack these characteristics. These students are persistent and tend to better assess their ability to master the language being studied as well as their ability to regulate their motivation and learning activities. Indeed, it was found that there is a positive relationship between the students' beliefs that they can regulate their learning and their academic achievements. It was also found among a sample of 113 high school students that the students' personal goals and sense of self-efficacy predicted academic achievements.

Research findings show that the more positively the child perceives his academic ability, the more he perceives himself as investing in the new language being learned and thus the higher his academic achievements. The failure also leads to the student's feeling that he is unable to meet the academic requirements, which leads to difficulties, the creation of an "anti" to the language being studied and disconnection, sometimes but leaving the school. Self-efficacy has a predictive effect in the context of the school in improving academic performance in general in any subject studied, and as a result it is there may be a goal of intervention programs to improve performance through raising self-efficacy.

**The influence of language characteristics on curriculum.** The ability to use language as a communication tool for receiving messages and as a mental tool for understanding and organizing them makes it a significant ability in learning processes. Because human knowledge is often represented by spoken and written language, the person listening and reading becomes familiar with the knowledge presented verbally in a linear sequence from the first word to the last word. Following the linear characteristics of the representation of linguistic knowledge, the curricula present the study materials in a hierarchical and linear manner with

predefined goals. However, verbal representation cannot give expression to all human knowledge, because it has a complex and branched dynamic structure, more so when it comes to multilingual education [7].

***The standards approach in a multilingual curriculum.*** One of the accepted approaches to learning several languages is the pedagogical approach that emphasizes the existing importance of education for understanding and thinking, the standards approach, which is reflected in the stated policy that guides the curriculum. These questions come up with great frequency in various discussion frameworks in which experts in the field of curriculum planning and assessment, academics from various fields and disciplines, administrators and teachers and other factors from the field of education participate. The agreed upon and accepted definitions for the term standards define that standards are standards that define what the student needs to know in the field of writing and reading skills to be able to determine what his level is.

According to the model of levels of complexity that allows one to stand on the level of his linguistic performance, at different ages [4]. There are three types of standards: standards of content, standards of performance and standards of learning opportunities. „Content standards” – are contents that define what learners should know and be able to do. These standards indicate knowledge and skill, ways of thinking, vocabulary, and grammar rules. „Performance standards” are contents defined as more specific and concrete examples. That is, explicit definitions of what the student needs to know and be able to do to demonstrate compliance with the content standards.

These standards provide examples of learner activities regarding what they need to know and be able to do to demonstrate compliance with the content standards and the expected level of performance or understanding. There are indicators of quality that indicate how much proficiency or mastery the student's performance should reflect, that is, what is considered a good level in oral and written expression.

The performance includes a graded selection of performance levels in the learning process to be able to assess the progress of the learners in their learning process. „Standards of opportunity for learning” – these standards provide a measure for determining whether the school provides its students with an equal and equal opportunity to learn the new foreign language well. This is indeed an opportunity for teachers who have undergone appropriate training in the areas of content, teaching materials and resources suitable for the purposes of teaching, a suitable and safe learning environment and a teaching program which sets higher standards of content and performance.

***The policy of standards in the field of education*** in general and not only linguistic education, began to develop starting in 2000. The initial definition given to the concept of “standards” was in 2002. According to it, a standard in education expresses what all students should know and be able to do in each subject - to be able to determine “how good is good” in the different professions at different ages.

In one of the studies that took place on the subject, it was found that one of the basic assumptions was that the standards approach will have a significant impact only when it focuses on the products and emphasizes what is received from the school, instead of what is introduced and included within the educational process. That is, when it seeks to intervene in the educational act by setting common, high, strict standards, which define what students should know and what they should be able to do or when it seeks to use appropriate evaluation systems, based on standards, it may succeed in realizing its ambition. In such a situation, it may be able to transfer the responsibility for achievements to students, teachers, and schools, while being able to introduce a reward system accordingly. The standards approach defines standards in teaching as an expression of what all students should know and be able to do. This definition emphasizes and sharpens the existing importance to the result expected from the educational process – social-behavioral-value.

A student in multilingual education is interested in improving cognitive abilities - a person who speaks foreign languages is not only perceived as more intelligent, but he also often really is. Learning a foreign language makes it possible to develop one's cognitive abilities, learn new abilities and refine the existing ones. By learning a foreign language, for example, memory can be improved, since by learning new words, we expand the limits of human memory and pose new challenges to it. Therefore, learning a new language helps to improve one's way of thinking and sharpen one's attention to small details. In the end, it is important to remember that like other muscles in the body, our brain is also a type of muscle, and the more we train it, the more successful it will be.

***Involvement in learning*** – the most significant factor is the quality of time engaged in learning the new language, and not the duration of engaging in it. Because the amount of time the students devote to the task is not a measure that allows us to know how attentive they are and how they process information. This factor is the “engagement” in learning - in fact, this variable can be seen as a central factor that actually expresses the student’s motivation for learning.

***Emotional involvement*** is expressed in positive attitudes to the school, to the language being studied, its speakers, etc., and includes two distinct structures that are related to each other: positive evaluations of the school and positive educational intentions. Positive evaluations reflect the extent to which the student sees learning the new language at school as a pleasant and satisfying experience, while positive intentions refer to the interest the student discovers and the desire for continued involvement in it. Also, students with positive attitudes toward the language and the school tend to demonstrate greater adaptation and fewer emotional difficulties and can-do using resources in a better way. Some see emotional involvement as an emotional reaction of the student (happiness, anxiety, interest in learning activities and the people involved in these activities).

Due to the important role that school has in the lives of teenagers, it is claimed that students who are more emotionally involved in learning experience a higher level of mental well-being compared to anxious, bored, or apathetic students. Also, it was found that the latter are at risk of underachieving and dropping out of school. In fact, the emotional involvement in the new language learned on all sides predicts the behavioral involvement and that this has a direct effect on their performance.

***Behavioral involvement*** includes participation in various activities that promote learning, including homework preparation, class behavior, participation in classes. Also, positive correlations were found between the students’ persistence in the tasks, their degree of activity and the effort to be involved and complete educational tasks and the educational achievements.

***Positive emotional functioning*** – at school is necessary for success even in learning a foreign language, or several languages. The school is an environment where students experience a variety of emotions every day, including pleasure, pride, curiosity, anxiety, anger, jealousy and boredom. There is an emerging view that emphasizes the importance of emotions and moods that support the students’ involvement and their achievements. Emotions may play a key role in the way students experience school, in their relationships with friends and teachers, in their adaptation to class and school, in cognitive processes, in their academic achievements, in motivation and in their involvement in learning.

***The mutual relationship between mental well-being and academic performance*** – a sense of personal well-being refers to a person’s cognitive and effective assessment of his life and is defined as the individual’s assessment of his quality of life. School mental well-being can be seen as the degree to which the student feels good at school, is satisfied with various aspects of his situation at school related, among other things, to the teachers, the peer group and the school organization, feels safe and protected at school and is free from feelings of fear and psychological problems. As evidence, students who learn several foreign languages are aware that success in multilingual studies will awaken in them future mental well-being beyond all the associated benefits.

It is clear to everyone that mental well-being is also affected by the student’s socioeconomic status and a variety of environmental factors. The student’s well-being will be strengthened and strengthened if we expose him to the option of availability to more information – knowledge of many languages opens to the student, and in fact to everyone, a much wider variety of databases available in different languages. This is of course not only for students. Learning a new language exposes a person to a much wider variety of information and programs - an especially important matter in the information age in which we live.

***Emotional intelligence*** – is a cognitive ability that includes various skills related to processing emotional information, including recognizing emotions in myself and others, using emotion to promote thinking, understanding emotions, and regulating emotions to promote effective behaviors. Various studies have found positive relationships between achievements in studies in general and learning foreign languages in particular, and emotional intelligence.

It was found that young people with high abilities to recognize and to understand emotions, to place emotions accurately, when necessary to know how to separate the opinion about the speakers of the foreign language being studied, and isolate stigmas about them in investment and multilingual learning. In a study conducted among 372 9th-10th grade students, it was found that emotional intelligence is related to healthier psychological functioning, good social ability, and better academic performance in the subject of English.

In addition, emotional intelligence allows those gifted with it to deal with various stressors in the educational cause, including assessment, social and emotional demands, continuous effort, managing time demands and academic pressure, working together and social coping. It was found that the ability to express emotion and understand the emotions of others was found in a positive relationship with Academic achievements. In a study conducted among 392 8th grade students, it was found that problem-focused coping significantly mediates the relationship between emotion regulation and academic achievement. In addition, it is claimed that awareness, appreciation and understanding of emotions is essential to creating a positive climate that promotes effective learning. Meaning that emotional knowledge serves as a long-term predictor of social behavior and good academic ability.

**The social value scale** – the level of society's academic expectations of its future citizens in the importance of knowledge and multilingual use of the potential learner in the future, from an understanding of the advantage of multilingual education for the learner's future, exposure to the world, and personal global development. Processes of developing diverse curricula suitable for teaching multilingual education, including teaching the tradition and culture of the language to bring the learner closer to the language being studied, with the aim of stimulating motivation and interest in the language.

**Academic resilience** – to be academically successful, students need the skills to deal effectively with pressure, academic load, and various academic difficulties. Resilience is a process of successfully adapting to difficult or threatening situations, and also the ability to persevere and be positive and adaptive in challenging situations, considering the belief that effort and challenge lead to success more than you can.

Many studies have shown that resilient teenagers succeed academically, a study conducted among high school students in Turkey found a clear positive relationship between academic resilience and self-esteem and academic achievements. It was found that students with academic resilience could maintain a positive attitude while dealing with frustrating academic problems and that they show high levels of more in the internalization and education.

**Social functioning and academic achievements** in the school plays a significant role in the lives of young people in every society. At school they acquire an education and are also given the opportunity to acquire personal and interpersonal skills that will be necessary for them later in life. The class constitutes a social context, since the students do not learn alone but in the presence of many members of the peer group.

Integration into the peer group and success in school studies are two central aspects of positive development in early adolescence, since positive relationships with significant others are the cornerstone of the students' ability to function effectively in social areas, emotional and academic, when examining academic achievements in multilingual education and growing up, predictors of social functioning must also be taken into account, such as acceptance into a social group and belonging. In a comprehensive review that examined the importance of interpersonal relationships for learning and achievement in various studies and among different age groups, the ways in which various structures of motivation and achievement are influenced by relationships with others and built within them were demonstrated.

Thus, for example, attributions are learned through receiving feedback from significant others and imitations and the need for belonging emphasized in the theory of intrinsic motivation is realized Through contact with supportive, warm, and nurturing others. The review showed that quality interpersonal relationships in students' lives contribute to promoting various aspects of their academic motivation, involvement in learning and achievements.

**Positive relationships** with the peer group at school contribute to a sense of belonging at school, which is a key to success, investment, and academic motivation. Relatedness refers to the significant need to feel loved and accepted by the others within the school, also in multilingual learning one will feel a connection



to the acquired foreign language. their sense of well-being. People strive to create and maintain meaningful interpersonal relationships with speakers of the main language and when this need is realized, positive emotional responses are created. These emotional reactions affect the achievement behaviors of the students, including: their reactions to the challenge, self-regulation, and participation.

*A sense of belonging to the language* and its speakers helps students to equip themselves with the beliefs and values necessary to function effectively in educational environments. These beliefs direct behavior in a way that promotes persistence, goal attainment and self-regulation. In addition, within the framework of dedicated projects, in order to stimulate this emotion, relationships are established with the natives of the acquired foreign language, within the framework of dedicated projects, which promote not only social, emotional and intellectual functioning, but also a positive sense of self-image and self-worth, and these are related to continuous achievement motivation for learning a foreign language acquisition and learning of a language, in general, depends mainly on the individual's exposure to it.

The more the individual is exposed to the language, learns it, listens to it, reads, and speaks the language, the better his verbal skills will be. This point is also true for learning another foreign language, beyond the mother tongue acquired already in childhood. In fact, the more the individual is exposed to the additional foreign language in diverse contexts and experiences it, the more effectively he will learn to master it. The learner is aware of the importance of getting to know a new culture - developing relationships, social and business, is beneficial not only in terms of employment and the social aspect. Knowing a new language also makes it possible to enrich one's life through the knowledge of a new culture.

### Conclusion

Educational policy and curriculum implementation mechanisms in multilingual learning and the integration of the standards approach create a connection and continuity between stages and cycles of instruction and are an important part of student success. This important issue must also be addressed in the study of differences between bilingual and monolingual students learning a foreign language. Therefore, it can be concluded that the implementation of the curriculum must be used to achieve the connection and continuity between the two through its mechanisms of valence subject to certain conditions.

Moreover, mastering more than one language has been found to have cognitive advantages in general. Research findings showed that multilingual speakers perform better in certain meta-linguistic tasks, which include cognitive skills such as inhibitory control and selective attention, compared to monolingual speakers.

These findings are extremely important, since inhibitory control, the belief in inhibiting impulsive impulses in favor of more appropriate behavior that corresponds to the individual's long-term goals, and selective attention, which enables the ability to concentrate on a certain object for a long time, are part of the executive functions of a person, the functions the most critical cognitive skills for academic skills. Also, research findings have shown that multilingual speakers' knowledge of more than one language can delay cognitive decline associated with aging. Compliance with all these conditions can establish the educational mechanisms of the study program in multilingual study. It can also improve and give meaning to the learning process, the teaching process in multilingual education and to achieve mutual connection and continuity between cycles and stages of education.

Thus, by learning another language, it is possible to communicate with many people from all over the world, get to know them, get to know their way of life and learn from their experience. Knowing another language will even help create a more positive impression among people in the society in which you live. The more languages a person knows the more intelligent and communicative he is. Thus, knowing another language makes it possible to make a good impression on the environment and may even lead a much more successful life.

Moreover, bilingual students who master both languages at a high level achieved significantly higher results in verbal and non-verbal intelligibility tests than monolingual students, from this grows another advantage for multilingual education, which is the possibility of improving the educational achievements of students.

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## THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIFIC SKILLS IN STUDENTS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION THROUGH THE USE OF OINA ELEMENTS

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The diversity of tools used in the educational process considerably increases the interest of primary school pupils and makes the physical education lesson much more attractive, especially when it is conducted in the form of a game. Oina is a very complex sports game and the use of specific elements of this game in the formation of students' skills is relevant. The arguments are based on the analysis of the results of the scientific research carried out at two high schools in Chisinau with the participation of fourth-grade students. The physical education tools proposed in the experimental group's research highlighted some motor qualities that can be developed in the primary school pupils. With the help of some physical exercises specific to the Oina game of that were practiced during a year of studies, the indices for throwing the Oina ball into the target, hitting the Oina ball accurately, and hitting the Oina ball at a distance improved considerably.

**Keywords:** *scientific research, motor skills, technical elements, assessment, hitting the Oina ball with the stick (paddle), catching the ball, specific skills, initial assessment, final assessment, physical development, psychological development, explosive strength, speed, coordination qualities, precision of movements.*

### DEZVOLTAREA ABILITĂȚILOR SPECIFICE LA ELEVII DIN ÎNVĂȚĂMÂNTUL PRIMAR PRIN UTILIZAREA ELEMENTELOR OINA

Diversitatea instrumentelor folosite în procesul de învățământ crește considerabil interesul elevilor din ciclul primar și face lecția de educație fizică mult mai atractivă, mai ales atunci când se desfășoară sub formă de joc. Oina este un joc sportiv foarte complex, iar folosirea elementelor specifice acestui joc în formarea deprinderilor motrice ale elevilor este relevantă. Argumentele se bazează pe analiza rezultatelor cercetării științifice efectuate la două licee din Chișinău cu participarea elevilor de clasa a IV-a. Instrumentele de educație fizică propuse în cercetarea grupului experimental au evidențiat unele calități motrice care pot fi dezvoltate la elevii din ciclul primar. Cu ajutorul unor exercitii fizice specifice jocului de foosbal care s-au practicat pe parcursul unui an de studii, s-au îmbunătățit considerabil indicii de aruncare a foosbalului în tinta, a lovirii cu precizie a foosbalului și a lovirii la distanță a foosbalului.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *cercetare științifică, calități motrice, elemente tehnice, evaluare, deprinderi motrice, bătaia mingii de oină cu bastonul (paleta), prinderea mingii, competențe specifice, evaluare inițială, evaluare finală, dezvoltare fizică, dezvoltare psihologică, forță explozivă, rapiditate, calități coordinative, precizia mișcărilor.*

#### Introduction

The national sports game Oina was highly appreciated by our ancestors, characterizing it as an important means of children's personality and physical development. At the end of the 19th century, Spiru Haret, through the „Education Reform” of 1898 as well as through other ministerial decisions, introduces the obligatory teaching of this sports game as a study discipline in Romanian schools of all levels. For the first time, an official Regulation of the game of Oină is approved and the first official competitions begin to take place. Spiru Haret said about Oină the following words, which have become historical: “Oina can bring new life to the Romanian school, being an admirable means of physical education, the true type of Romanian game.”

The educational potential of the Oina game is enormous. The Oina game is very complex and requires the learning of a large number of elements and technical procedures, and this fact requires the multilateral development of the human personality and forms a vast arsenal of motor skills. Oina contributes to the education of several motor qualities: good running speed, quick reflexes in self-defense movements, curling of movements, explosive strength, quickness in movements, and accuracy in throwing the ball and hitting

the ball with the stick. At the same time, in the practice of the game, the students are building coordination skills with teammates, concentration skills, operative thinking, and the ability to make quick decisions in ever-changing situations during the game. Along with other sports games: basketball, football, handball, volleyball, and others, Oina contributes to the formation of the students' personalities, the promotion of a healthy lifestyle and at the same time preserves the national cultural values, thus preserving the traditions of the Romanian nation.

By the provisions of the national curriculum in the discipline of Physical Education 2019 edition, teachers can optionally choose to study the national game Oina. To prepare students for secondary education, teachers and physical education teachers who teach in primary classes, in addition to the vast arsenal of tools, can also use Oina elements, certain sequences from the Oina game, or movement games specific to the Oina game.

To identify some efficient ways that would contribute to increasing the quality of the educational process, we expect to carry out a research regarding the familiarization of primary school students with the Oina game and propose a series of exercises specific to this sports game. Two institutions were selected to carry out this experiment and analyze the relevance of using Oina elements in primary school.

### **General characterization of the basic technical elements and procedures in the Oina sports game**

Oina is a team sport game played on a rectangular field that is approximately twice as long as it is wide. The game requires a stick and a small ball. The game is played in two halves, which are not limited in time. In the first half, one team is hitting the ball, and the second team is catching, and then in the second half, they will switch places. An inning ends when all players on the hitting team have hit the ball in the court and passed through the departure and return lanes, defending against the ball thrown by players from the opposing team.

The actions of the players who are hitting the ball (defending) are the following: serving the ball to the teammate, hitting the served ball with the stick, running on the field through the departure and return lane, catching or parrying the ball which is thrown at him by opponents, or dodging shots through different body movements. The players that hit the ball as far into the field as possible, have the opportunity to accumulate additional points within a match.

In this context, students must learn to serve the ball, throwing it vertically with great precision. The player must precisely handle the stick with which he will hit the ball.

After hitting the ball, the player chooses the right moment to enter the field and cross it so as not to be hit with the ball.

A specific action that the student will have to master is to parry the ball with the palms of his hands to protect himself from blows to the other parts of the body, blows which grant points to the opposing team, otherwise, he should try to dodge the thrown ball.

When the team is on the attack (catchment) the students must acquire the following actions: to master the ball – catching and passing it accurately to his teammates; to throw the ball with force and speed aiming at the players of the opposing team who are passing through the lane; to quickly pick up the ball hit by the opposing players; to recover the ball as quickly as possible if it was not accurately passed by the players in his team; to learn to catch the batted ball by the players of the opposing team, which would give game advantages or even reduce or nullify the potential points of a successful batting of the ball.

### **Analysis of the results of the initial special testing of fourth-grade students**

To carry out scientific research on the relevance of the use of oina elements in physical education lessons in primary education, an initial test of motor skills specific to oina game was carried out. Sixty-two students from “Mihai Viteazul” Theoretical High School and “Orizont” Theoretical High School in Chisinau were tested. The tests were selected based on the basic technical elements specific to the oina game. Three tests are directly related to the technique of the oina elements of aiming the players and hitting the Oina ball, and three tests were selected to evaluate the speed motoric qualities specific to the Oina and the ability of the students to handle the oina ball.

**The methodology for carrying out motoric tests specific to the Oina game is as follows**

1. *Throwing the Oina ball (120 g) at a distance.* Throwing the ball is done with one hand from the spot, in a 10 meters wide lane. On the field, the distance from the throwing place is marked every 50 centimeters. Students are given 3 attempts each, and the researcher records all three results in meters with decimals.

2. *Throwing the Oina ball (120 g) at the target.* The ball is thrown from the spot with one hand into a rectangular target 140 cm high and 50 cm wide fixed vertically at a distance of 10 meters from the throwing line. 5 attempts are given and the number of successful throws (when the ball hits the target) is recorded.

3. *Hitting the Oina ball with the paddle for accuracy.* The oina ball is thrown vertically upwards with one hand at a height of 1.5-2.0 meters, and with the second hand it is hit into the field with the help of a wooden paddle that is 7-8 centimeters wide and of 0.5 meters, secured for convenience with a round handle, as shown in the drawing below (Fig.1). Teh attempts are given, registering the number of attempts in which the student managed to hit the ball.

**Fig. 1. The paddle for batting the Oina ball.**



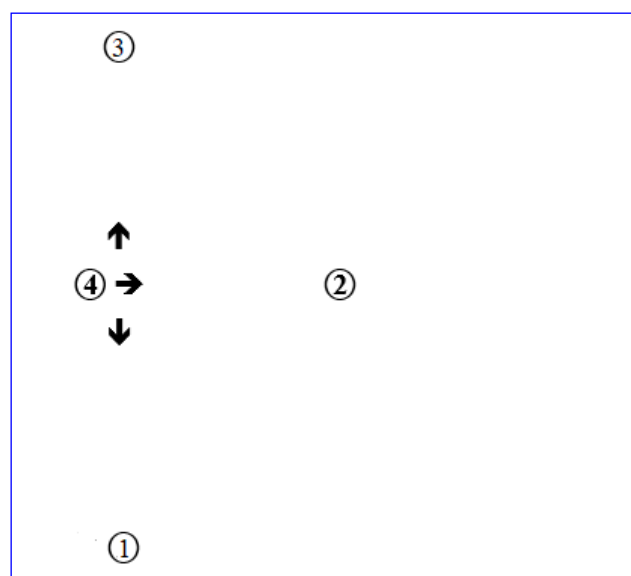
1. *Batting the Oina ball with the paddle at a distance.* The Oina ball is hit with the paddle as in test no. 3 in a corridor 10 meters wide. The ball is thrown with one hand up-vertically at a height of 1.5-2.0 meters, and with the other hand, it is hit with maximum power into the field. On the court, the distance from the hitting line is marked every 50 centimeters. Students are given 3 at-

tempts each and the researcher records all three results in meters with decimals on the research sheet.

2. *Throwing and catching the Oina ball against the wall.* At a distance of 3 meters from the wall, a line is drawn on the floor, where the student is placed with an Oina ball in hand. At the signal (the timer starts) the student throws the ball at the wall, and after the ricochet he must catch it, repeating this exercise at maximum speed 10 times. If the student crosses the throwing line, catching the ball does not count. The ball must be caught after bouncing without touching the floor. The timer stops when the student catches the ball 10 times.

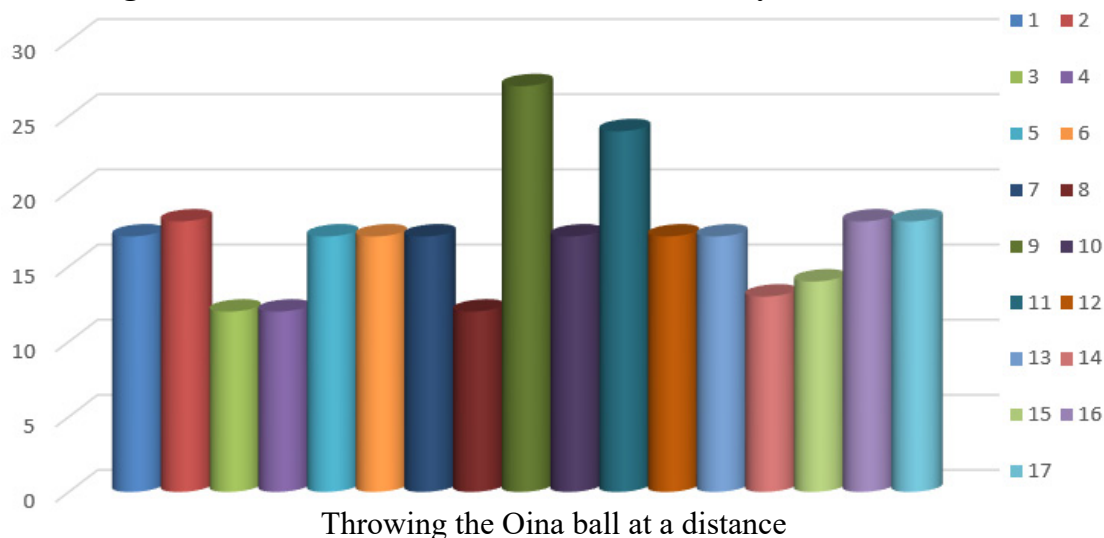
3. *Balls collection, 6x5m shuttle run (sec.).* Four circles are marked or placed on the field as indicated in the drawing below. The student stands in circle no. 4. An Oina ball is placed in circles 1, 2, and 3 each. At the researcher's signal, the student runs at full speed to circle no. 1, takes the ball, and puts it in circle no. 4. He turns to circle no. 2, takes the second ball which he places in circle no. 4, turns to circle no. 3, picks up the ball which he places in circle no. 4. The time in which the student placed the third ball in circle no. 4 is determined.

**Fig. 2. Placement of the circles for Balls collection, 6x5m shuttle run (sec.).**

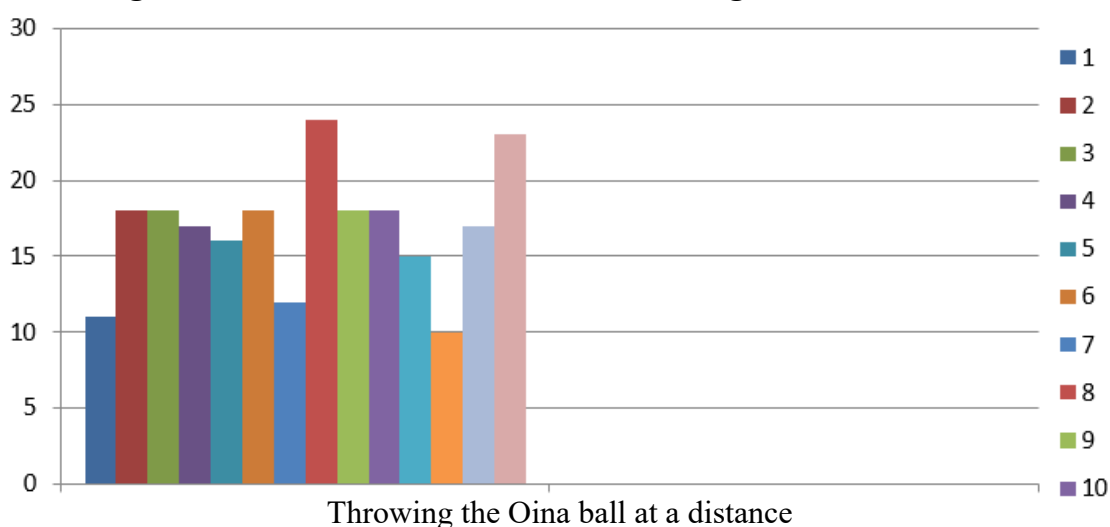


The results of the initial evaluation of Throw the Oina ball at a distance test are shown in Fig. 3 below.

**Fig. 3. Throwing the Oina ball at a distance shot results for boys.**



**Fig. 4. Throwing the Oina ball at a distance shot results for girls.**



Analyzing the results of the distance ball throwing test, it can be seen that the level of development of the explosive force qualities in 4th-grade students is very different for both girls and boys and varies between 8m and 27m for boys and between 10 and 24 meters for girls.

Comparing the results obtained in the experimental classes with the average for the country, we found the following. In the experimental group, only 29.4% of the tested students met the standards of learning efficiency for boys, compared to the national average for this test which, according to our study, is 61%. In the group of girls, 85.7% met the standards, compared to 67%, which represents the percentage of meeting the standards for throwing the mutton ball at a distance at the country level, according to the study conducted with the participation of students from the graduating classes of primary education.

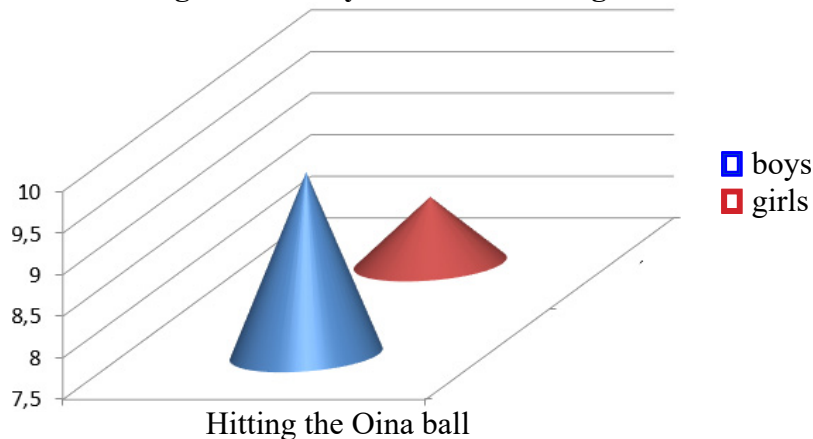
Analyzing the results of the „Throwing the ball at the target” test. We found that, out of the 5 attempts the students had for throwing at the target, 19 students out of the 34 did not hit the target even once, which is 55.9%. Girls showed slightly better results and more than half of them hit the target at least once (18 out of 28). About 35.7% of the girls never hit the target. Out of the total number of students tested, none of them hit all the balls in the target, meaning did not achieve the maximum result.

When hitting the ball with the paddle accurately, the results can be characterized as follows. Only one boy out of 34 and three girls out of 28 who participated in the test did not hit the ball once out of 10 attempts. The best result for both boys and girls was 5 accurate hits. And the average of the results was 2.91 for boys (29.1%) and 2.64 (26.4%) for girls.

Fig. 5 shows the results concerning hitting the ball with the paddle at a distance. The exercise that I proposed to the students for the first time, in other words, an unknown exercise, highlighted the fact that the students have a different levels of motor skills development. The results obtained by the boys in this test – hitting the Oina ball at a distance vary between the values of 1m and 20.5m. For girls, the values vary between 1 m and 17 m.

Fig. 5 shows the average results for boys and girls separately.

**Fig. 5. Average results for the girls’ and boys’ distance batting.**



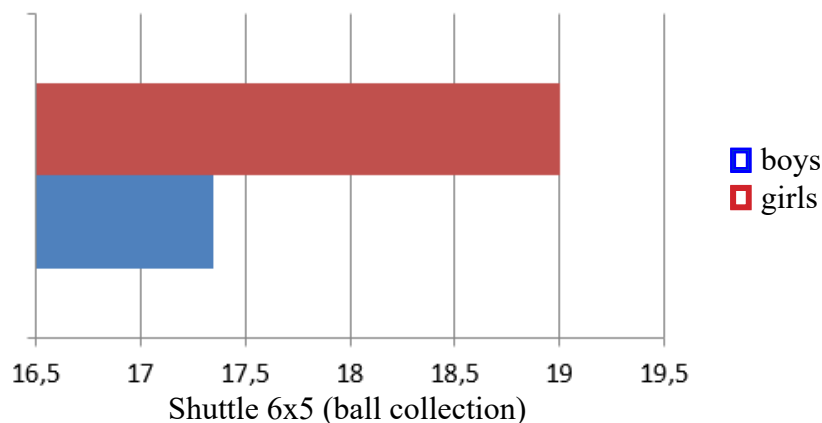
The following two tests were proposed to evaluate speed qualities. Throwing and catching the ball ricocheting off the wall at maximum speed is a test that evaluates the speed of contraction of the muscles of the upper limbs. Here is what we found by analyzing the results obtained:

- The difference between the time the students performed the test the fastest and the worst result among boys is 25.98 sec, and for girls, it is 29.28 sec.
- The average results for boys is 19.76 sec, and for girls it is 22.61 sec.

Carrying out this test requires good motoric coordination qualities, which are completely lacking in most students, for these reasons the difference between the results is very large. Many students during the execution of the test dropped the ball from their hands, for which reason the duration of the test increased suddenly.

Completing the shuttle test, a 6x5 m shuttle run also requires pupils to have high movement coordination. Fig. 6 shows the results of this test, the indicator being measured in seconds with decimals.

**Fig. 6. Average results (sec) in the Shuttle 6x5 m test for boys and girls.**



The time the students took the test varies from 13.14 sec to 22.8 sec – for boys, and from 11.42 sec to 26.4 sec – for girls.

The difference between the weakest and the best result for boys is 9.66 sec, and for girls - 14.98 sec.

Comparing the results, it was found that the value indices in boys are more homogenized, they are less dispersed.

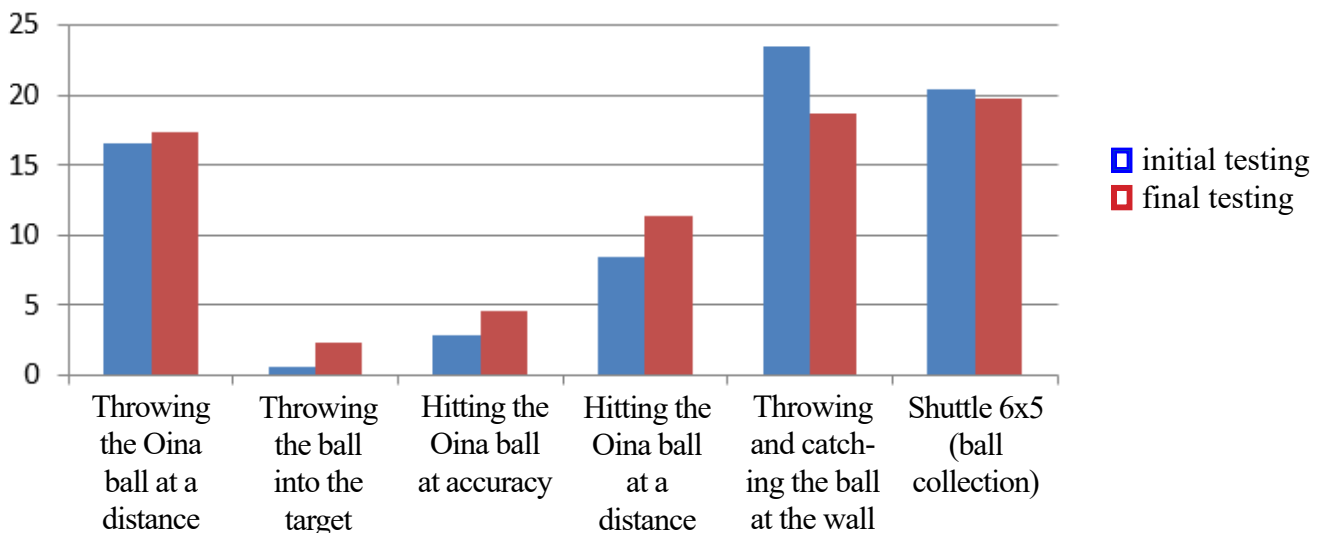
### The dynamics of the results of the special physical training and the acquisition of the technique of the basic technical procedures from Oină by the experimental group

To identify the relevance of using oina elements in physical education lessons in primary education, students in the experimental group were offered several exercises with a small ball and oina elements during the year to correctly learn the technique of their execution. Through movement games with oina elements, the students performed physical exercises to form new skills for handling the ball and the oina stick. At the end of the academic year, the students from the experimental group and the control group once again took the same tests that were included in the initial testing.

Next, the results of the final evaluation will be presented, they will be analyzed and compared with the indicators of the testing carried out at the beginning of the academic year.

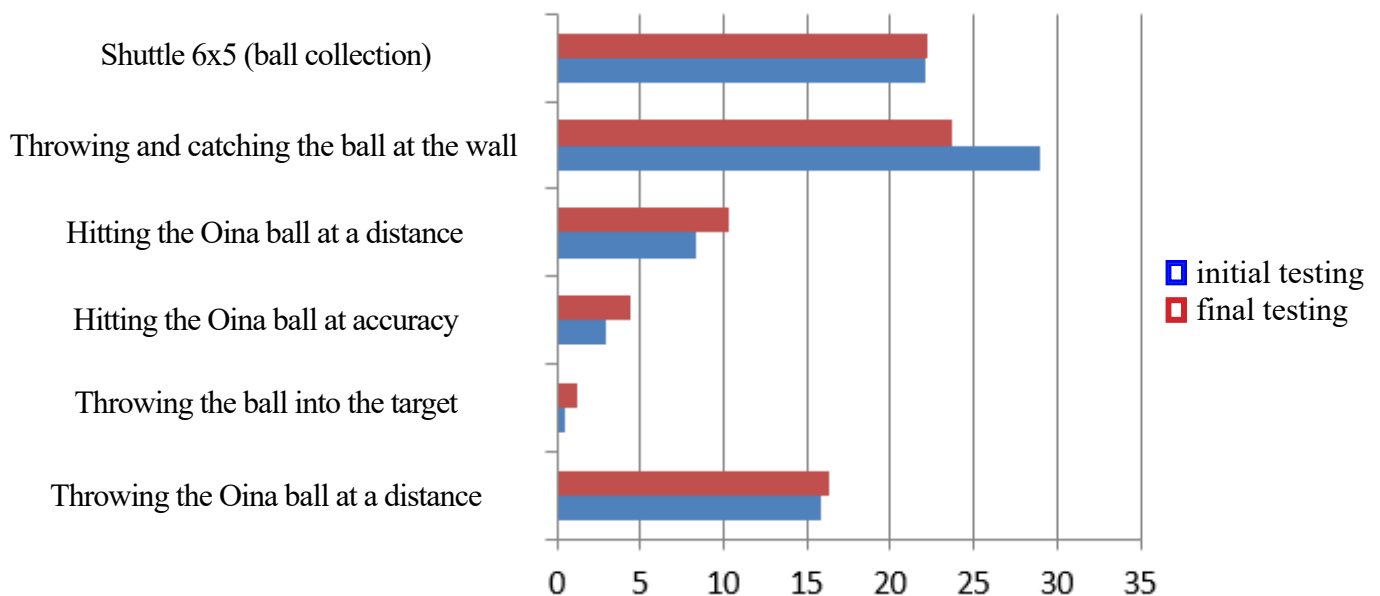
How the mean results for each test obtained by the boys changed are shown in Fig.7.

**Fig. 7. Dynamics of initial and final testing results in the experimental group of boys.**



The mean results for each test obtained by the girls in the experimental group are shown in Fig. 8.

**Fig. 8. Dynamics of initial and final testing results in the experimental group of girls.**



According to the final data obtained in the Naveta test in both girls and boys, an insignificant increase was observed compared to the initial testing. The average results for boys increased by 0.59 sec, and for



girls the result was weaker by 0.03 sec. This fact is explained by the fact that speed skills are very difficult to learn, and progress can be recorded in a longer time. At the same time, it was found that, during the year, the physical education teacher paid less attention to the execution of speed skills development exercises.

A significant increase in results was found in putting the Oina ball at the target and in hitting the Oina ball with the stick in both accuracy and distance. The average of the results when throwing the Oina ball at the target in the group of boys increased 4.4 times and in girls – 2.4 times. We believe that this increase is because for the children these exercises are something new and thus they performed them systematically and with greater interest.

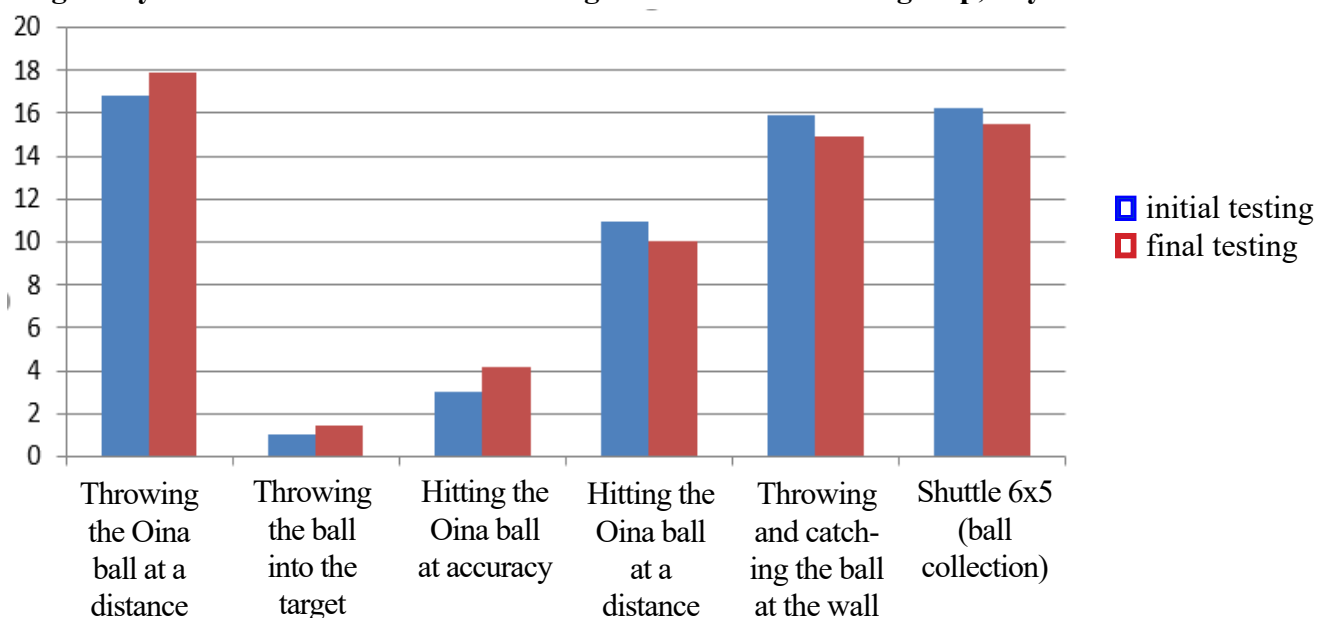
In hitting the Oina ball with the stick accurately, the boys demonstrated a 1.9 times better result in the final evaluation compared to the initial evaluation, and in the experimental group of girls, the average results increased by 1.5 times.

When hitting the Oina ball with a stick at a distance, the results also increased in the boys' group and the girls' group, respectively, by 34.9% and 24.1%.

Throwing and catching the Oina ball at the wall from a distance of 3 m also improved the results, for boys by 25.9% and for girls – by 22.4%.

Fig. 9 and 10 show the results recorded by the pupils in the control group (control).

**Fig. 9. Dynamics of initial and final testing results in the control group, boys.**

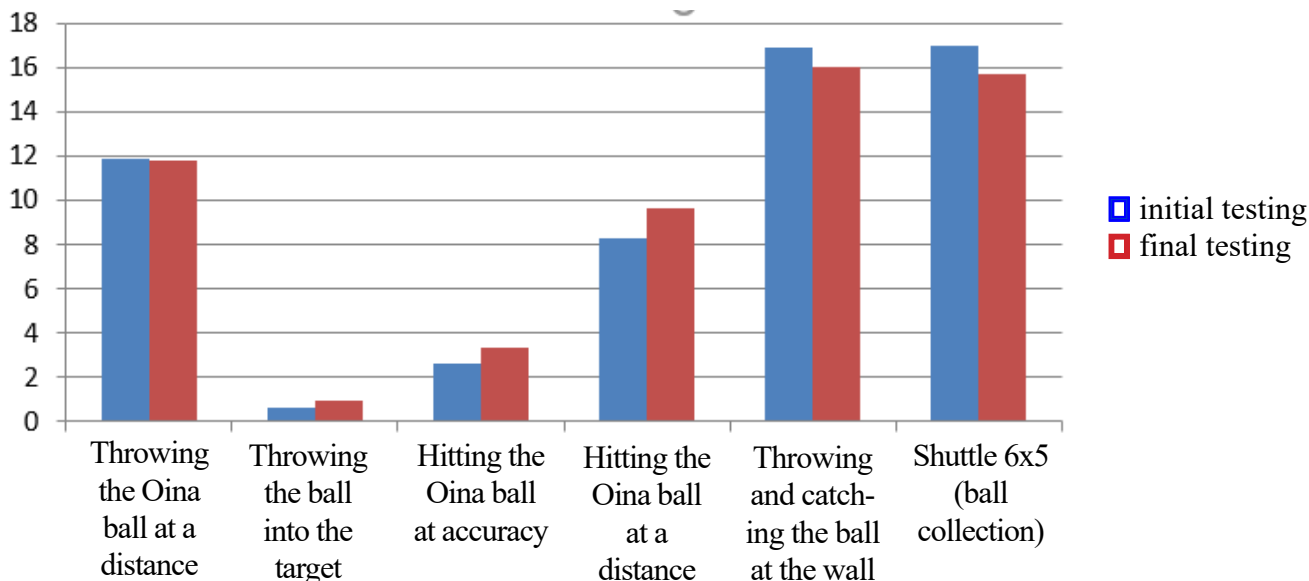


In the control group, boys, following the final assessment, insignificant changes were found in all tests. At the same time, it is necessary to mention that, in the final evaluation of the control group, the average of the results was lower than in the initial evaluation in the test of hitting the Oina ball with the paddle at a distance. The average dropped from 10.96 m to 10.05 m.

The results obtained in the 6 tests in the control group of girls are very close to the results of the initial testing. In the distance oina ball throw test, a very small decrease of 0.05 m in the calculated average is observed, according to the final data compared to the results obtained in the initial testing. In the other tests, a non-significant improvement of the average was found compared to the testing done at the beginning of the academic year. Comparing the test results of the control and experimental groups, we found that the average results from the initial testing are very close in some tests and far apart in others.

For example, in Throwing the ball at a distance, the difference was 0.27 m, in throwing at the target – 0.33 points, in hitting the ball accurately – 0.18 points. When hitting the ball at a distance, the difference was 2.5 m, resulting in the better result being recorded in the control group. Likewise, the best result was demonstrated in the control group and the following two tests: throwing and catching the Oina ball against the wall, the difference being 7.57 sec and 4.16 sec, respectively.

**Fig. 10. Dynamics of initial and final testing results in the control group of girls.**



**Table 1. The difference in the mean values of the test results in the groups experimental and control in boys.**

Tests	Mean results in the experimental group	Mean results in the control group	Difference
Throwing the Oina ball at a distance	16,59	16,86	0,27m
Throwing the ball into the target	0,53	1,06	0,53 points
Ball accuracy	2,82	3,00	0,18 points
Ball hitting distance	8,41	10,96	-2,55 m
Throwing and catching the ball at the wall	23.52	15.95	-7.57 sec
Shuttle 6x5m (ball collection)	20.36	16,20	-4.16 sec

Results obtained in the groups of girls in the initial assessment were included in table 2.

**Table 2. The difference in the mean values of the test results in the groups experimental and control in girls.**

Tests	Mean results in the experimental group	Mean results in the control group	Difference
Long throw	15,86	11,89	3,97m
Throwing the ball into the target	0,50	0,64	0,14 points
Ball accuracy	5,41	4,18	1,23 points
Ball hitting distance	8,29	8,31	-0,02 m
Throwing and catching the ball at the wall	28.99	16.88	-12.11 sec
Shuttle 6x5m (ball collection)	22.15	17.00	-5.15 sec

From the table presented, it can be seen that in three tests in the experimental group, better results were recorded, in hitting the Oina ball accurately, a weaker result, but with an insignificant difference. In Throwing and catching the Oina ball at the wall in time in the control group of girls a better result was recorded with a difference of 12.11 sec. and a difference of 5.15 sec. in the 6x5m shuttle test, also demonstrating a

better result than in the experimental group. At the same time, it is important to mention how these differences have changed following the research on the use of Oina elements in physical education lessons in the 4th grade. For this purpose, the differences in the mean results obtained at the initial assessment and the final assessment in the respective groups were compared.

**Table 3. The difference in the mean results obtained at the initial assessment and the final assessment in the experimental groups compared to the control group.**

Tests	Difference at initial testing	Difference at final testing	Results improvement
<b>boys</b>			
Throwing the Oina ball at a distance	-0,27 m	-0.55 m	-0.28 m
Throwing the ball into the target	-0,53 puncte	0.88	+1.41 points
Ball accuracy	-0,18 puncte	1.23	+1,41 points
Ball hitting distance	-2,55 m	1.30	+3,85 m
Throwing and catching the ball at the wall	-7.57 sec	-3.75	+3,82 m
Shuttle 6x5m (ball collection)	-4.16 sec	-4.24	-0,08 sec
<b>girls</b>			
Throwing the Oina ball at a distance	3,97 m	3.60m	+0,37 m
Throwing the ball into the target	-0,14 puncte	0.28	+0,42 points
Ball accuracy	1,23 puncte	1.07	-0.16 points
Ball hitting distance	-0,02 m	0.68	+0,70 m
Throwing and catching the ball at the wall	-12.11 sec	-7.68	+4,43 sec
Shuttle 6x5m (ball collection)	-5.15 sec	-6.47	-1,32 sec

In the initial evaluation, the results of the control group were mostly higher than in the experimental group. Only in throwing the ball at a distance and hitting the Oinball with the stick accurately in the experimental group of girls, the average results obtained were higher than in the control group.

At the end of the academic year, in the final evaluation, the results were better in the following tests: throwing the ball at the girls' distance (+3.60 m); throwing the ball at the target boys (+0.88 m); throwing the ball at the girls' target (+0.64 m); Hitting the ball accurately for boys (+1.23); Hitting the ball accurately for boys (+1.07).

At the same time, in the tests of throwing and catching the ricocheted ball from the wall and the 6x5m shuttle, although the results in the control groups were better than in the experimental groups and the final evaluation, the difference between the mean results decreased.

Thus, we can conclude that the experimental groups of both boys and girls who practiced elements of Oina during physical education lessons made better progress than the control groups.

### **The impact of the use of Oina elements and movement games specific to the Oina game on the development of primary school students**

The scientific research carried out in the 4th grade of the „Mihai Viteazul” Theoretical High School also produced some changes in the life of the high school. The institution selected for study by the middle school classes the sports game Oina from the module „National sports”, the optional module of the National Curriculum in the discipline Physical Education, edition 2019. In the institution, the word Oina is heard more and more often. The students who did not select the Oina module are curious to touch the ball and the oina stick, which they called the „baseball bat”, to our great regret.

The administration of the institution contributed to the display of a large poster in the gym with images from the Oina game, which pleases the children's eyes. The first Oina competition was held in the institution, after which the children fell in love with our national game Oina.

The most important thing is that the students of the 4th grade, who participated in the scientific research, felt that they acquired some important skills that they will need all their lives.

First of all, they became more dexterous. Carrying out a series of exercises with the Oina ball during physical education lessons, they began to „tame” the Oina, which at first slipped out of their hands very easily. After practicing the Oina elements they noticed that they could surpass themselves in performing precision movements, throwing the oina ball at the target.

Secondly, the students achieved progress in handling the Oina stick, which developed their muscle strength, the ability to coordinate their movements, the precision of the movements, and the ability to synchronize the movements with the partner serving the ball.

Thirdly, the Oina ball exercises contributed to the students’ development of courage. In the first lessons of Oina they were afraid of the Oina ball and often steered clear of it when their partners passed the ball, after learning to catch the ball the students caught it with great pleasure from different positions.

Fourthly, after practicing the movement games with Oina elements, the students started to cooperate better with their colleagues, and teammates in recovering the balls, and in passing the balls accurately. Students began to help each other to win a competition.

Fifth, the students became more persistent in achieving the goals of developing their bodies and helping the team to improve their performance. Relays with Oina elements, throwing the ball at the target, passing the Oina ball, and hitting the ball with the stick, developed children’s competitive spirit, made them more respectful towards the opposing team, more responsible for observing the rules imposed by the game or relays.

Referring to the other tests that the students took at the beginning and the end of the school year as part of the scientific research carried out, we can see that the physiological indices of the students in the experimental group increased, according to the average calculated for the lung volume from 1690 ml to 1846 ml. likewise, the effort capacity of the tested students increased, according to the results of the final evaluation.

The analysis of the research results allows us to conclude that the use of the specific means of the national sports game Oina in physical education lessons contributes to the development of motor skills of primary school students, lays the foundations for the formation of some character traits of the child’s personality and contributes to the good functioning of all systems of the growing body of students of that age.

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## **KNOWLEDGE IN THE STRUCTURE OF CURRICULAR MODULES IN THE DISCIPLINE UNIVERSITY PHYSICAL EDUCATION: FORMATIVE FUNCTIONS**

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It is well known the role of knowledge for learning motor actions, but also the application of knowledge gained in the independent practice of sports in everyday life. Knowledge, in fact, substantiates practical contents in physical education and sports activity. In this context, it is obvious that the small number of hours allocated to the subject of university physical education during a semester, the voluminous and complex contents cannot fully ensure the formation of knowledge specific to the sport test studied (especially when this sport was not studied in school). Thus, teachers are forced to resort to some methods less specific to the subject, and especially ICT tools. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to streamline the educational process in the discipline of university physical education by intensifying the formation of specific knowledge within the modules / sports tests by applying ICT tools. The pedagogical model developed by us for the formation of knowledge in university physical education lessons was applied to first-year students, who opted to study the badminton module, and the results are reflected in this work.

**Keywords:** *physical education, module, specific knowledge, students.*

### **CUNOȘTINȚE ÎN STRUCTURA MODULELOR CURRICULARE LA DISCIPLINA EDUCAȚIE FIZICĂ UNIVERSITARĂ: FUNCȚII FORMATIVE**

Este bine cunoscut rolul cunoștințelor pentru învățarea unor acțiuni motrice, dar și aplicarea cunoștințelor acumulate în practicarea independentă a unor sporturi în cotidian. Cunoștințele, de fapt, fundamentează conținuturile practice în activitatea de educație fizică și sport. În acest context, este evident că numărul mic de ore alocat disciplinei educație fizică universitară pe parcursul unui semestru, conținuturile voluminoase și complexe nu pot asigura pe deplin formarea cunoștințelor specifice probei de sport studiate (în special când acest sport nu a fost studiat în școală). Astfel, cadrele didactice sunt impuse să apeleze la unele metode mai puțin specifice disciplinei și în special la instrumentele TIC. Deci, scopul acestui studiu constă în eficientizarea procesului educațional la disciplina educație fizică universitară prin intensificarea formării cunoștințelor specifice din cadrul modulelor/ probe de sport prin aplicarea instrumentelor TIC. Modelul pedagogic elaborat de noi pentru formarea cunoștințelor în cadrul lecțiilor de educație fizică universitară a fost aplicat studenților anului I, care au optat pentru studierea modulului badminton, iar rezultatele sunt reflectate în această lucrare.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *educație fizică, modul, cunoștințe specifice, studenți.*

#### **Introduction**

The study organized within university physical education, but also the analysis of approaches, concepts and methodologies, created the basis for the reconceptualization of the discipline through modularization, in which a module provides for the study of a sports test during a semester [1, 2, 3]. The teaching-learning of a module or a sports test, according to the physical education curriculum, is oriented towards the formation of competences, and the content units (knowledge and motor skills) are structured so as to fully ensure the achievement of educational goals at the end of the semester [3, 4].

Starting from the notion of competence, „an integrated system of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values acquired, formed and developed through learning, whose mobilization allows the identification and solu-

tion of different problems in various contexts, life situations” [5, p. 68], it is necessary to highlight the role of the compartment (content unit) of knowledge in the modules designed in the curriculum for the discipline of university physical education and how these contents provide training/development of general and specific skills in students involved in the educational process.

From the analysis of specialized literature, we highlight some concepts of authors who argue the functions and value of knowledge in the educational process in the discipline of physical education.

The authors Sava Panfil and Ilescu Silvia consider that within the discipline of physical education, in addition to specific practical activities, knowledge training activities are necessary, stating that „the knowledge acquired by the student as a result of teaching certain concrete theoretical subjects contributes to the formation of visions, ideas, concepts, beliefs and motivation to actively and systematically practice physical exercises for various purposes” [6, page 12]. In the same vein, the same authors mention that knowledge is the information presented by the teacher during practical activities that guide the subject to correctly understand the structure of movements to fulfill the technically correct element, procedure, exercise.

In Oprescu Daniel’s opinion [6, pg. 308] „specialized theoretical knowledge has a primary role in awareness of practicing physical exercises”, and he mentions that „knowledge involves reflecting in the subjects’ consciousness the phenomena proper to physical education and sports activities, reflection in the form of perceptions, representations, actions or principles”.

Generalizing these statements, we summarize that the dimension of knowledge (general and specific) transcribed in the curricular modules of the university physical education discipline reflects and substantiates the practical contents, and through the acquisition by the student of the specific terminology from physical education or sports will positively influence the learning process, especially the movements specific to sports in practical lessons. At the same time, the knowledge gained by students will streamline communication between participants in the educational process, with direct impact on individual daily activities, where the student is willing to practice certain sports.

In previously published papers [2, 4, 8] we mentioned that by the number of hours allocated to education for one semester (15 hours transcribed in the curricula) it is very difficult to form elementary skills of independent practice of a sport, in which the practice and formation of an automated technique of movement is left to the student through individual activities, and specific knowledge is superficially internalized, in some cases it is not even addressed, these realities cannot fully ensure the achievement of educational goals.

Although in the specialized literature several authors refer to the application of verbal and intuitive methods (explanation, demonstration, etc.) for transmitting knowledge while performing exercises or technical-tactical actions, we find that they are insufficient. This is argued by the fact that in motor activities, the effort made during practical lessons causes physical and mental fatigue, which reduces the student’s ability to concentrate, so he is not able to receive, analyze and assimilate sufficiently the information transmitted by the teacher.

We emphasize that curricular contents are organized in a complex learning program (designed in the curriculum of the university physical education discipline) that fully corresponds to the 4 fundamental criteria of modular instruction theory [3, p. 477], and the teacher is given the freedom to diversify learning situations for competence formation.

From the above, it is necessary to characterize the structure of a module of the physical education curriculum of Moldova State University and especially of the knowledge component.

The knowledge component is divided into two parts, such as general knowledge and specific knowledge [2, 4]. The *general knowledge* in the curricular module includes those subjects that ensure the continuous course of the physical education discipline from the lower stages of education developing notions, definitions, peculiarities, legalities (e.g. hardening and physical development of the human body, self-assessment and self-control, etc.) and *specific knowledge*, with themes from the history of the sports test, regulation, technique and tactics specific to the sports test. They are meant to form in-depth perceptions, and, unlike the approach of these topics in school physical education, in higher education institutions they are oriented towards motivating and training the habit of independent practice of this sport, self-training, but also the organization of specific activities in daily life. This volume of information in a small number

of hours cannot be assimilated, therefore, in order to streamline the teaching-learning process of module-specific knowledge, it is necessary to use ICT tools.

*The purpose* of this study is to streamline the educational process in the discipline of university physical education by intensifying the formation of specific knowledge within the modules / sports tests by applying ICT tools.

In order to achieve the goal, the following objectives are proposed: analysis of bibliographic sources on methodological approaches to form knowledge in physical education lessons; elaboration of the methodology for forming knowledge specific to curricular modules of the university physical education discipline by applying ICT tools; application of the methodology for forming knowledge specific to modules in the educational process to the discipline of physical education with first-year students.

### **Concept and methodology**

The arguments mentioned above, as well as the previous teaching experience, were the basis for starting a formative experiment, which was organized during one semester with the first year students (116 students) of the Faculty of Letters of Moldova State University. As a tool of ICT for the formation of specific knowledge of the curricular module, the university educational platform „Moodle” was selected. The choice of the „Moodle” platform for teaching-evaluating specific knowledge in the discipline of physical education, besides being an educational tool institutionalized by Moldova State University, is argued by the following specific aspects:

- sufficient number of tools for operationalization, accessible to students;
- access to the platform in Romanian, Russian, English;
- adopted for all electronic devices;
- flexibility in the educational process;
- effective communication between participants, etc.

At the beginning of the experiment, the university physical education course was reconceptualized and placed on the „Moodle” platform with content divided into blocks, topics and activities. The blocks consist of the general one and subjects on modules (in our case on sports trials). In the general block are placed general resources (curricula, timetable, methodologies, etc.) and the forum, through which teachers and students can open topics for debate. In the construction of a subject for the study of a module/sports test, tools such as the file (in which the general course for the knowledge specific to the studied sport test is placed), the link (which directs the student to complementary resources, e.g. video material, etc.) and the test for assessing the knowledge specific to the module/sports test are applied.

The second stage, in addition to informing about how to obtain the grade admitted to the discipline, students were trained on the new way of forming knowledge specific to the sports module/test, giving it freedom and flexibility for individual study on the educational platform „Moodle”. At the same time, for an efficiency of the educational process, the student was proposed the following rules:

- will have access to module-specific materials throughout the semester;
- will be able to initiate group discussions in the forum but also individually with the teacher;
- carry out the specific knowledge test individually and remotely, but the time allocated for completion will be limited;
- the period for carrying out the test is the period of assessment test I;
- for validation of the test, it is necessary to accumulate 5 points;
- the points accumulated in the specific knowledge test will influence the grade at the end of the semester.

*At the third stage, the methodology of knowledge formation was applied by applying the educational platform „Moodle” to first-year students, who, according to the curricular provisions, opted to study the badminton module in physical education classes.*

### **Results and discussion**

The students participating in the formative experiment accepted the new methodology of knowledge formation in the discipline of university physical education and demonstrated openness and curiosity for



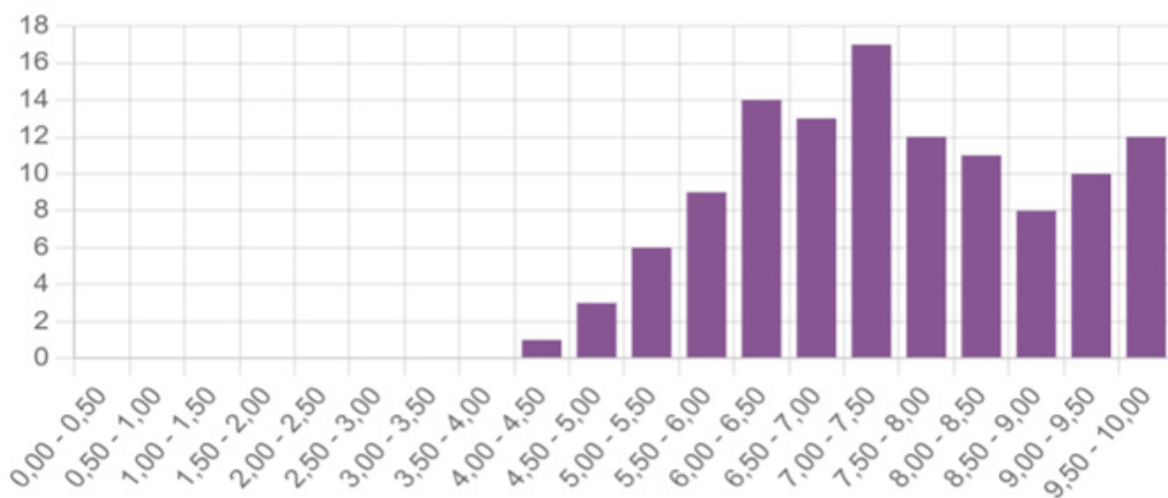
the activities started. This is because, in addition to the freedom to independently study the materials and to carry out the module-specific knowledge test during the time they consider it appropriate, they were also informed about how to obtain the grade admitted to the discipline at the beginning of the semester.

Our ultimate goal being the formation of module-specific skills, it is necessary to analyze more broadly the level of specific knowledge formed during the semester in the students participating in the experiment. As mentioned above, this methodology was applied to students who opted to study the badminton module and the results are reflected in the data centralizer offered by the educational platform „Moodle” (figure 1, 2 and 3).

From figure 1 we see that 22 students (18.9%) obtained values between 9 and 10 points and 19 students (14.5%) obtained values between 8 and 9 points. It attests that almost a third of the students participating in the experiment demonstrated cognitive skills at a very good level.

Almost half of the students who completed the questionnaire (48.8%) demonstrated knowledge at a good level, where 29 students (25%) accumulated values between 7 and 8 points and 27 students (23.2%) accumulated between 6 and 7 points. A much smaller number of 15 students (12.9%), after completing the knowledge test specific to the badminton module demonstrated a sufficient level, obtaining values between 5 and 6 points.

**Fig. 1. Number of students in the point ranges obtained on knowledge testing Badminton module specific.**



Unfortunately, 4 students (3.5%) did not check the correct options to accumulate 5 points, being evaluated with insufficient grade. It should be noted that students who did not take the test at a sufficient level were proposed ways for recovery.

In order to identify in which subjects from the specific knowledge compartment of the badminton module students encounter difficulties for assimilation, it was necessary to make an analysis of the items proposed in the evaluation test, presented in figure 2.

The construction of the classical test includes 8 items, of which (figure 2):

- 2 items on the history of badminton;
- 3 items from the rules of the game;
- 3 items from the technical content of the game (game-specific moves).

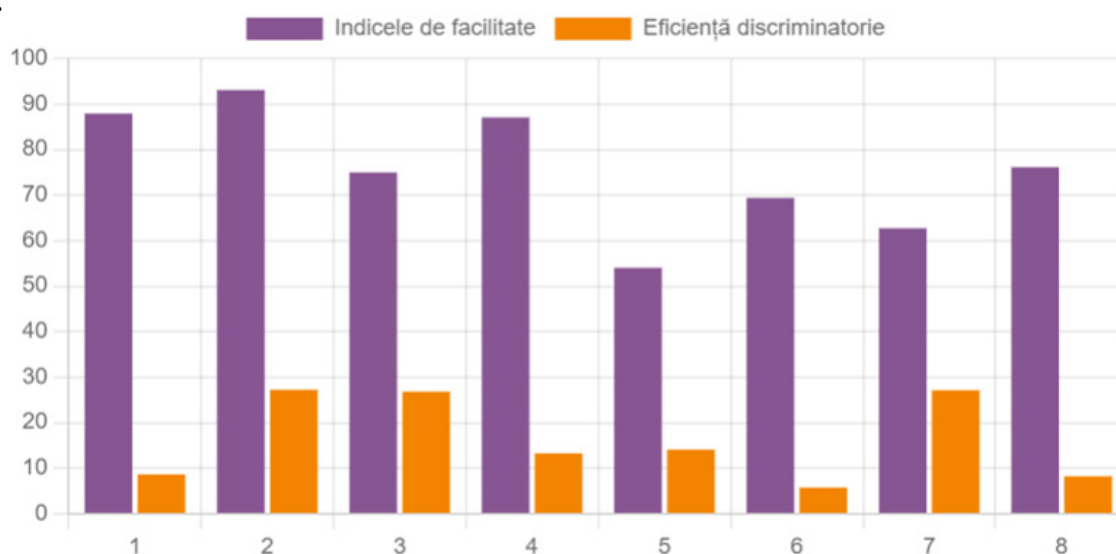
From figure 2 and 3 we see that the Facility Indicators to identify the correct answer by the student is, on average, over 75%, and the discriminatory efficiency index is below the level of 20%, which indicates that the test gives the student the opportunity to easily obtain the minimum required points.

The same indicators of figures 2 and 3, related to the analysis of the test, highlight the fact that, from the specific knowledge contents, respondents have difficulties in acquiring content related to the rules of the game (fouls in the game of badminton) and specific terminology (classification of shots in the game of badminton). These data, in order to achieve the educational goals by the student, provide the teacher with guidelines for reconfiguring the educational process in practical lessons, which shows the need to give more time to acquire the rules of the game and the specific terminology of the badminton technique.

**Fig. 2. Analysis of the structure of the badminton module specific knowledge questionnaire**

Q#	Denumirea întrebării	Încercări	Indicele de facilitate	Deviație standard	Scor ghicit aleatoriu	Pondere intenționată	Pondere efectivă	Indicele discriminării	Eficiență discriminatorie
1	istoria jocului badminton	116	87,93%	32,72%	50,00%	10,00%	9,28%	5,17%	8,68%
2	Badmintonul în programul Jocurilor Olimpice	116	93,10%	25,45%	20,00%	10,00%	8,54%	12,85%	27,28%
3	Reguli de joc	116	75,00%	43,49%	20,00%	10,00%	14,12%	19,96%	26,86%
4	Durata partidei de badminton	116	87,07%	33,70%	25,00%	10,00%	10,05%	8,52%	13,29%
5	Faulturile în jocul de badminton	116	54,06%	30,83%		10,00%	10,07%	13,83%	14,12%
6	Tehnica jocului de badminton	116	69,40%	32,49%		10,00%	9,26%	5,39%	5,79%
7	Clasificarea loviturilor în jocul de badminton	116	62,74%	31,81%	33,33%	20,00%	19,86%	26,50%	27,16%
8	Deplasările în jocul de badminton	116	76,15%	34,56%		20,00%	18,82%	7,03%	8,26%

**Fig. 3. Positions of questions in the structure of the test by knowledge specific to the badminton module.**



Regarding the results of the assessment of knowledge specific to the badminton module, in general, out of the 116 students only 4 of them did not accumulate the minimum required of 5 points, which is 96.5% successful for the specific knowledge component. It is also worth mentioning that at the second evaluation, which reflects the formation of motor skills specific to the game of badminton, all 112 students who took the module-specific knowledge test, demonstrated a very good level of mastery of technical-tactical actions in badminton as a result of which they obtained the grade „admitted” at the end of the semester.

**In conclusion**, we state that:

- the knowledge specific to sports modules/tests in the curriculum of the discipline Physical Education aims to streamline the educational process and the acquisition by students of notions, specific terms will directly influence the formation of skills/abilities to practice the studied sport;
- by intensifying the teaching-learning-assessment of module-specific knowledge in the university physical education lesson, by applying ICT tools, it will lead to the efficiency of the educational process (formation of specific competences), in the context of allocating a small volume of hours for the subject during a semester;

- ICT tools applied in the educational process of the physical education discipline offer the student full freedom to acquire the knowledge specific to the sports modules / tests practiced during the lessons;
- the results of the questionnaires for assessing the knowledge specific to the modules, following the analysis by the teacher, offer the possibility to build an efficient path of acquiring sports tests at the level of training of the group of students, or for each student.

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## THE ROLE OF CREATIVE-EXPRESSIVE TECHNIQUES IN UNLOCKING INTRINSIC MOTIVATION FOR LEARNING – GENERAL HUMAN NEED

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Although the decrease in motivation for study occupies an important place among the concerns of researchers in the field of education, who have revolutionized the methodology, didactic technologies, work strategies, this article draws attention to the importance of awareness of the causes of the decrease in intrinsic motivation for learning. The study puts above the treatment of the effects, the identification of the causes and the creation of didactic technologies based on expressive-creative techniques in order to unlock some installed resistance mechanisms, which can block the personal development of the adolescent student and implicitly of this general human need, learning.

**Keywords:** *learning motivation, personality, adolescent, Self, Gestalt.*

### ROLUL TEHNICILOR EXPRESIV-CREATIVE ÎN DEBLOCAREA MOTIVAȚIEI INTRINSECI PENTRU ÎNVĂȚARE – NEVOIE GENERAL UMANĂ

Deși scăderea motivației pentru studiu ocupă un loc important în rândul preocupărilor cercetătorilor din domeniul educației care au revoluționat metodologia, tehnologiile didactice, strategiile de lucru, prezentul articol atrage atenția asupra importanței conștientizării cauzelor scăderii motivației intrinsece pentru învățare. Studiul pune mai presus decât tratarea efectelor, identificarea cauzelor și creionarea de tehnologii didactice bazate pe tehnici expresiv-creative în vederea deblocării unor mecanisme de rezistență instalate, care pot bloca dezvoltarea personală a elevului adolescent și implicit a acestei nevoi general-umane, învățarea.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *motivația pentru învățare, personalitate, adolescent, sine, Gestalt.*

#### Methods

The data collection included methods such as: using the database of online search engines to identify known works in terms of personality and how its development leaves its mark on the development and implicitly the motivation of learning in adolescent students, the identification of documents relevant as a result of searches based on publications included in the academic database, the analysis of references cited in certain publications encountered in the research process, as well as the consultation of specialized journals.

#### Introduction

By reference to the Gestalt theory regarding personality, resistance mechanisms are identified that block the development of the person in accordance with their own needs and also limit access to self-knowledge and implicitly block the activation of intrinsic motivation for learning, a need felt by each of us, representing the factor responsible for eliminating uncertainties from our life. Levels to be followed in the self-discovery action were also highlighted, such as self-knowledge, autonomy, anxiety as a state, the development of creativity, imperative needs at the age of adolescence.

The didactic technologies through which personal insight activities can be carried out are considered to be based on discrete activities, which activate the „child in us”, thus allowing the adolescent student self-knowledge and the discovery of the desire for study.

We find the concept of motivation in psychology from the beginning, being considered a stimulation and an energetic discharge according to Freud (1900, Lorenz (1937) or Huli (1943); by other authors it is seen as a reaction learned by association with a stimulus, this being a behaviorist conception, or, according to Brown (1979), being seen as the psychological factor that has influence on behavior. Motivation is also seen as spontaneous action energizing the organism and explains the transition from rest to action according to Hebb's theory (1955) [Hebb, apud 6, p. 151].

As far as motivation is concerned, a particularly important aspect is the analysis of desires, because they are references to the discovery of the motivational basis of the individual. Desires are not ends in themselves, but they can be seen as ways to achieve them. It is important to take into account what a person wants and once the wishes are understood and satisfied, we can support and encourage the development of motivation on certain levels [1, p. 66-67].

We consider it an utopia to expect the student to want to learn the contents of all curricular areas, to show his desire to spend most of his time reading, especially at the age of adolescence when the limitation of personal freedom by imposing activities constitutes a threat to the level of personal autonomy. Although learning represents a general human need, it is imperative to understand that it is not produced only by transmitting and explaining contents by means, which have recently been given a great deal of interest, given the fact that there are a multitude of methods and learning aids designed to stimulate the student's intrinsic motivation for learning. However, we conclude that the adolescent student's intrinsic motivation to learn has not increased.

We will start from the idea that learning is a general human need [7], but why it did not develop harmoniously and why it does not manifest itself accordingly? We believe that the answers can be multiple and we do not believe that searching for all these answers can solve this problem. Regardless of what the causes might be, we assume that the objective is to unlock this need, which he possesses, at the level of the adolescent student's personality.

According to the humanist theory, the person has many means of healing, without accessing the factors that were the basis of the production of certain disorders, as long as he manages to update himself, to be present in the „present”.

Alfred Binet was the one who experienced the application of the principles of psychotherapy in the educational field, thus giving birth to the idea of educational counseling, which, although initially manifested only at the school level, was later extended to other actors involved – parents, support groups, permanent education [Rogers, apud 2]. In this context, we believe that there could be the possibility of expanding the counseling at the level of the student class, but we are not referring here to the counseling of the student by the head teacher, but we believe that it is necessary to create didactic technologies that allow discovery by favoring insight and thus to improve the unlocking of intrinsic motivation for learning.

We assume that the students have wrongly introjected the idea of learning given the fact that it is associated with the idea of rigorous evaluation, in Romania the idea of competence being strictly associated with grading, which is perceived as punishment.

We will review the gestalt approach to the human personality that we will extend to the school level. Holism, a concept emphasized by gestaltism, approaches the person as a system, within which any element can affect another and implicitly the entire personality system, but this system only develops in relation to the environment, practically through contact with reality. „Contact is made through all the senses – sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, movement, etc. After experiencing the contact, it is necessary to integrate the information „gathered” from the environment. Contact means enrichment and, at the same time, change. A good contact, (unitary, healthy, holistic) means relating to the environment and others without losing the sense of one's own identity [2 p.107].

The problem we are taking into account is related to the resistances that actors involved in the learning process and implicitly in education can show, resistances that are related to the fact that the person avoids the real, authentic relationship with reality, with the actions carried out in the present. Thus we will address resistances that intervene in establishing an effective contact with the environment.

Introjection, which is actually the assimilation by people of values and norms taken from other people considered role models, without them being passed through the filter of the mind, distorting the self-image and implicitly the path of personal development in accordance with one's own needs. If we extend this concept to the level of the adolescent student's mental life, we can deduce that self-knowledge is one of the important elements of discovering one's own meaning and implicitly unlocking real needs, among which, as we mentioned, learning is also included. It is well known that through the gadgets that students in Romania have permanent access to there are models, which most of the time do not present a realistic image,

with which they associate and thus introject certain norms that can guide them on a route that they do not identify.

Projection is another resistance mechanism through which the person does not assume their own failures, projecting them onto other people.

We can consider that a certain level of personal autonomy can lead the adolescent to assume intra- and interpersonal control. A study carried out in Romania in 2022 highlights the importance of developing the autonomy of the adolescent student, demonstrating the fact that this has a direct link with the increase in school performance.[4]. We believe that next to autonomy, anxiety towards test situations, evaluation represents another problem that could lead to projection.

Retroflection „describes the general process of denying, restraining, restraining or balancing the impulsive tension with the opposite sensorial-notorious tension” [Mitrofan I, apud 2, p. 108], representing another means of resistance that leads to blocking expressiveness and implicitly spontaneity, thus leading to stiffening. This effect is also well known among teenage students in Romania, and in this sense, we believe that we can combat „rigidity” by developing the student’s creativity. We believe that simple programs can be developed for the development of creativity, which can be carried out both in a formal and non-formal setting.

Research from other parts of the world demonstrates that creativity skills can be improved following deliberate training, with effect sizes ranging in magnitude from moderate to large [Bott, Quintin, Saggar, Kienitz, & Royalty, 2014; Byrge and Tang, 2015; Karpova, Marcetti, & Barker, 2011; Kienitz et al., 2014; May, 2006; Perry & Karpova, 2017 ; Scott, Leritz, & Mumford, 2004 apud 5]. These beneficial effects have been demonstrated for training programs in a number of modalities, settings, target populations, and durations, with some training regimens lasting only a few days [West, Tateishi, Wright, & Fonoimoana, 2012 apud 5] or, in some cases , only one session [Ding, Tang, Tang, & Posner, 2014 apud 5].

Another resistance factor, confluence, draws attention to the need to establish boundaries between self and others, thus preventing effective relationships with others. We believe that the adolescent student must be trained in order to learn assertive communication strategies and thus outline a social self that allows him to develop in accordance with his own needs. Thus, we can also combat another resistance factor mentioned by gestaltism - deflection. We believe that the idea of Self must be addressed multilaterally (physically, socially, emotionally, academically), in order to satisfy the need for self-knowledge and effective communication.

At a theoretical level, we believe that the resistance factors find a solution, but the problem is put into a concrete, practical plan. How can we awaken awareness and implicitly self-knowledge (Self), autonomy, awareness and amelioration of anxiety states in front of evaluation situations, presence in the present? By means of informing the adolescent student, we believe that we can awaken the idea of the problem, of stigmatization, therefore the means and technologies of intervention must reach the same level at which the resistances are, the subconscious and implicitly the unconscious. We believe that it is necessary to develop didactic technologies based on expressive-creative techniques through which the adolescent student can have access to his needs and thus develop mechanisms through which to create his desires in accordance with his own needs. Expressive-creative techniques have the role of reaching the „child in him” and thus unlocking the hidden potential and needs.

## **Conclusions**

Expressive-creative techniques have a special role in shaping the Self of each of us because they encourage awareness, awaken the senses through immediate, authentic experiences, participate in self-discovery. In the adolescent, individuation as well as separation is identified as a major task. Violet Oaklander draws attention to the need for the experience itself, direct and does not underline the fact that it is not the discussion, or better said the explanations, that determine the change. The child experiences situations through play, or other techniques perceived as play, these constituting important sources of awareness of different parts of them, in a way that cannot be expressed in words most of the time [3]. We believe that it is necessary to identify methods from the spectrum of activities carried out with young children, to adapt them

to the contents corresponding to high school students and thus to awaken blocked needs and eliminate installed resistances, among which is the imperative need for learning, because we all we feel the need to eliminate uncertainties from our lives, and this fact can only be achieved through knowledge. In conclusion, we believe that we need to treat the cause, not the effects, and one of the causes of the decrease in intrinsic motivation for learning could be represented by the distance from one's own Self. By treating the Self through self-discovery, autonomy, anxiety as a state, the development of creativity, we can break unconscious barriers and awaken repressed needs such as the need for learning.

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## THE STUDY OF VARIABLE STARS WITHIN EXTRACURRICULAR ASTRONOMY ACTIVITIES

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This paper presents the impact of extracurricular astronomy activities, with a special focus on the study of variable stars, on the development of students' investigative competence. Involving 55 students from grades VI-XII in the Republic of Moldova, the extracurricular activities combined theory with practice, using modern technologies for astronomical observations and data analysis. The students were introduced to the use of astronomical equipment and software necessary for conducting detailed analyses of variable stars. The results showed a significant improvement in understanding and applying scientific concepts, as well as an increase in digital skills and critical thinking. The article highlights the value of interdisciplinarity and innovative approaches in scientific education, providing a valuable model for enhancing educational programs through practical activities and direct interactions with scientific phenomena.

**Keywords:** *astronomy, variable stars, extracurricular activities, astronomical observations, investigative competence, scientific education, interdisciplinarity.*

### STUDIUL STELELOR VARIABILE ÎN CADRUL ACTIVITĂȚILOR EXTRAȘCOLARE DE ASTRONOMIE

Această lucrare prezintă impactul activităților extrașcolare de astronomie, cu un accent special pe studiul stelelor variabile, asupra dezvoltării competenței investigaționale a elevilor. Prin implicarea a 55 de elevi din clasele VI-XII din Republica Moldova, activitățile extrașcolare au combinat teoria cu practica, folosind tehnologii moderne pentru observații astronomice și analiza datelor. Elevii au fost inițiați în utilizarea echipamentelor astronomice și a softurilor necesare pentru a efectua analize detaliate ale stelelor variabile. Rezultatele au demonstrat o îmbunătățire semnificativă a înțelegerii și aplicării conceptelor științifice, precum și o creștere a competențelor digitale și a gândirii critice. Articolul subliniază valoarea interdisciplinarității și a abordărilor inovatoare în educația științifică, oferind un model valoros pentru îmbunătățirea programelor educaționale prin activități practice și interacțiuni directe cu fenomenele științifice.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *astronomie, stele variabile, activități extrașcolare, observații astronomice, competență investigațională, educație științifică, interdisciplinaritate.*

#### Introduction

Astronomy is a fundamental science that not only reveals information about our vast and dynamic universe but also serves as a powerful educational tool, stimulating curiosity and inspiring critical thinking. Engaging students in the study of astronomy can have a profound impact on their perception of science and technology and can motivate students' future scientific career choices.

Variable stars are stars that change their brightness regularly or irregularly over periods of time due to physical processes occurring inside or on the surface of the star. There are also variable stars whose brightness changes due to the mutual eclipsing of two stars in a binary system or because of physical processes related to their rotation [8, p. 89].

Their study not only contributes to the understanding of the universe but can also stimulate interest in science and astronomy among students. Extracurricular activities provide a flexible and dynamic framework through which students can explore scientific subjects outside the standard curriculum.

These activities allow students to learn through investigation and to deepen their understanding of complex concepts and notions, such as those in astronomy, in a flexible and dynamic environment [7].

Astronomy extracurricular activities, which include astronomical observations and data analysis, offer



a practical and interactive learning experience, stimulating students' interest and involvement in scientific research.

The study of variable stars within these activities allows for the exploration of interdisciplinary connections, from physics and mathematics to information technology, presenting science in an integrative manner and promoting a holistic understanding of the world.

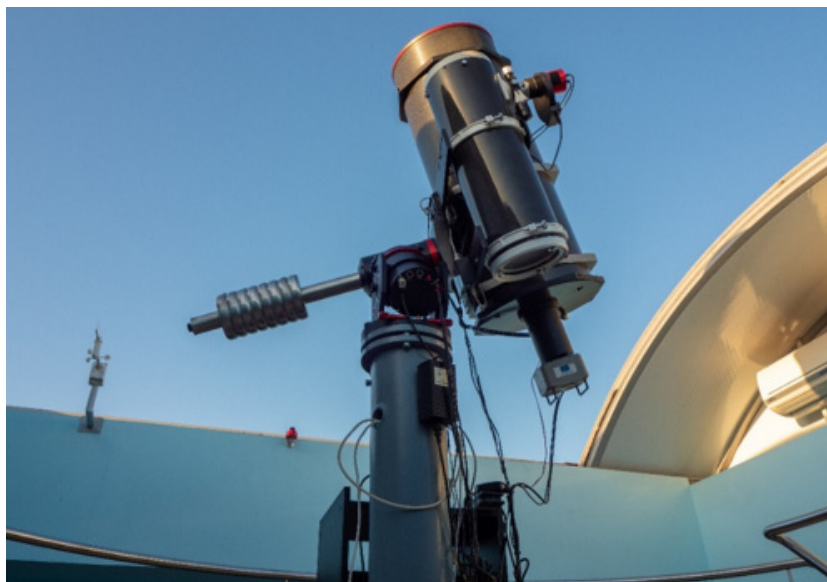
Furthermore, these activities can be an effective pedagogical tool for the development of students' investigative competence, providing an attractive alternative to traditional learning methods.

### Methods and Materials

In the study of variable stars, 55 students from grades VI – XII, coming from different schools in the Republic of Moldova, were involved. These students formed the experimental group in a pedagogical experiment aimed at the formation of investigative competence, which took place from February to August 2023.

They were engaged in both theoretical and practical extracurricular astronomy activities, including the study of variable stars. All activities were conducted online within the Astronomical Observatory of the „Răsvan Angheluță” Natural Sciences Museum Complex in Galați, using Google Meet [5] and AnyDesk Remote Desktop applications [2] (Fig. 1.).

**Fig. 1. The Astronomical Observatory of the „Răsvan Angheluță” Natural Sciences Museum Complex Galați.**



Source: © O. Tercu

These applications facilitated the remote conduct of astronomical observations, as well as the reduction and analysis of scientific data by students. Within the theoretical component of the investigative competence training program, various courses were organized, including those focused on the classification and observation methods of variable stars. Throughout the practical activities, students were trained to use the astronomical observatory's equipment, including the telescope and the CCD camera. During the astronomical observation sessions, students acquired skills in selecting variable stars, using resources offered by The International Variable Star Index (VSX) webpage. They were also introduced to determining the optimal exposure time and configuring the CCD camera for acquiring uncalibrated images, using the MaxIm DL program [4].

An important component of the practical training included the calibration of images by applying master flat, master dark, and master bias frames, using the same program. During the practical activities, images from the database of the Galați Astronomical Observatory were used so that students could become familiar with using the AstroImageJ (AIJ) software for photometric data reduction [3]. They also learned to use the

Peranso [6] and VStar [1] programs for light curve analysis, including determining the period, epoch, and the minimum and maximum brightness of variable stars.

To facilitate independent investigations, students were given images from the astronomical observatory's database, which they could use utilizing AstroImageJ and VStar on their personal computers. The assessment of the knowledge, skills, habits, and abilities acquired by students in the study of variable stars was conducted through a research project. To accomplish this task, students were provided with images from the observatory's database, the title and structure of the project, as well as the necessary bibliography. The evaluation of these projects was carried out using the grades: „Very Good”, „Good”, „Satisfactory”, and „Unsatisfactory”.

### Results and Discussions

During the extracurricular activities, students analyzed scientific data on variable stars. Table 1 presents some of the results obtained together with the students:

**Table 1. Scientific results obtained during extracurricular activities.**

Numele Stelei	Perioada (zile)	Epoca (HJD)	Minimul Luminozități	Maximul Luminozități
ASASSN-V J133717.40+653116.6	0.066858 +/- 0.005473	2459653.290	15.03 +/- 0.01 R	14.74 +/- 0.01 R
GSC 02456-00517	0.060258 +/- 0.008159	2459658.427	11.13 +/- 0.001 V	11.11 +/- 0.001 V
2MASS J23581334+5038031	0.125471 +/- 0.000082	2459100.295	11.26 +/- 0.005 V	11.20 +/- 0.006 V
2MASS J00004537+5857083	0.099553 +/- 0.000001	2459440.396	12.39 +/- 0.004 V	12.35 +/- 0.006 V

The analysis of light curves of variable stars highlighted the students' ability to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical context. Furthermore, the efficient use of software for data reduction and analysis emphasized the students' remarkable adaptability to modern research methods.

Extracurricular activities demonstrated the effectiveness of combining theory with practice in stimulating students' interest and investigative competence. The results obtained from these activities underline the importance of integrating technology and practical research into education. Through direct involvement in observations and analyses, students acquired not just scientific knowledge, but also developed critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

This approach can serve as a model for improving scientific educational programs in schools and universities. Extracurricular activities have proven their efficiency in achieving the goal of developing investigative competence as students have shown a significant increase in understanding of astronomy concepts as well as skills, abilities in using astronomical equipment, and software for the reduction and analysis of scientific data. Although extracurricular activities have yielded positive results, there are limitations in the Republic of Moldova related to students' access to equipment for conducting astronomical observations.

The necessary equipment, such as telescopes, CCD cameras, and other specialized instruments, can be costly and are not available in schools. Conducting remote astronomical observations requires a good internet connection and suitable IT equipment. Students in areas with poorly developed IT infrastructure or with limited access to high-speed internet may have difficulties in accessing and using remote telescopes. Additionally, it would be beneficial to explore ways in which these learning methods can be adapted to be more inclusive and accessible to a broader spectrum of students.

Extracurricular activities represent a significant step towards improving scientific education through practical and innovative activities, stimulating students' interest and competencies in general, and in the

field of astronomy in particular. In the research project, it was found that approximately 85% of the students achieved performance levels characterized by the grades of „Very Good” and „Good”, while about 15% of the students were evaluated with the grade of „Satisfactory”.

We observe that the majority of students (85%) have reached high levels of performance, which suggests a significant effectiveness of the pedagogical methodology adopted in the study of variable stars. The results obtained in the research projects reflect a high level of development of the students’ investigative competence. The fact that a large proportion of students received grades of „Very Good” and „Good” highlights that they have acquired essential knowledge, capacities, abilities, and skills necessary for using the software required for the reduction and analysis of scientific data for the study of variable stars.

This demonstrates that the students were able to apply theoretical knowledge in a practical context, a crucial skill in the scientific field. There is a minority of 15% of students who received grades of „Satisfactory”. This indicates the need for a more differentiated approach within the investigative competence training program, which takes into account the various levels of understanding and abilities of the students. It may be important to explore additional support methods to help these students improve their performance.

The results obtained in the research projects suggest that the study of variable stars within the investigative competence training program was relevant and motivating for the majority of students. This is evidence of the importance of including practical activities and modern technology in the educational curriculum, especially in complex scientific fields such as astronomy.

### Conclusions

The study of variable stars within extracurricular astronomy activities has shown a significant impact on the development of students’ investigative competence. The educational program for the development of investigative competence provided not only a platform for enriching theoretical knowledge but also valuable opportunities for the practical application of this knowledge in the analysis of scientific data. The program’s results indicate the effectiveness of the adopted pedagogical approach, highlighted by the fact that approximately 85% of students achieved high levels of performance.

This suggests that integrating practical and theoretical activities, along with the use of modern technology, is an effective strategy in stimulating students’ interest and involvement in science. Students involved in this program have demonstrated a high level of investigative competence formation, acquiring knowledge, capacities, abilities, and skills for using the software necessary for the reduction and analysis of scientific data.

Their ability to apply theoretical knowledge in practical contexts underscores the success of this program. The presence of a minority of students (15%) with satisfactory performance highlights the need for a more differentiated pedagogical approach. This involves adjusting learning methods to address the diverse levels of understanding and abilities of students, thus providing additional support to those who need it to improve their performance. The extracurricular activities carried out have revealed that involvement in the research of variable stars was both relevant and motivating for the majority of students.

This highlights the importance of including practical activities in the educational curriculum, especially in complex scientific fields such as astronomy, to stimulate scientific curiosity and promote a holistic understanding. For the future, it is advisable to explore ways to make these learning experiences more accessible and inclusive. This could include ensuring access to various equipment used in astronomy and online resources, as well as adapting activities to meet a wide range of learning styles and ability levels.

The study of variable stars within extracurricular astronomy activities has been an effective pedagogical tool, promoting not only scientific understanding but also developing students’ investigative competence. It provides a valuable model for improving scientific education through innovative and practical methods. In addition to the significant impact of extracurricular activities on the development of students’ investigative competence, highlighted in this paper, there are several important aspects that deserve mention.

The study of variable stars within extracurricular astronomy activities has highlighted the value of interdisciplinarity in education. Students had the opportunity to integrate knowledge from various fields, such as

mathematics, physics, and computer science, demonstrating how different disciplines can merge to provide a deeper understanding of astronomical phenomena. The activities conducted encouraged students to think innovatively and creatively in addressing scientific problems.

By working with advanced technologies and exploring complex concepts, students were challenged to find original solutions and approach various subjects from new perspectives. In the digital age, familiarizing students with advanced technologies and specialized software is essential. Extracurricular activities provided students with the opportunity to develop their digital skills, which are vital in modern education and their future careers. Through participation in these activities, students acquired not just scientific knowledge, but also a greater awareness of the role of science in society.

This can contribute to the formation of more informed and civically engaged citizens, capable of making decisions based on a solid scientific understanding. The experience gained through extracurricular astronomy activities has the potential to shape future educational initiatives in the field of sciences. Demonstrating the success of a practical and interactive approach, these activities can serve as an example for the development of other educational programs that make learning science more attractive and effective.

The study of variable stars within extracurricular astronomy activities has surpassed the initial goal of developing investigative competence, significantly contributing to the holistic development of students in many essential areas, from scientific thinking and digital skills to collaboration and civic awareness. These conclusions underline the vital role of innovative scientific education in shaping the future of society.

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## THE ROLES OF TEACHERS IN THE PROCESS OF INCLUSION OF STUDENTS WITH SEN IN MASS EDUCATION CLASSES

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In this article, the roles of the teaching staff in mass education institutions, from the primary level, to facilitate the process of inclusion of students with special educational needs are addressed. These roles are analyzed both individually and from the perspective of the classroom teacher's teamwork with other specialists involved in the inclusion process of students with special educational needs, but also in partnership with their families.

Conceptual aspects are presented regarding the roles of the teaching staff in an inclusive context, to ensure a quality education, adapted and individualized, in relation to the needs, type and degree of disability, psycho-individual and cognitive characteristics of students with special educational needs, taking account of the discrepancy between chronological and mental age, which requires inclusion in mainstream education classes, being schooled alongside typical students, as well as concrete examples from their own scientific research.

**Keywords:** *the roles of the teaching staff, students with special educational needs, inclusion.*

### ROLURILE CADRELOR DIDACTICE ÎN PROCESUL DE INCLUZIUNE A ELEVILOR CU CES ÎN CLASELE DIN ÎNVĂȚĂMÂNTUL DE MASĂ

În acest articol sunt abordate rolurile pe care le deține cadrul didactic în instituțiile din învățământul de masă, de la nivel primar, pentru facilitarea procesului de incluziune a elevilor cu cerințe educaționale speciale. Aceste roluri sunt analizate atât în plan individual, cât și din perspectiva lucrului în echipă a învățătorului de la clasă cu alți specialiști implicați în procesul de incluziune a elevilor cu cerințe educaționale speciale, dar și în parteneriat cu familiile acestora.

Se expun aspecte conceptuale cu privire la rolurile cadrului didactic în context incluziv, pentru asigurarea unei educații de calitate, adaptată și individualizată, în raport cu nevoile, tipul și gradul de dizabilitate, caracteristicile psiho-individuale și cognitive ale elevilor cu cerințe educaționale speciale, ținând cont de discrepanța dintre vârsta cronologică și mintală, care solicită incluziunea în clasele din învățământul de masă, fiind școlarizați alături de elevii tipici, precum și exemple concrete din propria cercetare științifică.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *rolurile cadrului didactic, elevi cu cerințe educaționale speciale, incluziune.*

#### Introduction

The inclusion process of students with special educational needs is an increasingly complex one that involves the training of human, financial, material and temporal resources, as it takes place in several stages and takes place over a long period of time. Human resources include the management staff from the school unit, the classroom teacher who adopts inclusive practices, the support teacher, other specialists from the educational institution, who must form a multidisciplinary team, and together they will create favorable conditions, from the pedagogical, social and psychological perspectives, necessary for the inclusion of students with special educational needs in mainstream education classes. From the financial resources at the school level, funds should also be allocated to students with special needs, in order to create and ensure an inclusive school environment through access and participation of this category of students in all school spaces, to adapt and, implicitly, facilitate optimal conditions for carrying out the educational process. From a temporal point of view, teachers and all staff involved in the inclusion process must give time to students with special educational needs to settle in the school, contribute to his integration into the class group and, most importantly, pay attention in the educational-instructional process for all children, equally.

According to the document Law on pre-university education no. 519, chapter V, section 1, (i) specifies the need to ensure „support for mass education units and especially in carrying out a permanent process of improving management, educational policies, practices and organizational culture, so that the existing

resources to be used for the purpose of supporting the participation in the educational process of all beneficiaries within a community” [7].

In the Education Code, chapter XII, art. 53, (3), a, the functions of teaching staff in general education, primary level are provided for: teacher, professor, support teaching staff, teaching assistant, speech therapist, psychologist, psychopedagogue, circle leader [4].

In the Order of the Minister of Education no. 623, the professional competence standards of general education teachers are exposed, within the five areas of competence: didactic design, living environment, educational process, professional development and educational partnerships [10].

The roles of the teacher in mainstream education institutions could be: teaching staff-curriculum researcher, facilitator of relations between/with students, teacher-mediator of students in the learning process, maker of curricular adaptations, coach of students in the learning process, provides feedback and evaluation in the educational process [1, p. 170].

Thus, through the initial evaluation, the teaching staff will determine the initial level of the student with C.E.S. preparatory or 1st grade. The family has a very important role in children’s lives and they can contribute with information and personal data about the child, which the teaching staff cannot discover in the school environment.

After the stage of identifying the individual special needs that each individual student requires, the teaching staff will have the role of curriculum designer, and to fulfill this, continuous professional training in the field of inclusive education is necessary, according to the Pre-University Education Law no. 519, chapter V, section 1, (k) mentions „the development and implementation of national programs for continuous training of teaching staff from the national education system, in the field of inclusive education” [7].

The teaching staff will have an individualized approach to training, by acquiring theoretical and practical knowledge during training, which they can be transferred and applied to students with special educational requirements, will adapt the methods, strategies, didactic means with inclusive ones, customize tasks and worksheets, depending on the cognitive level, convey information with a lower degree of difficulty, depending on the level of understanding of the students with SEN in the class.

**Fig. 1. Increasing interest in the continuous professional training of primary school teachers in the field of inclusive education.**



In the framework of my scientific research among the respondents who participated in the scientific experiment, I noticed a maximization of interest in the continuous professional training in the field of inclusive education of teaching staff in mass education, because in mass education institutions there are more and more several cases of students with different special needs, and in order to satisfy their needs, it is necessary to train them, as well as to accumulate the 90 transferable credits that each teacher must have during five school years, called five-year, provided in Order no. 5561/2011, art. 4, (a), [9], but also following the completion of teaching degrees II and I, university studies, professional conversion or specialization in another field of license, provided in Figure no. 1.

The role of the teaching staff is to individualize the training of students with special educational needs, treating each student differently, depending on their individual characteristics, by developing adapted and differentiated work tasks, during educational activities, of learning forms, the appropriate preparation of the classroom space, the placement of furniture according to the needs of the student with CES, the use of additional methods, procedures and means to meet the educational requirements of this category of students in the class, offering individual support to these students in different situations, the differentiation being a function of their previous experiences, style, own rhythm, of the individual potential, within the limit allowed by the disability, in relation to their interests, aspirations and personal particularities [5, p. 49].

The application of effective methods, inclusive didactic strategies, as well as the adaptation of materials and work tasks in the instructional-educational and recuperative process of students with CES requires the completion of several stages: the identification of students in difficulty, as well as the causes that generated certain needs special needs, the diagnosis of students with special educational needs, the establishment of their initial cognitive level, the permanent monitoring of the evolution on all levels of each individual student with CES and the school performance, the design of a differentiated and individualized curriculum, depending on the particular situation of each one and of the problems they face in terms of education, the development of an educational approach centered on the student, by creating learning situations that will favor the registration of school progress, by continuous motivation of the student with CES and the application of formative assessment, the collaboration between the teaching staff in the school and other specialists who offer support services, school counseling and parent involvement.

In correlation with these stages, the following inclusive strategies specific to interactive learning can be successfully implemented: capitalizing on students' previous experiences and knowledge in educational activities, using games in the learning process (didactic game, dramatization, role play), using problematization on certain sequences of the lesson and their transposition into practice through different methods and procedures, such as storytelling, modeling, drawing, manual work; creative resolution of conflicts in the classroom, active collaboration with students' parents and capitalizing on resources from the local community as ways of supporting the teaching-learning-evaluation process; involving students in educational activities that imply cooperation between them to solve some problems that have arisen at the group level, through which they have the opportunity to learn to listen to each other, negotiate, respect and accept the opinion of the other, on the topic addressed in the respective group [5, p. 58].

At the class level, the teacher is responsible for creating an inclusive school environment and atmosphere, a favorable climate for the teaching-learning-evaluation process for all students in the class, to encourage the formation of friendships between them, teamwork, interaction, collaborating, socializing, providing mutual support, accepting their differences, treating each other with respect and empathy.

Also, the teaching staff in the classroom, in collaboration with the support teacher and the whole multidisciplinary team of specialists in the school who work with the student with special educational requirements, the students with special needs and their parents, to develop individualized and personalized school programs, according to the type and degree of disability and/or the educational requirements that the student has in the instructional-educational process, but also the cognitive level, the learning style, the types of intelligence, the own pace, the degree of motivation, interest in learning, the potential it has and the creation of educational contexts in which to capitalize and amplify them, in the educational approach [3, p. 25].

Then, at a certain predetermined time interval, the individualized personalized plans (IEPs) will be reviewed by the classroom teacher together with the support teacher, and the individualized educational plans (IEPs) in collaboration with the itinerant teacher, in the case home-schooled students, students with educational requirements will be monitored during their application and implementation, in order to observe their recorded school progress, reflected through school performance.

Cooperative learning at the class level is a method of organizing the learning process that involves different challenges, at the own pace and modality of each student with CES, since the students in a group have diverse personalities, they must work together and to help each other, obtaining a final result, reaching their intended goal.

Differentiated learning involves the use of methods, didactic strategies, didactic means and materials, adapted and the differentiation of learning contents for students with special educational needs integrated in mainstream education, the organization of flexible activities, on which students can work individually or can be organized in groups, the teaching staff has the role of a guide, offering support in the learning process, flexible time in relation to the pace and needs of students with CES, centered on formative assessment [6, p. 45].

The teacher has the role of facilitator of relations between/with students, both within the educational activities in the educational institution, during breaks, and in the extracurricular environment, at the socio-cultural level, favors the improvement of relations between student-student, teacher-student, strengthening the relationship between child and parent.

Thus, the relationships will strengthen through interschool partnerships, for the development of extra-curricular educational activities, with other mainstream education institutions, where they will have the opportunity to adapt to new places, meet and talk with other unknown people and interact with typical students with the goal of changing their attitudes towards students with special educational needs, through acceptance and tolerance. It can also come from special education, through which they will be able to know and participate together with other students with special needs in special educational activities.

In this sense, other members of the local community, the parents of students from partner schools can be trained in such activities, in order to sensitize them, to find out their specific characteristics, depending on the special educational requirements that the respective students have, to change their preconceived attitudes and ideas regarding this category of students, as well as to encourage and accept education, implicitly their schooling alongside typical children in mainstream schools [11, p.19,20].

In the process of getting to know the students from a collective or from the school, the teacher has the role of mediator, at a general level, since students with special educational needs usually have difficulties adapting to new spaces, with unknown people, and if the teaching staff has completed a continuous training course in the field of inclusive education, they will be able to resolve the small conflicts that may arise between the students of the class or the student with special educational needs and other students in the school or their parents, by discovering the causes that generated the conflict, the context and the duration and by finding the optimal solution to solve them [13, p.60].

Conflicts can arise between students-students, students-teachers, students-parents, teachers-parents, classroom teachers or those who are part of the multidisciplinary team and other specialists involved in the inclusion process of the student with special educational needs, between parents- management staff of the school unit, parents-representatives of local authorities, majority parents-minority parents.

For a good management of a conflict, teachers in mainstream education must acquire, through continuous training courses, communication skills, problem solving, negotiation and mediation of conflict situations, by establishing a conflict management program at the class and or school level, and resolving a conflict with the help of negotiation is the most optimal option, being possible through five strategies: competition or confrontation, avoidance, collaboration or compromise [13, p.63].

Also, the classroom teacher, in collaboration with the members of the multidisciplinary team who are involved in the educational approach of the student with special educational needs, must constantly continue monitoring the evolution of the mental processes on an individual level of each student with special needs. These refer to the type of memory acquired during the educational approach by the student with special educational needs, the degree of improvement in the level of attention, concentration, during educational activities, of understanding and solving work tasks, of the behavior manifested both in the plan personally, as well as in relation to others, the control of emotions and stimuli that can disturb them.

Thus, the classroom teacher, together with the school counsellor, will apply in pedagogical practice, the theories of E Thorndike, J Watson and B F Skinner that refer to behavioral therapy from a behaviorist perspective, for the student with special educational needs, it is very beneficial in addition to pedagogical and psychological counselling, in order to identify the stimuli in the environment that precede the behavior, i.e. the antecedents and stimuli that follow the undesirable behavior shown by the student, respectively – its consequences. The teacher will work in collaboration with specialists to remove unwanted behaviors and to replace them with desirable behaviors, which the student with special needs will show more and more frequently, in the school, family and social environment, as well as in everyday life [12, p.83].

In the training process the teacher must attract and maintain his students with special educational needs in the learning process, by continuously stimulating motivation and interest in learning, by discovering the types of intelligence in the student with multiple special educational needs and their valorization during his educational path.

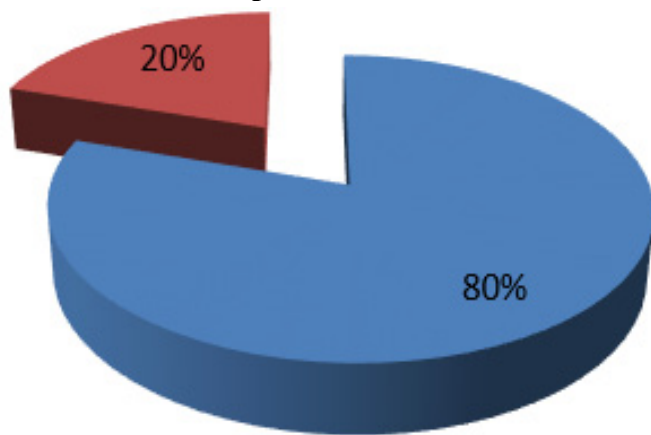
Also, in the instructional-educational process of students with special educational needs, the teaching staff must use inclusive, innovative and interactive active-participatory didactic methods, along with means, didactic materials and work techniques, adapted, according to their needs, moreover, feedback and evaluation in the educational process have an important role in the evolution and educational progress of



students with special educational needs [14, p.15].

From my own scientific research, I found out from a praxeological aspect that a poorly developed motivation and a low interest in the learning process of a student with special educational needs is/was caused by the non-involvement of parents who have not had any education either and do not encourage and support their own children. There may be situations when some of these students have no family or come from disadvantaged, single-parent backgrounds, with a precarious socialment financial situation and socio-educational barriers. These problems can appear through the prism of the fact that they encounter learning difficulties in some school subjects, especially in the Romanian language and literature and mathematics, which can worsen over time if they do not receive individualized specialized help, they often fail to get the grade minimum at the national assessment exams, from the end of the 2nd and 4th grades, because the subjects are not adapted according to the individual special educational requirements, shown in Figure 2.

**Fig. 2. The distribution of students according to the learning difficulties recorded in the instructional-educational process.**

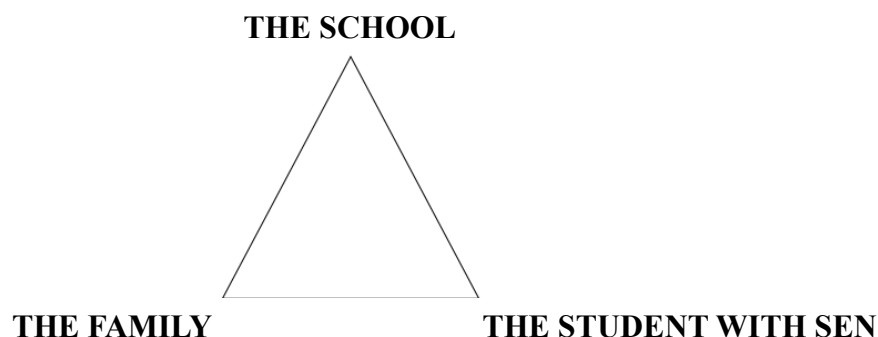


The partnership between school-family-students (Figure 3), within the educational institution is particularly important in the process of inclusion of students with CES, the teaching staff of the class will work in a team with the other members of the multidisciplinary team who are involved in the inclusion process of students with special educational needs in mainstream education, to ensure a specific assessment of this type of learning, applying also the mental models proposed by Jean Piaget, which refer to the processes of accommodation and assimilation, from a psycho- social learning [8, p. 382,383].

Also, the relationship between the parent and child must be solid, to spend their free time together with all its members, by organizing and carrying out joint activities in which the child with CES is involved, to know that he is listened to and encouraged and expresses his needs, concerns, but also to be valued for his achievements no matter how small they may be, to know that his parents will always be by his side and he will have permanent support from them.

The family must form an active partnership, through continuous collaboration with the school, with the staff who are part of the multidisciplinary team, being involved in the educational activities carried out by the teachers, but it is equally important to monitor the child’s activities outside school and continuing learning at home, together with parents [2, p. 174,175].

**Fig. 3. The partnership between school-family-student.**



In the context of the inclusive school, the instructional-educational process implies certain changes at the curriculum level, through adaptation and flexibility, depending on the needs of each student with SEN, in active partnership with other educational units or other public institutions, it involves the creation of an

inclusive environment, by offering favorable conditions for the inclusion process of students with educational needs in public school units and their adaptation according to their needs, by providing educational support services, as well as access and participation in all learning activities, contributing to the reduction of barriers and the difficulties faced by students with CES, their marginalization or exclusion [6, p.29].

In conclusion, for an optimal socio-educational inclusion of students with special educational needs, there is a need for awareness and adaptation at the level of mainstream education institutions, training and continuous professional training of school staff, family involvement and the contribution of local community members.

Among the teaching staff, as well as the specialists involved in the process of inclusion of students with special educational needs in the classes of mainstream education, primary level, who make up the multidisciplinary team, there must be collaboration, in order to offer a high quality education, in the superior interest of the student.

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## EDUCAȚIA ECONOMICĂ A ELEVILOR ȘI ADULȚILOR: ASEMĂNĂRI ȘI DIFERENȚE

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În articol sunt descrise asemănările și diferențele dintre educația economică a elevilor și a adulților. Sunt descrise etapele modelului de învățare fundamentate de David Kolb și condițiile pentru creșterea motivației de învățare identificate de savanții Ginsberg M. B. și Wlodkowski R. J. Totodată, este menționat faptul că educația economică este un demers care conține principii, competențe, obiective, conținuturi, activități de predare/învățare/evaluare care trebuie respectate, planificate, implementate și evaluate. Educația economică este un proces continuu, etapizat și trebuie neapărat realizat de către un specialist în domeniul economiei și/sau științelor educației. Rolul formatorului este de a împărtăși o parte din știința sa și a favoriza receptarea ei. Iar rolul educatului este de a asculta, munci, înțelege și interioriza informația primită. La final, sunt explicate unele valori economice, printre care independența, libertatea și prosperitatea. De asemenea, sunt descrise principiile educației economice, fără de care acest demers nu poate fi eficient.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** educație economică, învățare, cultură economică, valori economice, principii ale educației economice.

### ECONOMIC EDUCATION OF STUDENTS AND ADULTS: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES

The article describes the similarities and differences of the Economic Education of students and adults. There are described the stages of the learning model substantiated by David Kolb and the conditions for increasing learning motivation identified by Ginsberg M. B. and Wlodkowski R. J. At the same time, it is mentioned that Economic Education is an approach that consists of principles, competences, objectives, contents, teaching/ learning/ assessment activities that are to be observed, planned, implemented and evaluated. Economic Education is a continuous, staged process that must necessarily be carried out by a specialist in the field of Economics and/or Educational Sciences. The trainer's role is to share some of his knowledge and to promote its comprehension. And the role of the trainee is to listen, work, understand and internalize the received information. Finally, some Economic Values are explained, including independence, freedom and prosperity. Also, there are described the principles of Economic Education that prove its effectiveness.

**Keywords:** economic education, learning, economic culture, economic values, principles of economic education.

#### Introduction

Recently, trainings, seminars, webinars on various economic topics are increasingly looked for. As a rule, the beneficiaries of these forms of Economic Education are adults. Thanks to them, today, we are witnessing a real explosion on the market of private educational services, and one reason is the lack of continuity in the educational process. This rupture leads to the stagnation of the development of the economic and entrepreneurial spirit, the reduction of the level of awareness of economic relations, the lack of the possibility of preventing some undesirable economic behaviors, financial losses, etc. At the same time, the Coronavirus Pandemic outlined the fact that Economic Education must never end because we will end up being overtaken by the situation, if we stay where we are [8, p. 115].

#### Differences between the economic education of students and adults

Learning is one of the most appropriate and natural activities of the humanity. We are used to a child asking a lot of questions, and from the answers received, he formulates other questions. From one perspective, we admire adults who have the courage to learn at an older age. In terms of Economic Education, what is fun and fascinating for children can be boring or even useless for adults. That is why, in contemporary pedagogy (in the last 20-25 years), adults, unlike children, are considered a special subgroup for which specially processed theoretical and applied training methods are needed [6, p. 4].

The origins of learning in adulthood dates back the outbreak of the Second World War when there was a need to teach people in a short period of time to fight, to give first aid, to use certain weapons, etc. When the military operations slowed down, lots of adults returned to education with the aim to be trained in a specific field. Thus, the pedagogues, who delivered educational services faced problems related to the quality of teaching, the selection of contents, the formulation of learning objectives, the choice of didactic strategies, etc. Also, then, specialists understood that adults need a different approach than children. Adults have different learning characteristics than children, so they need new education means in general, but Economic Education in particular.

At a conceptual level, pedagogy implies the action of educating children. Andragogy has as its object of study the education of adults, having a less normative character than the science of children's education due to the fact that adults are already trained, and gerontology is the science of the education of the elderly, i.e. those who have passed 65 [7, p. 25].

Thus, a first difference between the Economic Education of students and adults refers to the age and individual characteristics of those educated. We will not dwell on the many physical, sensory, psychomotor, intellectual, etc. changes that occur with aging; the human brain can build new neural pathways, life-long habits of thought and action, learning Economics in old age, in adulthood is not that simple. The child brings with him little knowledge in the process of learning Economics. Therefore, he is dependent on the teacher. The adult, however, brings with him a vast experience on which he relies more than what he is told [1].

The researcher David Kolb [Apud 4, p. 73] founded a learning model, which is also applied within the learning of the Economy and which represents a continuous cyclical process consisting of four interrelated stages.

1. Concrete experience – a new experience is lived or a reinterpretation of an existing economic experience takes place.
2. Reflective observation – analysis, understanding and explanation of the new experience takes place.
3. Abstract conceptualization – reflection makes room for new ideas or a modification of an existing abstract concept and provides an understanding of the process of translating theories into concepts.
4. Active experimentation – practicing experience, training skills, changing behavior. The learner is able to teach others [apud 4].

According to the above mentioned researcher, effective learning occurs only when the learner is able to execute all four stages of the model. It is curious that the learning of Economics with students begins with the third stage of the Abstract Conceptualization model, because students need theoretical knowledge, which is amplified by practicing them through different examples or problems and later they are able to solve an economic problem in real life, also called “economic competence”. Learning Economics in adulthood, however, begins with stage I, because adults already possess a richer or poorer economic experience; positive or negative. They have certain economic knowledge and beliefs, including various strategies they use in their daily tasks. Therefore, this experience needs to be observed, valued, analyzed and only then, depending on the necessity, to be explained to adults through theoretical aspects, laws, concepts, economic principles that will contribute to the change of economic thinking and behavior. Learning Economics is more effective, if it is done gradually adding new knowledge on top of the previously memorized [4, 8].

At the same time, within Economic Education, the self-concept of the learner/trainee is also of particular importance, as mentioned by the researchers Lindeman E. C. and Mucchielli R. [1]. The student sees himself first as a personality completely dependent on the adult in the sense of decisions made at school, on the play ground and wherever he is. Even during the learning process, based on the learner oriented approach, the child/student is the subject and the active actor of the didactic approach, the responsibility for the content, methods, resources and ways of evaluating learning lies on the teaching staff. Adults are people who have entered professional life, who assume social roles and who have already accumulated direct experience. That is why they came out of the state of dependence specific to childhood by assuming responsibility for their own actions. They are aware of their social role, their situation, their potential and their aspirations. They want to set their own rules and be treated as individuals responsible for their own decisions.

Another difference that refers to the specifics of learning Economics in adulthood is motivation. From the experience of teaching Economic Subjects, we note that the motivation for learning Economics for students is mainly extrinsic. Students expect rewards from the external environment, in the form of grades, participation in competitions, prizes, diplomas, etc. Adults' motivation, on the other hand, is intrinsic. The adult is motivated by his life plans and aspirations [4, 8], by the desire to establish new social contacts, to progress professionally, to escape from the routine, to escape from the phenomenon of professional deformation and burnout, but also the simple curiosity to broaden one's horizon of knowledge.

Ginsberg M. B. and Wlodkowski R. J. [apud 7, p. 149] identified four conditions that must be met to increase adults' motivation for learning:

1. Creating the sense of inclusion, implies the adult's awareness that he is a part of the learning environment, that he is respected and connected with all other participants. This condition can be achieved differently, either in the classroom or through social networks, but it is important to create a positive, warm atmosphere, manifested by the enthusiasm and involvement of the trainer, on the one hand, and the existence of opportunities for social interaction, on the other hand.

2. Development of a positive attitude towards learning and towards other participants. Adult learning brings into the same group different personalities from different social backgrounds and different occupations. This fact must be very careful and well managed. Feelings of anxiety, loneliness, confusion can inhibit the adult's attempts to learn, especially a complex field such as Economics. That is why the trainer will have to create a conducive learning environment where the diversity of personalities and learning styles will be valued, where every adult will feel recognized and encouraged.

3. Creating the meaning of knowledge. Many adults feel that if they have earned a degree, they have reached the peak. In reality it is not like that, because the world around us is changing rapidly and, if we do not evolve, we risk being left behind. Thus, if a person in adulthood decides to learn economics, he is not lost, but on the contrary, he will not allow his own mind to stagnate. Thus, adults will have to be convinced that what they learn is important and can be immediately applied in practice.

4. Building a sense of proficiency. Adults want to know that the skills they develop in the learning process will help them solve the real problems they face every day. One of the arguments in favor of lifelong learning within Economy could be the following: currently, knowledge in Economy – means only those people succeed, who possess transversal skills: communication, teamwork, entrepreneurship, digital, initiative, etc. Therefore, the investment in the training/development of these skills throughout the professional career will ensure a better professional training, adaptation to the demands of the labor market, achieving social cohesion, ensuring personal and social well-being, etc. However, these transversal skills can be formed and developed through Economic Education [4, 7].

Thus, the objective of learning Economics is not the simple knowledge of this field, but also the change that takes place in the thinking, emotions, skills and behavior of the trainee.

### **Similarities between student and adult Economic Education**

Although there are multiple differences between the Economic Education of students and that of adults, Economic Education is an approach that contains principles, competences, objectives, contents, teaching/learning/evaluation activities that must be planned, implemented and evaluated. As any educational activity, certain rigors must be followed.

Economic Education is a component of new Educational Sciences that must be thought of as an investment tool in human capital. Therefore, this is a continuous and stepwise process. Thus, we can refer both to the didactic principle, according to which Economic Contents must be correlated with the age and individual peculiarities of the individual, but also to the levels of Economic Education: factual, episodic, procedural and semantic knowledge through which knowledge is not only stored, but also an economic thinking is formed, and also the skills and competences necessary for human existence.

Economic Education is a didactic contract between a trainer and the learner. The didactic approach, regardless of whether it is intended for students or adults, will be effective if it is carried out by a specialist in the field of Economics and/or Educational Sciences. The trainer's role is to share some of his knowledge

and to promote its reception. On the other hand, the educated person has the task of listening, working, understanding and internalizing the received information [3, p. 18].

Economic Education must be carried out on the basis of rigorous planning, that is, it requires the existence of a curriculum. In order to form/develop a certain Economic Competence, it is necessary for the educational act to be meticulously prepared and to contain objectives specific to the Economy contents necessary to fulfill these objectives, didactic strategies and by no means the evaluation of the results of the trainee. At the same time, we do not deny the fact that Economic Education can harmoniously combine the general forms of Education (formal, informal and non-formal), the latter presupposing the non-existence of a specialized curriculum. But if it is carried out in a formal or non-formal environment, which can be a lesson or an extra-curricular activity for students and a course, seminar or training for adults, this activity requires a design and an inter-correlation between all the component elements of the curriculum. A current problem, in this sense, in the context of a huge number of existing trainings, webinars and economic courses, is the evaluation of the trained skills. Many times, it is completely missing, especially in the case of Economic Education of adults. But let's not forget that learning is not simply moving information from a textbook into our brain, it is much more important to know what to do with what you have learned. That is why there is a need for conscious and intentional learning that means positive, long-term change in the learner's life.

Another similarity in the Economic Education of students and adults is the finality. For both students and adults, the purpose of Economic Education must be the formation of Economic Culture following the scheme: knowledge, conscience, thinking, attitude, economic behavior. Economic Culture is not only about money, but is a broader concept, which includes the knowledge and skills of a man related to work, consumption, savings, goods, property, health, future, the rules that guide human behavior, etc. Economic Culture is formed throughout life, but it is necessary to set goals in this regard. Initially, with the help of the teaching staff, later independently and consciously.

The Economic Education of students and adults must also be oriented towards Economic Values, including positive influences in the development of the personality of the trainee. Economics is a moral science, therefore those who deliver Economics and Entrepreneurship Education services must be unanimous in this regard. Economic Values are those that satisfy the needs of life. They are always intermediate values, because they serve as means to satisfy human needs. Among the main values, which relate directly to economic activity, we can mention: money, economic resources, price, work, etc. And among the Economic Values correlated with the moral values we mention: responsibility, perseverance, prudence, honesty, generosity, diligence, accuracy and self-control [4, 5].

From practice, we note that both adults and students encounter difficulties in explaining and ranking such values as independence, freedom and economic prosperity, therefore, we will briefly explain them next.

Economic or financial independence is the situation when the value of personal assets that generate a passive income covers your current expenses [2, 4].

Economic freedom is the situation beyond which passive income consistently exceeds monthly expenses, in the sense that after covering expenses you have money left over for travel, education and other desires.

Prosperity is the state of balance between the seven important values of life: emotional fulfillment, relationship with others, professional fulfillment, financial fulfillment, health, generosity and time management. It is important to realize that prosperity can be achieved at any income level. That is why investment in Economic Education will allow knowledge of balance and prosperity [Ibidem].

Wealth or poverty are states of consciousness. Poor people have a poverty consciousness which always makes them experience lack of money. Rich people have the consciousness of wealth, for which they will have prosperity and abundance [4]. However, this awareness can be changed through effort and Education. Besides, the most precious gift that people possess is the gift of learning. All accumulated knowledge is added on top of others and is the basis of future accumulation. For this process to be effective and continuous, the principles of Economic Education need to be followed, formulated on the basis of the principles of Education through/for work (Сухомлинский В. А.), Economic theories (Becker G., Smith A.), the principles and strategies of personal self-efficacy (Bandura A.), the fundamental principles of educational action (Hubert R.) and the principles of adult training (Mor D.).

1. The principle of unity between Economic Education and the general contents of Education. If the Economic Education will be carried out in an optimal connection with the general contents of the Education, the trainee will have a baggage of necessary and useful skills in the organization of personal life and professional activity [5].

2. The principle of developing interest, motivation and responsibility for learning. Human behavior is based on motivation, therefore the trainer/teacher must find those areas of interest of the trainee that will allow the broadening of their intellectual and spiritual horizons. As for responsibility, it implies concentration, effort and will in favor of Economic Education.

3. Principles of active, voluntary and conscious participation in the learning activity. No one can develop by being a passive observer. Only through studying, moral-volitional effort, active participation in economic activities, both students and adults can develop their abilities and healthy habits and can assert themselves professionally [5].

4. The principle of integrating theory with economic practice and capitalizing on previous experience refers to the idea that what is acquired theoretically in the educational process should be capitalized in practical activities by solving concrete tasks. The accumulated experience needs to be observed and capitalized, and sometimes adapted to new requirements or to the concrete situation.

5. The principle of forming a positive attitude towards economic concepts, involves cultivating a responsible attitude towards work, property, money, etc. Observing character traits and/or beliefs that create certain problems and showing effort to improve them.

6. The principle of optimal exercise of economic and social roles. According to this principle, people exercise various roles: consumers, producers, depositors, investors, employees, taxpayers, etc. thus, economic education involves living new experiences based on which sciences of education understand, generalize and capitalize on what is happened to them.

7. The principle of exploring Economic Values in close correlation with moral values. Without an inclusion of values in Economic Education cannot be achieved. In this sense, it is important to form positive attitudes in students based on moral values correlated to Economic Values, such as rationality, prudence, independence, perseverance, generosity, honesty, etc. As well as the change in adults' personal, social, professional values, etc. in order to establish individual and collective value priorities [ibidem].

8. The principle of flexibility and adaptation to change. We live in a world characterized by profound changes in all areas, including the economic one. If we stop learning, we limit ourselves both personally and professionally. That is why we need to develop in both students and adults the resilience, responsibility and learning to learn competence for life.

### Conclusions

From those mentioned above, we conclude that between the students and adults Economic Education there are profound differences that refer to the age and individual characteristics of the trainee, such as: experience, self-concept, motivation, responsibility for what they have learned etc. However, for the effective implementation of Economic Education, certain rigors must be followed, especially regarding the planning of activity objectives, contents, methods, techniques, applied tools and perform the evaluation of the obtained results. Also, the mentioned desideratum must be achieved based on the principles of Economic Education, because if we don't have some guidelines for educational action, we risk getting lost in the multitude of roles, requirements, information and current changes.

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## THE ROLE OF ATTITUDES IN SHAPING SOCIAL PERCEPTION IN THE CONTEXT OF CRISIS

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Contemporary society faces a series of crises, ranging from economic and political to social and environmental ones. In this turbulent context, the way we perceive and interpret social reality becomes essential for our adaptation and for making responsible decisions. Crisis situations, whether natural, economic, or political, have a significant impact not only on concrete reality but also on how we perceive and interpret the world around us. Pre-existing attitudes play a crucial role in this reconfiguration of social perception, influencing how we process information, interpret events, and relate to others. Combating prejudices, promoting dialogue, and transparent communication are essential for balanced social perception and building a climate of social cohesion in difficult times.

Social perception is a complex process influenced by a series of factors, among which pre-existing attitudes are included. In the context of crisis, it is essential to be aware of how attitudes can distort our perception of reality and to take concrete measures to inform ourselves from reliable sources, to engage in dialogue with those who have different opinions, and to promote transparent communication. Only through joint efforts to combat prejudices and promote tolerance and mutual understanding we can build a more united and resilient society in the face of crises.

**Keywords:** *attitudes, social perception, crisis, conflict, values, norms.*

### ROLUL ATITUDINILOR ÎN FORMAREA PERCEPȚIEI SOCIALE ÎN CONTEXTUL SITUAȚIEI DE CRIZĂ

Societatea contemporană se confruntă cu o serie de crize, de la cele economice și politice la cele sociale și de mediu. În acest context turbulent, modul în care percepem și interpretăm realitatea socială devine esențial pentru adaptarea noastră și pentru luarea unor decizii responsabile. Situațiile de criză, fie ele naturale, economice sau politice, au un impact semnificativ nu doar asupra realității concrete, ci și asupra modului în care percepem și interpretăm lumea din jurul nostru. Atitudinile preexistente joacă un rol crucial în această reconfigurare a percepției sociale, influențând modul în care procesăm informația, interpretăm evenimentele și ne raportăm la ceilalți. Combaterea prejudecăților, promovarea dialogului și a unei comunicări transparente sunt esențiale pentru o percepție socială echilibrată și construirea unui climat de coeziune socială în momente dificile. Percepția socială este un proces complex influențat de o serie de factori, printre care și atitudinile preexistente. În contextul crizei, este esențial să fim conștienți de modul în care atitudinile ne pot distorsiona percepția realității și să luăm măsuri concrete pentru a ne informa din surse veridice, a dialoga cu cei care au opinii diferite și a promova o comunicare transparentă. Doar prin eforturi comune de combatere a prejudecăților și de promovare a toleranței și a înțelegerii reciproce putem construi o societate mai unită și mai rezistentă în fața crizelor.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *atitudini, percepție socială, criză, conflict, valori, norme.*

#### Introduction

Currently, society is going through a difficult period that leaves its mark on all spheres of life: emotional, social, economic, political, medical, legal, etc. Over the past four years, humanity has been living in a continuous crisis situation. The years 2020-2021 were marked by the Covid-19 pandemic, which completely changed the functioning of the society and the perception of stability and security. However, with the decline of the pandemic situation, the largest armed conflict since the end of World War II was triggered at the border of our country. Fear, confusion, panic, and instability are just a few of the feelings that have become chronic during this period, unfortunately, but few are those who know how to manage them.

Attitudes play an essential role in how we perceive and interpret social reality in the context of crisis. Combating prejudices, promoting dialogue, and transparent communication are essential for balanced social perception and building a climate of social cohesion in difficult times. Attitudes are part of everyone's

suite of prejudices and stereotypes, as the crisis can amplify pre-existing prejudices and stereotypes, leading to the stigmatization of certain social groups considered vulnerable or responsible for the difficult situation.

At the same time, divergent attitudes can lead to heightened social polarization, creating opposing camps that accuse each other and fail to find common solutions. On the other hand, the lack of accurate information or mistrust in official sources can facilitate the proliferation of conspiracy theories, which can distort reality and create an atmosphere of panic and distrust.

### **Social perceptions in the context of crisis situation**

Social influence represents „a type of interaction between two social entities (individuals or groups), one of which is the „target” and the other is the „source of influence” ”. As a result of this interaction, the target reacts differently than usual to an „object” (expressing an opinion, making an evaluation, proposing an explanation, or performing a behavior) (Chelcea, *Influența socială*, 2013) Authors D. Abrams and M. A. Hogg define social influence as „any change that the relationships of the person with others (individuals, groups, institutions, or society as a whole) produce on their intellectual activities, emotions, or actions” [3].

In specialized literature, social perception can also be described, by several authors, under the term “social cognition” defined as “the set of mechanisms through which we try to understand other people” [7].

Social perception represents more than is directly presented [5]. Therefore, the components of “social perception and social reality can often differ significantly.

Nevertheless, if we set aside the generality encompassed by the term „social cognition”, Pennington still defines social perception, in a narrow sense, as „the way we form first impressions in relationships with others, relying on mental schemes”, with attitudes playing an important role [7]. The uniqueness of individuals’ sets of opinions, values, and behaviors stems from the different ways in which each perceives the reality around them compared to other individuals. Individual perceptions influence the formation of attitudes, and values, in turn, contribute to the formation of perceptions and have a direct influence on attitudes [4]. The works of S. Asch (1946) and F. Heider (1958) explore, through the lens of social perceptions, the processes of inference involved in attitude formation, and phenomena of causal attribution [7]. Social perceptions are also framed within schema theory [6]. Thus, the formation of social perception involves four basic mechanisms/components: observation, attribution, integration, and confirmation [1].

If we talk about the concept of “crisis”, then it is used in most spheres of life: both to describe personal and private situations and to describe situations that affect social groups, organizations, or states, including: social, political, economic, ethnic, religious, military, or environmental crises. Whatever the type of crisis, its influence on us is imminent. However, there are solutions through which we can avoid being affected by the impact of the crisis on us. We know from informational sources that we, as humans, connect to the environment through the reception of information. Unfortunately, during crises, the way we perceive information is distorted, and therefore, it is necessary to follow a series of recommendations to combat attempts at informational manipulation during a crisis..

First and foremost, it is necessary to accept the potential need to change attitudes/beliefs. Usually, if a person strongly holds onto their beliefs, they are difficult to modify. Even though we mentioned earlier that informational manipulation aims to change beliefs, sometimes the news serves a noble purpose, and changing beliefs is indispensable.

Secondly, before taking action during a crisis, it is necessary to confirm the information from multiple different sources. Only after receiving information from several sources are we able to make a well-calculated decision.

Thirdly, often during a crisis, the speed of response is a factor that could reduce damage. In the absence of information, rumors may arise, and often the first message received is the one internalized. In this case, it is important during the crisis to compare the information received initially with the updates presented. Updates should have the following characteristics: they should be repeated; they should be specific to the current crisis situation; they should come from multiple credible sources [2].

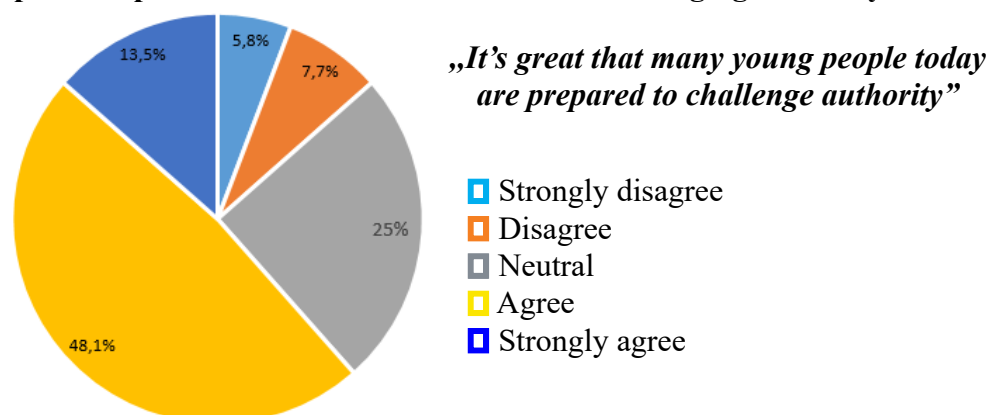
Unfortunately, during a crisis, there are more questions than answers, especially at the beginning. Depending on the magnitude of the crisis and its cause, the actions individuals take to protect themselves are unpredictable. The state of uncertainty will challenge even the most prepared person. Thus, to reduce anxiety, people tend to seek information to form their opinions and to confirm, or conversely, deny their beliefs. They usually choose a familiar source of information over a less familiar one, regardless of the accuracy of the information presented. Like that, social perception is not only about external stimuli received. An equally important factor as external influences is the individual's internal factors, expressed through needs, motivations, desires, opinions, emotions. In the same way, manipulation works. Low self-esteem, over-intellectualization, or low levels of emotional intelligence are just a few aspects that make the individual much more sensitive to informational manipulation.

### Results of the study of attitudes regarding the formation of social perception in the context of crisis

The study of attitudes regarding the formation of social perception in the context of crisis was conducted using a questionnaire that aims to explore multiple dimensions, including: attitudes towards current norms and values; attitudes towards social aspects; attitudes towards military actions in general. A total of 52 subjects from the Republic of Moldova participated in the research.

**One of the dimensions analyzed in our research is attitudes towards current norms and values.** Regarding the question „*It's great that many young people today are prepared to challenge authority*”, subjects responded as follows (Figure 1.1): 48.1% partially agree, while 13.5% fully agree. On the other hand, 7.7% expressed partial disagreement, 5.8% completely disagree, and 25% tend to remain neutral. Thus, the majority perceive the fact that young people are not afraid to resist authority as a positive quality.

Fig. 1. Graphical representation of attitudes towards challenging authority.



This indicates that we perceive the advantages and necessity of democracy and freedom, within which young people are able to express their opinions.

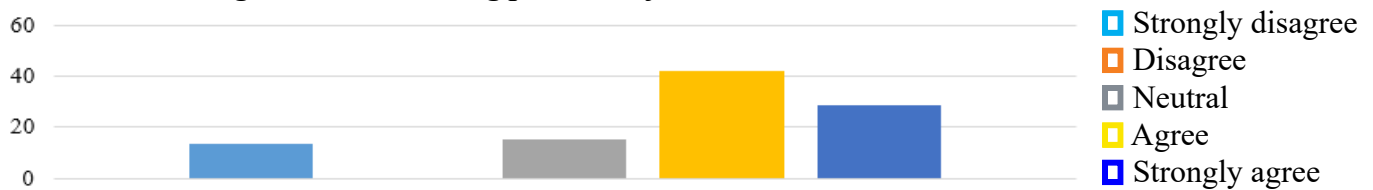
Regarding the question „*What our country needs most is discipline, everyone following our leaders in unity?*”, we observe that the majority (32.7%) express partial disagreement with this statement, while 3.8% strongly disagree. On the other hand, we note that opinions are fairly evenly divided at both extremes, with 25% partially agreeing with this statement and 7.7% completely agreeing.

We also observe a similar division of responses to the statement „*Our society DOES NOT need a tougher government and stricter laws*”: 28.8% tend to remain neutral, 26.9% strongly disagree to this extent, 23.1% partially agree to some extent, 11.5% partially disagree, and 9.6% strongly agree.

Analyzing the statement presented in Figure 1.2, „*Recent statistics on crime and societal issues show that we need to take more drastic measures against those causing problems if we want to maintain law and order*”, we can see that the majority of subjects agree with it: 42.3% expressing partial agreement and 28.8% strongly agreeing. Therefore, there is a clear awareness of the need to strengthen justice in order to achieve harmonious living in crisis situations.

**Fig. 2. Representation of opinions regarding the necessity of toughening the laws.**

*„Recent statistics on crime and societal issues show that we need to take more drastic measures against those causing problems if we want to maintain law and order”*

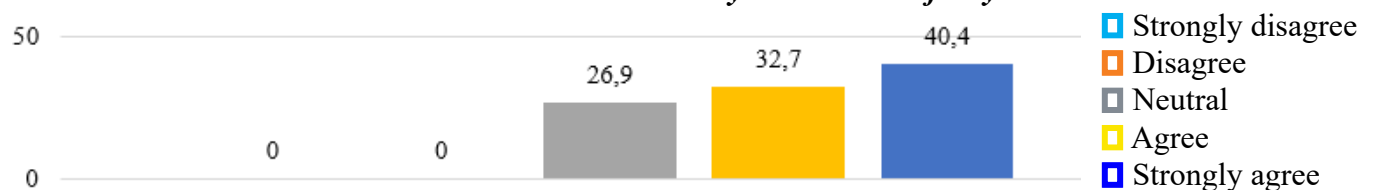


The attitudes of subjects towards current values are indicators of how they perceive the needs, strengths, and weaknesses of our people in crisis situations. Therefore, we observe the appreciation of democracy and freedom as fundamental values in crisis situations, which contribute to the resilience of a nation. On the other hand, we identify the need for the enactment of laws that will organize and guide society, especially in situations that provoke panic. These steps will lead to the strengthening of social structures, and will also increase citizens' confidence in the state's ability to react.

*Another dimension of the research aims to evaluate individuals' attitudes towards social aspects.* Analyzing the responses to the question *„When the government makes laws, the number one principle should be to ensure that everyone is treated fairly”*, as presented in Figure 1.3, we initially highlight the fact that there are no subjects who expressed strong disagreement or moderate disagreement with this statement. Therefore, we conclude that, considering the 40.4% who strongly agreed and the 32.7% who moderately agreed, the social perception of the utility and fairness of a law is influenced by adhering to the principle of fairness in its formation.

**Fig. 3. Distribution of data regarding opinions on the manner of lawmaking.**

*„When the government makes laws, the number one principle should be to ensure that everyone is treated fairly”*



In response to the statement *„I am proud of my country's history”* the majority were undecided, with 46.2% of those surveyed selecting the “neutral” response. However, upon analyzing the other responses, we observe that a higher percentage of subjects believe they have reasons to be proud of their country's history, with 25% selecting the “moderately agree” response and 19.2% selecting the “strongly agree” response, compared to the percentage of those who believe there are no reasons to be proud of their country's history, with 7.7% expressing moderate disagreement in this regard, and 1.9% expressing strong disagreement. Nevertheless, we believe that the high frequency of the „neutral” response is a consequence of a lack of information about remarkable events in our country's history, and we hope that in the future, the number of those who agree with this statement will increase.

The statement *„People should not do things that are disgusting, even if no one is harmed”* examines how individuals perceive „disgusting” things. Thus, evaluating the responses to this statement, where 36.5% expressed moderate agreement and 19.2% of respondents strongly agreed, we observe that the majority of participants do not accept things that are „disgusting”, even if they do not cause harm to others. Therefore, disgusting things are perceived as wrong. This idea is supported by the fact that no respondent selected the „strongly disagree” response. At the same time, 34.6% of respondents do not have a definite opinion on this idea, and 9.6% expressed moderate disagreement.

Analyzing the responses recorded for the statement *„It is more satisfying to do good than to do harm”*, we note that 59.6% and 23.1% completely agree and partially agree with it, respectively. This indicates that

the majority of respondents, 82.7%, perceive goodness and good deeds as more acceptable than evil (Figure 1.4). This perception is further supported by the absence of respondents expressing strong disagreement with this statement and the presence of only one respondent expressing moderate agreement in this case.

**Fig. 4. Results regarding the social perception of the concepts of „good” and „evil”.**  
**„It is more satisfying to do good than to do harm”**



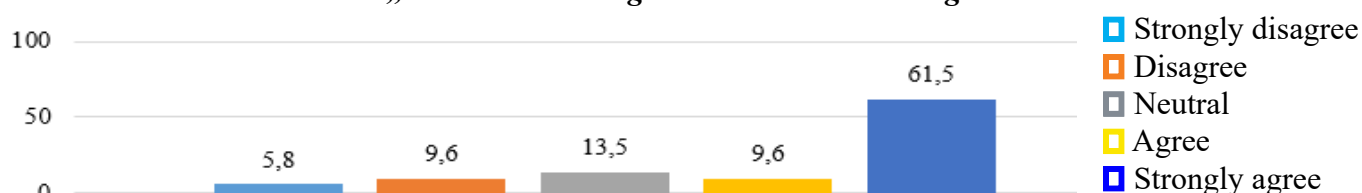
A percentage of 65.4% strongly agreed with the statement „One of the worst things a person can do is to harm a defenseless animal”, while 9.6% expressed moderate agreement. We know that during crisis situations, animals are among the victims of suffering, as they are abused, neglected, or helpless. However, there were also 1.9% of subjects who selected the “strongly disagree” response and 9.6% who expressed moderate disagreement.

The next statement in this dimension, „Justice is the most important requirement for a society”, is designed to assess the value of justice for the harmonious functioning of a society from the respondents’ perspective. Therefore, the majority of respondents indicated moderate agreement (44.2%) and strong agreement (40.4%), with 84.6% considering justice as the cornerstone of a society. The importance of justice is further demonstrated by the fact that no survey participant chose the “strongly disagree” response, and only 3.8% expressed moderate disagreement in this regard.

The next statement respondents expressed their opinion on is „It can never be right to kill a human being”. Thus, according to Figure 1.5, we can affirm that more than 70% of respondents strongly agree with this statement, with 61.5% selecting the „strongly agree” response and 9.6% selecting the „moderately agree” response. Therefore, we conclude that for these subjects, killing is perceived as an unacceptable action under any circumstances. On the other end of the axis, 5.8% strongly disagree with this idea, and 9.6% moderately agree, which could be an indicator that these individuals might justify the action of killing under certain circumstances.

**Fig. 5. Graphical representation of attitudes towards homicide.**

**„It can never be right to kill a human being”**



Therefore, analyzing the obtained results, we conclude that the majority of subjects perceive values, such as compassion, kindness, justice, and fairness as socially desirable. On the other hand, harming a defenseless animal and killing a human being regardless of circumstances are condemned by most subjects, being perceived as socially unacceptable. Similarly, the majority do not accept in society the commission of disgusting actions, even if they cause no harm. A large portion of subjects express pride in their own country.

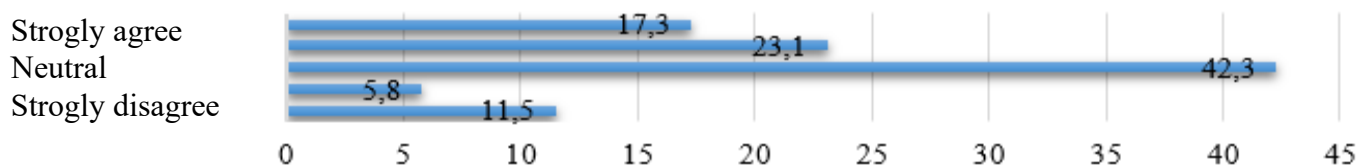
**The next dimension investigated aims to identify attitudes towards military actions in general**

The statement „When an authority requests something the individual does not agree with, the responsibility lies entirely with the authority that issued that order” aims to assess how subjects perceive the role of

authority in actions taken in crisis situations and analyze the social phenomenon of diffusion of responsibility. Thus, we observe that, in addition to the 42.3% of respondents who preferred to remain neutral about this response, 17.3% completely agree with the statement presented, and 23.1% agree to some extent. This indicates that they consider that if an individual has committed an act ordered by authority, then the individual is not perceived as responsible, but the authority is, regardless of the act committed. These responses confirm the existence of the social phenomenon of diffusion of responsibility and explain why in crisis situations, when individuals are in a group, they tend to commit unacceptable actions without taking responsibility. However, the 5.8% of subjects who expressed their disagreement to some extent, as well as the 11.5% who strongly disagreed, indicate that they perceive each individual as responsible for their own actions (Figure 1.6).

**Fig. 6. Results regarding responsibility attribution.**

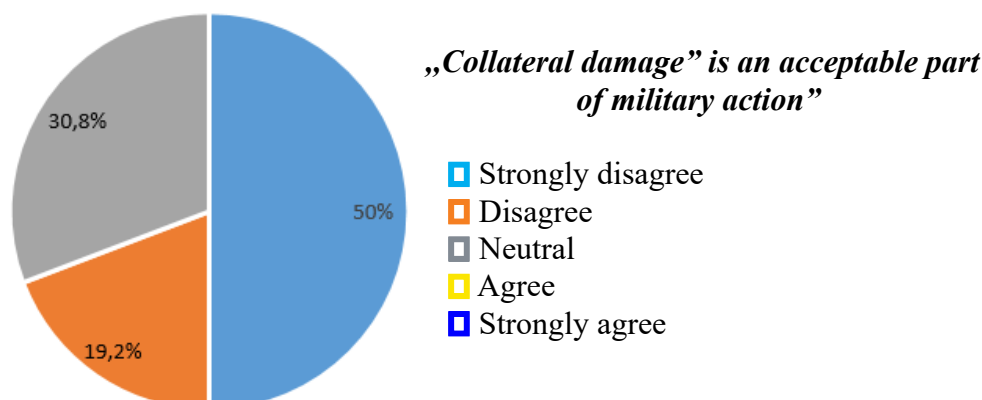
**„When an authority requests something the individual does not agree with, the responsibility lies entirely with the authority that issued that order”**



Continuing, we attempted to identify how respondents perceive the term frequently mentioned in the media, „collateral damage”. In this regard, in Figure 1.7, responses to the question „Collateral damage is just a less intense term for „civilian deaths”, used to make military actions more acceptable” are presented. Thus, the fact that 40.4% of the subjects strongly agreed with this statement, followed by 26.9% who somewhat agreed, indicates that they view the use of the term „collateral damage” as a form of informational manipulation aimed at misleading the population. We observe that this opinion is expressed by the majority of respondents, given the low number who argue against this statement, with only 5.8% and 3.8%, respectively, doing so. Another 23.1% are unsure, choosing to remain neutral.

Furthermore, we attempted to identify how many respondents perceive deaths as an indispensable component of a military conflict, with the results to the statement „Collateral damage” is an acceptable part of military action” available in Figure 1.7. Thus, we notice the absence of respondents who perceive deaths in war as acceptable. Moreover, half of the respondents strongly disagree with the previously mentioned statement, while 19.2% disagree to some extent. However, 30.8% remain neutral in this case, probably considering that the word “war” has always been associated with human losses.

**Fig. 7. Representation of opinions regarding the acceptability of „collateral damage” in military actions.**



The statement „Reports of damage resulting from military interventions are usually exaggerated” aims to assess to what extent respondents believe that the information reaching the public is modified and exaggerated to manipulate ordinary citizens. Thus, we have identified that 26.9% of respondents do not

fully agree with this statement, while 13.5% partially disagree, indicating that they consider the information they receive about the damage caused by military attacks to be truthful. On the other hand, there are 11.5% who partially agree with this statement and only 5.8% who strongly agree that the information reaching the public does not correspond to reality, thus perceiving this as a form of informational manipulation.

Analyzing the responses to the question „*The media only report the negative effects of military campaigns, but rarely the good ones*” we observe that the majority (57.7%) do not have a strong opinion on the statement. However, if we aggregate the frequencies of the responses „disagree” (11.5%) and „strongly disagree” (13.5%), compared to those recorded for „strongly agree” (5.8%) and „agree” (11.5%), we can notice that a higher percentage of respondents still trust the information presented in news portals.

Thus, in this way, we have managed to identify how individuals perceive military actions in general and how they appreciate the information about military actions transmitted by the mass media. Consequently, we can say that the majority of respondents evaluate the gravity of the situation based on the information they receive from news portals. They trust that the information presented in the mass media is accurate, thus tending to construct their perception of reality based on it. A significant portion of participants disagrees with the idea that the media exaggerates certain aspects of military campaigns; moreover, they believe that some aspects are presented in a less serious manner than they actually are. Participants, for the most part, are aware of the consequences caused by military actions, including deaths, yet they perceive the enemy more as a human rather than as a soulless animal.

Attitudes are an important part of shaping social perception. One of the consequences of the current crisis situation we are experiencing is the large number of refugees who have been forced to leave the regions where the conflict has intensified.

### Conclusions

The data obtained regarding the analyzed dimensions in the research communicate important aspects of attitudes and their role in shaping social perception based on various criteria. Social perception is defined as the process by which we interpret and understand the behavior and characteristics of other individuals, and our attitudes, beliefs, and past experiences play a crucial role in forming social perception, influencing how we: choose and retain information that aligns with our pre-existing attitudes; give a specific interpretation to information based on our attitudes; better retain information that confirms our attitudes.

Contemporary society faces a variety of crises, ranging from economic and political to social and environmental ones. In this turbulent context, how we perceive and interpret social reality becomes essential for our adaptation to changes and for making responsible decisions. Attitudes play an important role in shaping social perception, but it is important to be aware of their influence and to take measures to improve the accuracy of information interpretation and the evaluation of others. The attitudes of individuals towards current values are indicators of how they perceive the needs, strengths, and weaknesses of our society in times of crisis. Thus, we observe an appreciation for democracy and freedom as fundamental values at the moment, as well as the current need for the enactment of laws that will organize and lead society, especially in the given situation of uncertainty.

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## RELEVANCE OF FUNCTIONAL AND DYSFUNCTIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS IN THE MANIFESTATION OF EATING BEHAVIOR

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Eating behavior represents a complex interaction of psychological, social, and biological factors. Understanding the role of psychological dimensions, both functional and dysfunctional, is crucial in comprehending the manifestation of eating behavior. This article explores the significance of functional and dysfunctional psychological dimensions in eating behavior, emphasizing their relevance in the development, maintenance, and treatment of eating disorders. By exploring how these dimensions influence food choices and the relationship with nutrition, their impact on overall health and the prevention of eating disorders had highlighted. Eating disorders represent a category of complex mental disorders, characterized by significant disturbances in eating behavior and body image perception.

**Keywords:** *eating behavior disorders, anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, psycho-emotional development.*

### RELEVANȚA DIMENSIUNILOR PSIHOLOGICE FUNCȚIONALE ȘI DISFUNCȚIONALE ÎN MANIFESTAREA CONDUITEI ALIMENTARE

Comportamentul alimentar reprezintă o interacțiune complexă de factori psihologici, sociali și biologici. Înțelegerea rolului dimensiunilor psihologice atât funcționale, cât și disfuncționale este crucială în înțelegerea manifestării comportamentului alimentar. Acest articol explorează semnificația dimensiunilor psihologice funcționale și disfuncționale în comportamentul alimentar, subliniind relevanța acestora în dezvoltarea, întreținerea și tratamentul tulburărilor de alimentație. Prin explorarea modului în care aceste dimensiuni influențează alegerile alimentare și relația cu alimentația, se evidențiază impactul lor asupra sănătății generale și prevenirea tulburărilor de alimentație. Tulburările de alimentație reprezintă o categorie de afecțiuni mentale complexe, caracterizate prin perturbări semnificative ale comportamentului alimentar și ale percepției imaginii corporale.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *tulburări de comportament alimentar, anorexie nervoasă, bulimie nervoasă, dezvoltare psiho-emoțională.*

#### Introduction

Dysfunctional aspects in the manifestation of eating behavior represent a complex issue involving both psychological and social aspects and have significant consequences on individual health and functionality. Particularly, the intention to control weight can be a major risk factor in the development and maintenance of eating disorders (EDs), such as anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder [3, p. 36-40].

The first and foremost, it is important to understand that these disorders are not just about eating but also about the complex relationship an individual has with food and their own body image. Additionally, dysfunctional psychological aspects of EDs can include issues related to self-esteem and self-blame. Individuals affected by EDs may have low self-esteem and tend to attribute faults and food-related problems to their own character or lack of self-control.

These feelings of guilt and self-blame can further exacerbate ED symptoms, creating a vicious cycle of thinking and behavior.

Functional theories of eating psychology emphasize the importance of adequate regulation of food intake for maintaining optimal health. These theories explore how factors such as hunger and satiety sensations, food preferences, and cultural habits influence food choices and the amount consumed.

### **Explanatory theories of the functional and dysfunctional psychological dimensions in the manifestation of eating behavior**

There are several explanatory theories that attempt to provide a deeper understanding of the functional and dysfunctional aspects of eating behavior. These theories offer different perspectives on how psychological factors influence individuals' relationship with food and body weight. Here are some of these theories:

*Psychoanalytic Theory* – initially developed by Sigmund Freud, it focuses on the role of the subconscious and internal conflicts in determining human behavior. Regarding eating behavior, functional aspects can be understood as mechanisms of adaptation to the individual's physiological and emotional needs. Conversely, dysfunctional aspects may be associated with subconscious conflicts or past traumas that can negatively influence a person's relationship with food [2, p. 92].

Symptoms of eating disorders have symbolic meaning and sometimes reflect aspects of sexuality. Psychoanalysts tried to explain the behavior by assigning a symbol, vomiting was considered an attempt to erase a traumatic sexual experience, these induced vomiting are considered as release from the traumatic moment. The fear of being fat had been analyzed as rejection of pregnancy and thinness had been analyzed as fear of death. Bruch states that weight loss has the function of avoiding the onset of sexuality by inhibiting the development of certain aspects of the body associated with sexual functions [1].

*Behavioral Theory* – this theory focuses on how learning and previous experiences shape human behavior. In terms of eating, functional aspects may include adopting healthy eating habits following positive rewards or social feedback. On the other hand, dysfunctional aspects can be the result of learning unhealthy eating patterns or associating food with negative emotions.

*Cognitive Theory* – explores how thoughts and perceptions influence human behavior. In terms of nutrition, functional aspects can involve developing healthy thoughts and beliefs about food and one's body that promote balanced food choices. In contrast, dysfunctional aspects may be associated with cognitive distortions, such as distorted perceptions of body weight or negative thoughts about food.

*Socio-cultural theory* – the theory examines how social and cultural factors influence human behavior. In terms of nutrition, functional aspects may include adopting healthy eating practices in accordance with cultural norms and values. Conversely, dysfunctional aspects may be the result of social pressure or unrealistic cultural norms regarding weight and physical appearance.

By integrating these explanatory theories, psychologists can gain a more comprehensive understanding of the reasons and mechanisms underlying healthy or dysfunctional eating behavior. This understanding can be usable in the development of effective prevention and treatment interventions for eating disorders and in promoting a healthy relationship with food among the population.

The intricate dynamics of eating behavior encompass a spectrum ranging from functional to dysfunctional dimensions, each holding profound implications for individual health and well-being. This understanding is pivotal for several compelling reasons.

Firstly, adopting a holistic approach to health underscores the intricate interplay of psychological, social, and environmental factors in shaping eating behaviors. By examining both the functional, or healthy, aspects and the dysfunctional, or unhealthy, facets, healthcare professionals can deliver comprehensive care that targets the root causes of disordered eating patterns.

Recognizing functional dimensions, such as positive body image and effective coping strategies, informs prevention efforts, potentially reducing susceptibility to developing eating disorders. Conversely, understanding dysfunctional dimensions, such as perfectionism and trauma, facilitates early intervention strategies, preventing the exacerbation of disordered eating behaviors.

Furthermore, acknowledging the functional dimensions of eating behavior promotes positive attitudes towards food, body image, and self-care, thereby reducing the stigma and shame associated with disordered eating. This encourages individuals to seek help earlier and engage more openly in treatment.

Lastly, fostering functional dimensions like resilience and self-compassion not only serves as protective factors against eating disorders but also promotes overall mental health and well-being. By nurturing these positive attributes, individuals can cultivate healthier relationships with food, their bodies, and themselves, leading to improved quality of life and psychological resilience.

*Functional psychological factors:*

- *Developing a sense of identity and autonomy:* Adolescence, the period of frequent onset of eating disorders, marked by the search for identity and independence.
- *Coping with stress:* Eating disorders can be a way to manage difficult emotions or stressful situations.
- *Healthy interpersonal relationships:* Social support and meaningful relationships can reduce the risk of developing eating disorders.
- *Positive body image:* Appreciating your own body and accepting imperfections can help prevent eating disorders.

*Dysfunctional psychological factors:*

- *Perfectionism:* The tendency to set unrealistic standards and be highly critical of oneself can contribute to eating disorders.
- *Low self-esteem:* A negative self-image can negatively influence the relationship with food and the body.
- *Depression and anxiety:* eating disorders can be comorbid with other mental health problems, which can amplify the risk of eating disorders.
- *Emotional trauma:* Traumatic childhood experiences can increase vulnerability to TA.

Understanding the complex interplay of factors contributing to the development of eating disorders is essential for effective prevention and treatment strategies. Environmental influences, cultural norms, family dynamics, individual variability, and treatment implications all shape the landscape of disordered eating behaviors. Sociocultural pressures, such as media portrayals of body image ideals, can profoundly impact individuals' perceptions of themselves and their eating behaviors. Likewise, family dynamics, including parental attitudes towards food and weight, play a significant role in shaping individuals' relationships with food.

However, amidst these influences, individual variability emerges, with some demonstrating resilience, despite facing similar challenges, while others may be genetically predisposed to certain psychological traits that heighten their susceptibility to eating disorders.

Recognizing the multifaceted nature of eating disorders calls for holistic treatment approaches that address both functional and dysfunctional psychological dimensions. Moreover, prioritizing prevention efforts by promoting positive body image and fostering healthy coping strategies is crucial in curbing the prevalence of disordered eating behaviors.

This comprehensive approach underscores the importance of addressing the complex interplay of factors involved in the manifestation and treatment of eating disorders.

People suffering from eating disorders suffer from difficulties in emotional regulation and especially in emotional regulation on the four dimensions. The negative effects on the severity of dieting and eating behavior disorders analyzed and classified by Plivy and Herman, 1999 [7] who tested four working hypotheses:

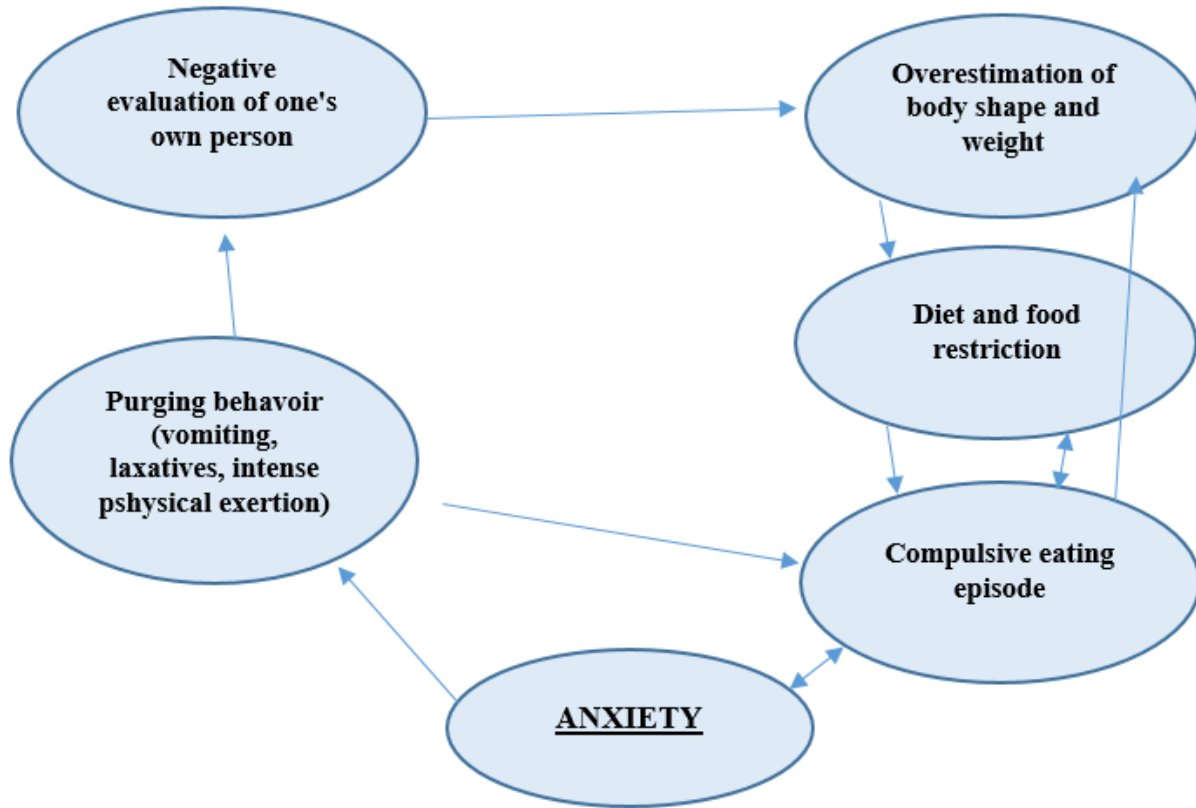
1. The psychosomatic comfort that suggests the food makes people feel better.
2. Learned helplessness through which the experience of stress is generating in all areas of the person's life.
3. Distraction the person consumes a large amount of food to distract them from the feeling of discomfort.
4. To mask people who keep a strict diet attribute the discomfort felt to the problem of overeating.

Modes of intervention in reducing the dysfunctional aspects of eating behavior.

Understanding the dimensions of functional and dysfunctional psychology in the manifestation of eating behavior is indeed essential for appropriate intervention and treatment of eating disorders (EDs). Therapeutic approaches aimed at changing dysfunctional perceptions and attitudes about food and the body are crucial in effectively treating these disorders. In this context, cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), individual and family therapy, and nutritional interventions are just some of the effective approaches used in treating OCD.

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is one of the most widely used and researched forms of therapy for eating disorders. This therapy focuses on identifying and changing dysfunctional thoughts and behaviors related to food and the body. Through CBT, clients learn to recognize and challenge negative thoughts and beliefs associated with eating and body image and develop healthy strategies for managing these thoughts and emotions.

Fig. 1. Cognitive-behavioral model of bulimia maintenance mechanisms, according to Fairburn [4-5].



The cognitive-behavioral model of eating disorder maintenance mechanisms (ED), developed by Christopher Fairburn, is a theory that explains how individual thoughts and behaviors contribute to the maintenance of these disorders. This model focuses on the complex relationship between thoughts, feelings, and behaviors related to eating and weight. Here is a more detailed explanation of this model:

-*Distorted thoughts related to food, weight, and body.* According to this model, individuals with ED tend to have distorted and negative thoughts about food, weight, and their physical appearance. These thoughts may include distorted perceptions of their body, as well as irrational beliefs about weight control and self-worth.

-*Maladaptive eating behaviors.* Individuals with ED often adopt maladaptive eating behaviors, such as severe food restriction, binge eating, or consuming food in a secretive manner. These behaviors may be used as a means of weight control or to cope with negative emotions.

-*Compensatory behaviors.* To compensate for feelings of guilt and anxiety related to uncontrolled eating, individuals with ED may engage in compensatory behaviors such as vomiting, laxative use, excessive exercise, or fasting. These behaviors can become cyclical and contribute to the maintenance of the disorder.

-*Distorted perception of outcomes.* Individuals with ED often have a distorted perception of the outcomes of these behaviors, as well as their weight and physical appearance. For example, they may perceive themselves as larger than they actually are or may believe that their weight is directly related to their worth as individuals.

-*Cycles of negative self-reflection.* These distorted thoughts, behaviors, and perceptions form cycles of negative self-reflection, in which individuals with ED experience intense feelings of guilt, shame, and anxiety. This can lead to the perpetuation and reinforcement of dysfunctional eating and weight-related thoughts and behaviors.

-*Cognitive and behavioral rigidity.* Individuals with ED may be rigid in their thinking and behavior related to eating and weight, meaning they are often resistant to change and may continue to adopt the same patterns of thinking and behavior even when they are harmful to their physical and mental health.

The cognitive-behavioral model of ED maintenance mechanisms suggests that distorted thoughts, maladaptive eating behaviors, and distorted perceptions play a central role in maintaining these disorders, and therapeutic intervention often focuses on changing these dysfunctional patterns of thinking and behavior [6].

Individual and family therapy is also an important component of eating disorder intervention. In individual therapy, clients have the opportunity to deeply explore the causes and triggers of dysfunctional eating behaviors and develop skills to deal with these challenges. Family therapy is essential in cases where relationships and family dynamics have a significant impact on the eating behavior of the affected individual. In these cases, family involvement in the therapeutic process can facilitate positive changes and support for the person experiencing ACT [8].

### Conclusions

Analyzing the specialized literature against the research issue that claims that the basis of eating behavior disorders are adaptive and mood disorders that are triggering and maintaining factors. Understanding and exploring functional and dysfunctional psychological dimensions are essential in addressing eating disorders and promoting a healthy relationship with food. Eating disorders are not only a physical problem, but also reflect deep psychological aspects such as self-esteem, interpersonal relationships and dysfunctional thought patterns.

Psychological theories offer varied perspectives on how psychological factors influence eating behavior, and their integration into therapeutic interventions can lead to personalized and effective strategies for the treatment and prevention of eating disorders.

It is crucial to recognize the role of both functional factors, such as healthy identity development and positive interpersonal relationships, and dysfunctional factors, such as perfectionism or depression, in influencing eating behavior. By approaching these issues with a holistic and personalized perspective, we can promote a healthy and balanced relationship with food, thereby helping to improve the mental and physical health of individuals.

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## THE IMPACT OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONAL STATES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LONELINESS IN THE ELDERLY

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Loneliness is an unnatural state for humans, it is a manifestation of poor adaptability, being either a social, or personal problem. The sample of the ascertainment research consisted of 200 elderly people aged between 65-90 years. The analysis of the results revealed that 78.5% of the elderly marked a level of loneliness from very high to a moderate level. The feeling of loneliness in the elderly is preceded by a series of harmful factors such as retirement, widowhood that cause negative emotions: stress, depression, anxiety. The study showed that 68.5% of the elderly attest to a very severe level of anxiety: 22.0% of respondents marked a very severe level of stress, 24.0% a high level of stress, 18.5% a moderate level of stress. On the depression scale, we found that 31% of the elderly scored very high; 26.0% attest to a high level; 21.0% find a moderate level of depression. The study confirmed that the negative emotional states of stress, depression, anxiety correlate significantly positively with the high scores that elderly people get on the loneliness scale.

**Keywords:** *loneliness, elderly, negative emotions, stress, depression, anxiety, retirement, widowhood.*

### IMPACTUL STĂRILOR EMOȚIONALE NEGATIVE ÎN EVOLUȚIA SINGURĂȚĂȚII LA VÂRSTNICI

Singuratarea este o stare nefireasca pentru oameni, este o manifestare a slabei adaptabilitati, fiind fie o problemă socială, fie personală. Eșantionul cercetării constative a fost format din 200 de vârstnici cu vârsta cuprinsă între 65-90 de ani. Analiza rezultatelor a relevat că 78,5% dintre vârstnici au marcat un nivel de singurătate de la un nivel foarte ridicat la un nivel moderat. Sentimentul de singurătate la vârstnici este precedat de o serie de factori nocivi precum pensionarea, văduvie care provoacă emoții negative: stres, depresie, anxietate. Studiul a arătat că 68,5% dintre vârstnici atestă un nivel foarte sever de anxietate: 22,0% dintre respondenți au marcat un nivel foarte sever de stres, 24,0% un nivel ridicat de stres, 18,5% un nivel moderat de stres. Pe scara depresiei, am constatat că 31% dintre vârstnici au avut scoruri foarte mari; 26,0% atestă un nivel ridicat; 21,0% găsesc un nivel moderat de depresie. Studiul a confirmat că stările emoționale negative de stres, depresie, anxietate se corelează semnificativ pozitiv cu scorurile mari pe care le obțin persoanele în vârstă la scara singurătății.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *singurătate, vârstnici, emoții negative, stres, depresie, anxietate, pensionare, văduvie.*

### Introduction

Psychological research on the third age began at the end of the XXth century in some European countries, North America, Asian countries where a longevity of the population after 65 years was found. These researches are conditioned by the aggravation in this age of some mental illnesses and the aggravation of psychosomatics–affective disorders. The most widespread of them are mood disorders, depression, anxiety which in turn can stimulate the development of more serious disorders, such as dementia [12].

Every conscious person, reaching the age of 60-65, makes a critical assessment of the years he has lived, analyzes the meaning of his own life, looks for his own contribution. The crisis in the third age is determined by the comprehension of the meaning of life: why he lived, what he achieved. The conclusion that the person makes for himself that life has been lived intensely or that it has been lived in vain, is recognized by the person and often it is difficult for him to come to terms with some segments of life or situations he

has gone through. The mistakes committed and the virtues accumulated make this crisis so significant for the following years of life, give it such emotional intensity and despair.

The crisis at this age proceeds satisfactorily for people who have realized the main meaning of life in a family where mutual understanding, support and emotional closeness reign, family members are engaged in creative activities, from which they receive satisfaction. Thus, their purpose in life was fulfilled [12]. According to the teachings of A. Maslow, these are self-realized individuals, those who have found their purpose in life, satisfied with themselves and the life they live [5]. The meaning of their life and the activities carried out coincided with their real abilities, individual characteristics, and therefore the tasks were performed by them at a satisfactory level and can determine their lifestyle, whether he became a world-renowned scholar, head of an enterprise or fulfilled the triad of vital tasks: educated the children well, planted a tree, built a house. The contribution made for descendants, regardless of their number, is an important factor in stabilizing the course of the old age crisis. The elderly, however, who are desperate and come to the conclusion that they “lived in vain”, did not achieve their aspirations or set unattainable goals, become depressed, anxious, isolate themselves, conclude that they are neglected by those close to them and by society [10].

**Loneliness** is the most complex social phenomenon that requires interdisciplinary analysis. There are various philosophical currents and psychological schools that considered loneliness as the only possible basis of human existence, an unnatural state for humans, a pathology and a manifestation of poor adaptability, being either a social problem or a consequence of the development of modern social forces. [4]. The concept of loneliness characterizes the state of a person’s emotional sphere at a certain moment in time (or a period of his life). Loneliness is a state that does not necessarily occur when a person is alone. There is probably no person who has never felt lonely being among people, and the phrase “loneliness in the crowd” has become a kind of cliché in relation to those people who experience psychological discomfort in social interaction. However, it would be more appropriate to consider loneliness as a more complex and multifaceted state that can be accompanied by various experiences [3, 7].

L. E. Peplo, M. Miceli and B. Morash offer the following view on the phenomenon of loneliness and consider that „loneliness is a complex feeling that takes over a person as a whole – his feelings, thoughts, actions” [3].

**The purpose** of the research is to identify the relationship between negative emotions: stress, depression, anxiety and the evolution of the feeling of loneliness in the elderly.

In this research, we started from the assumption that people of the third age repeatedly experience the state of stress and psychotrauma generated by a series of traumatic factors such as: retirement, estrangement from the loved ones through separation or their loss through death and exacerbation of chronic diseases. These life events, in turn, lead to social isolation and the development of feelings of loneliness [10].

**The stress** caused by the change in social status, retirement, for many elderly people leads to social isolation and the development of depression and feelings of loneliness. Episodic stress, according to H. Selye, has a positive impact on the person. It is an important phenomenon for body and soul, making a correlation between the brain, the endocrine and the nervous system. Stress, in the first stage, of alarm, and in the second, of resistance, stimulates, mobilizes, energizes, amplifies the body’s internal sources [11]. During episodic stress, man can be successful in his activity, he finds various useful solutions faster in solving some problems. Specialists in the field explain this phenomenon by the fact that during stress, more adrenaline and noradrenaline are eliminated, which in turn positively influence mental activity – due to which this hormone is called the „hormone of intelligence”. In the case of the attacked organism, these hormones produce physiological changes throughout the organism, amplifying the person’s powers to save his life or to obtain what he aspires to, but if these hormones are not exhausted, depression, indifference and stagnation in thinking intervene [8].

In the case of the elderly, the stress is repeated and the discomfort is maintained for a long time. In this sense, Hans Selye, as early as 1925, experimentally demonstrated that distress is at the origin of various mental and somatic disorders, thus having a destructive impact on human health. Selye demonstrated experimentally that psychological, emotional, as well as informational distress is reflected in different forms of behavior: impulsivity, aggressiveness, inertness, causing somatic disturbances, negative transformations

in the quality of psychic processes, changes in the structure of the motivational sphere, disturbances in behavior and communication. Thus, distress generates emotional explosions, disturbances in the emotional, cognitive, somatic spheres and in the conduct of the person, stimulates passivity, apathy, indifference to activity, depression, aggression towards those close to you or self-aggression, up to suicides [11].

We would like to mention that one and the same stressor affects people differently depending on their individual characteristics, moral values, type of temperament, etc. For some people, the source of stress is when he becomes the „scapegoat” in the group where he works or in the family, he endures the daily aggression of colleagues and family members; for another, the stress is caused by the raised voice of the colleague (parents, manager) or their non-tactical observation, and for the third – the conflict situation in the family, the breakup of the family through divorce, the loss of a loved one (through death, divorce, incarceration, going abroad borders for a long period of time), frequent alcohol abuse of one of the family members, the stress following the daily sufferings in the family where one of its members is mentally ill, etc. [10].

There is a complex, bidirectional relationship between stress and depression. Liu and Alloy (2010) investigate this relationship, reaching the conclusion that distress leads to the onset of depression, but, on the other hand, depression, once established, increases the individual’s sensitivity to stressful events [9].

**Depression** is a disease with a profound change in the thymic state, mood in the sense of sadness, moral suffering and psychomotor difficulties. The depression caused by moral suffering is particularly intense. It is accompanied by a loss of self-esteem and is manifested by the presence of thoughts about death, suicidal thoughts, negativism (lack of hope in relation to happy experiences and events in the future), lack of self-worth, problems making decisions or problems concentrating, suicidal thoughts, etc. Regarding socioeconomic factors [8, p. 12]. Depressed people are convinced that everything that happens to them is horrible and they cannot get joy from anything in life. In reality, not everything is bad in their life, but it depends on the person’s attitude towards what is happening and their way of interpreting things. Major depression, generalized anxiety disorder, and social anxiety disorder increase the risk of developing loneliness in middle and late adulthood.

Nervous depression, predominantly specific for the elderly, [6, p. 23-26] can be caused by:

- a) self-blame – the mistaken thinking that you are the worst person on earth and that everything bad, even if you were not treated to the level of your expectations, is your fault;
- b) self-pity - you complain of pity at any small failure, you are systematically in the position of victim;
- c) compassion for others - you are affected by the troubles of others on the same level as your own (it affects you that the house of a person in Africa was burned to the same extent as if it were yours, without having solutions to solve the problem).

Loneliness is directly proportional to increased social isolation and higher rates of depression and anxiety over time. The relationship between depression and loneliness is bidirectional, and these constructs are closely related. However, depression and loneliness are not the same. Depression causes people to withdraw socially, which can lead to preferred isolation.

Loneliness is not a core diagnostic feature of depression, but it can be an associated symptom. Depression is commonly seen as a gateway to loneliness [6]. Loneliness is both a predisposing factor and an outcome of depression, and people with depression, who have poor social networks, have poorer recovery rates.

**Anxiety** is defined as a feeling of uneasiness, of fear without having a real cause as the trigger, the object of fear is poorly differentiated from a cognitive point of view. People experiencing anxious states cannot recognize and define the trigger. Anxiety always targets the future, it is related to what could happen [4, p. 97]. Anxiety can be found in several forms:

**Generalized anxiety** is characterized by the constant and accentuated manifestation of states of concern about general events such as the financial situation, the relationship with the family or uncertainty about the future. It affects the person’s ability to integrate into society and often leads to isolation. This often occurs together with other anxiety or depression disorders and/or: increased nervousness, fatigue, insomnia, concentration problems, etc.

**Separation anxiety** – occurs when the person in question feels a constant fear of losing contact or the relationship with a loved one.



**Social anxiety** is a fear of negative judgment from others in social situations or public appearances. Social anxiety includes a range of feelings, such as stage fright, fear of intimacy and fears about humiliation and rejection. Social anxiety can cause people to avoid public exposure and human contact to the point where everyday life becomes extremely difficult.

**Post-traumatic stress disorder.** It can develop after a shock or psychotrauma suffered in the past. The event is relived with heightened anxiety and nightmares. The traumatic experience that triggers this form of anxiety can be determined by a variety of events such as: military service, accidents, sexual abuse or other abuse suffered in childhood, etc.

**Anxiety in the elderly** is manifested by states of worry vis a vis the near future, the financial situation, the quality of the relationship with the family of origin, states of nervousness and agitation, sleep disturbances and nightmares, lack of energy, etc.

**The hypothesis of the research:** the higher scores obtained by the elderly for negative emotional states: stress, depression, anxiety, correlate significantly positively with the high scores they attest to the loneliness scale.

**Tools used for data collection:**

1. **DASS self-assessment tool**, developed by Lovibond and Lovibond (1995). This instrument is composed of three subscales, each with the role of distinctly assessing the subjects' negative states: the depression scale, the anxiety scale and the stress scale [1, 2].

*The depression scale* in the DASS explores aspects such as negative affective mood, hopelessness, devalued appreciation of life, and lack of energy, providing a detailed picture of the degree of depression felt by an individual.

*The anxiety scale* focuses on measuring anxiety reactions, including autonomic activation, skeletal muscle effects, and the subjective experience of anxious affect, helping to assess subjects' anxiety levels.

*The stress scale* assesses the degree of stress felt, paying attention to aspects, such as difficulty relaxing, nervous agitation, irritability and impatience, thus providing a detailed picture of the level of stress in the lives of individuals (Oei, Sawang, Goh, Mukhtar, 2013).

2. **UCLA Loneliness Scale in the Elderly**, which relates to loneliness as a concept within the Loneliness Discrepancy Theory, according to which loneliness is experienced by a person when there is a difference between the connections they have and those they want, both qualitatively and quantitatively. This scale is unidimensional, which is consistent with the subjectivity of this phenomenon. The UCLA is a widely used test, considered by Weeks and Asher to be the most widely used test for measuring loneliness in adults (2012). In Romanian, the UCLA loneliness test was adapted by Plămădeala V., (2018) [7].

**The research sample consists** of 200 elderly people aged 65-85. The detailed analysis of the age of the study participants, both as an absolute value and as a distribution by age category, will allow us to assess how loneliness varies by age and to identify any statistically significant differences in this variable.

**Table 1. The structure of the sample, according to age.**

Age	Frequency	%
Between 65-74 years	152	76
Between 75-84 years	42	21
Over 85 years	6	3
Total	200	100

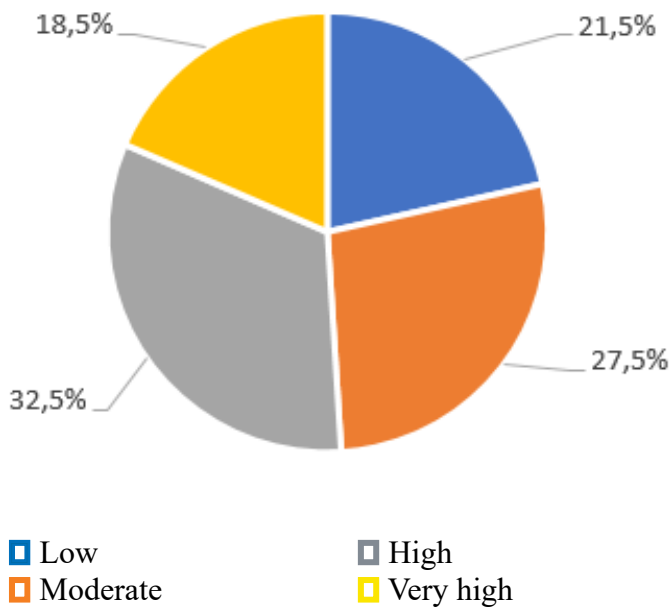
**Research results on loneliness in seniors.** To confirm the hypothesis that the high scores marked by the elderly, for negative emotional states: stress, depression, anxiety, correlate significantly positively with the high scores they obtain on the loneliness scale. we applied the UCLA Loneliness Scale and the DASS to the entire research group, consisting of 200 middle-aged respondents.

*The results from the UCLA loneliness scale* are reflected in figure 1. As can be seen from figure 1 of the total number of respondents – 18.5% marked a very high level of loneliness, 32.5% confirm a high level of loneliness, 27.5% attest to a moderate level of loneliness and only 21.5% of the elderly experience a low level of loneliness.

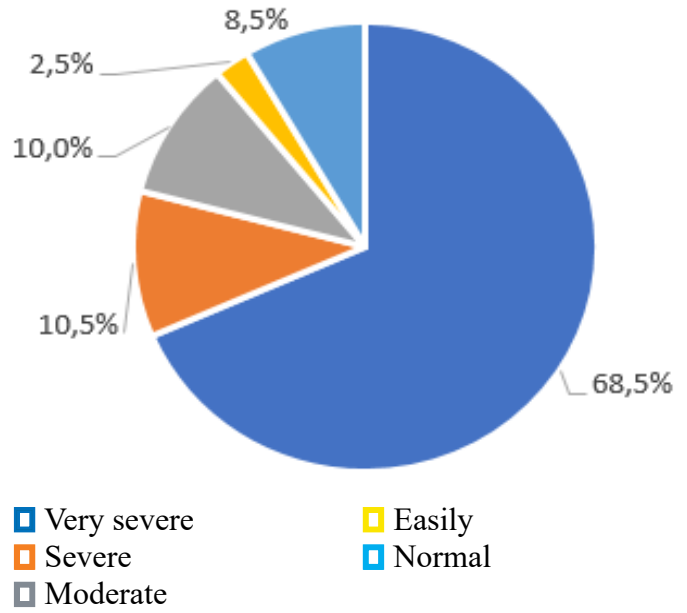
Next we present the results from the DASS 21 **Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale**. For the DASS21-R Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale, we tested the normality of the data with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. For each scale, we obtained p values > 0.05. More precisely, the stress scale has a p = 0.071 value, the anxiety scale p = 0.222, and the depression scale p = 0.177.

The analysis of the results indicates that 68.5% of the elderly attest to a very severe level of **anxiety**; 10.5% of the elderly marked a high level of anxiety; 10% have a moderate level of anxiety; 2.5% showed a mild level of anxiety and only 8.5% of the elderly show a normal level of anxiety (see fig. 2).

**Fig. 1. The level of loneliness in the elderly.**



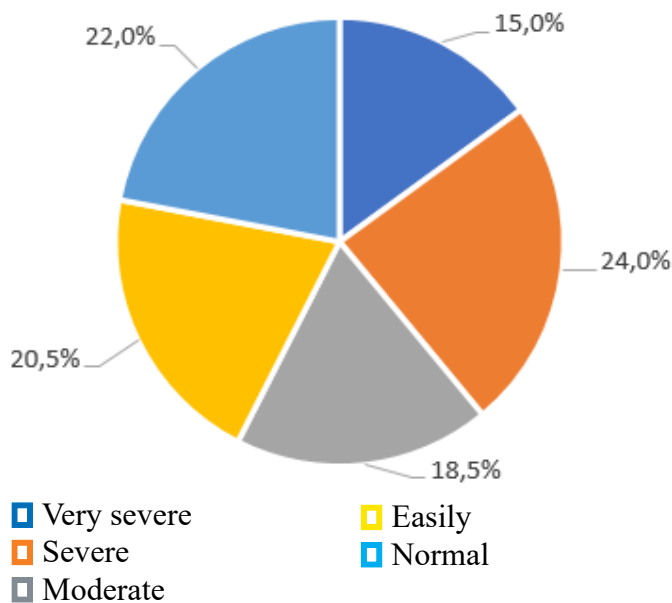
**Fig. 2. The level of anxiety in the elderly (%).**



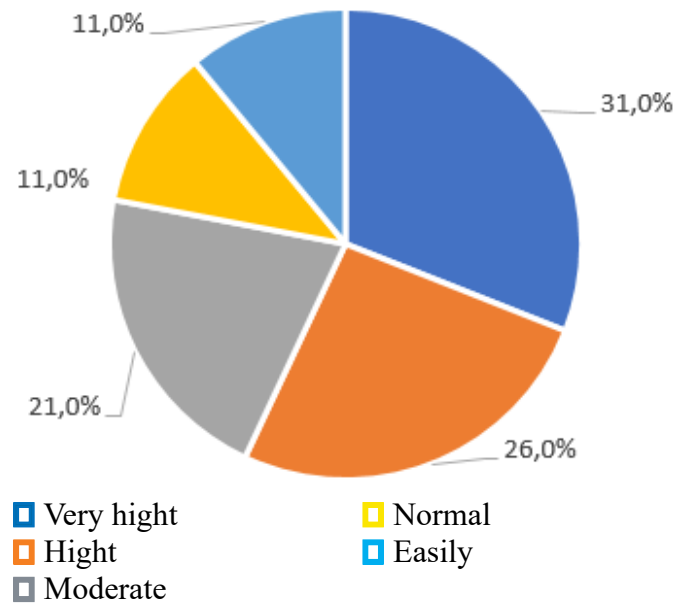
The analysis of the results obtained on the *stress* scale revealed that 22.0% of the respondents marked a very severe level of stress, 24.0% a high level, 18.5% a moderate level, 20.5% a mild level of stress and only 22% of respondents marked a normal level (see fig. 3).

On the depression scale, we found that 31% of the elderly scored the depression very high; 26.0% attest to a high level; 21.0% find a moderate level; 11% of the elderly have a mild level; 11.0% of the elderly have a normal depression score (see fig. 4).

**Fig. 3. The level of stress in the elderly (%).**



**Fig. 4. Level of depression in the elderly (%).**



We used the Pearson correlation test to identify the correlation between loneliness and negative emotions: stress, anxiety and depression (table 5). Thus, we observe that between **anxiety** and **loneliness** there is a statistically significant correlation ( $p = 0.000$ ) and that this correlation is positive, with a medium effect intensity ( $r = 0.519$ ). Therefore, we can state that a higher level of anxiety experienced by the elderly may result in a more pronounced level of loneliness.

Of the relationship between **loneliness and stress**, the correlation is statistically significant ( $p = 0.000$ ), the correlation level is low to medium ( $r = 0.470$ ), and the direction of the correlation is positive. This correlation suggests that there is an association, but not a very strong one, between how lonely an elderly person feels and the level of stress they feel. In other words, people who feel a higher level of stress tend to feel more lonely, but the connection is not very strong.

Statistical analysis revealed a positive correlation between **loneliness and depression**, which has a statistically significant level ( $p = 0.000$ ) and a medium level of correlation ( $r = 0.564$ ). This result suggests that as the level of depression increases, there is an associated tendency for the level of loneliness to increase. The statistical comparison of the results from the negative emotions: anxiety, stress, derision, the Pearson correlation coefficient has a positive value, which confirms that every increase in one of the variables analyzed there is also an increase in the other correlated variable.

**Table 5. Correlation between loneliness and negative emotions: anxiety, stress and derision.**

		Loneliness	Anxiety	Stress	Depression
Loneliness	Pearson Correlation	1	0,519	0,47	0,564
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0	0	0
	N	200	200	200	200
Anxiety	Pearson Correlation	0,519	1	0,842	0,592
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0		0	0
	N	200	200	200	200
Stress	Pearson Correlation	0,47	0,842	1	0,551
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0		0
	N	200	200	200	200
Depression	Pearson Correlation	0,564	0,592	0,551	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0	0	0	
	N	200	200	200	200

Table 5 shows the Pearson correlation revealed between loneliness and negative emotions: anxiety, stress and depression. We can say that the higher the negative emotions: anxiety, stress and derision, the higher the loneliness. Thus, the hypothesis assumed by us in the study was confirmed.

### Conclusions

1. Seniors face a series of negative factors such as retirement, widowhood, divorce, isolation from loved ones. Retirement and widowhood change the social status of the elderly and may contribute to social isolation. In our opinion, it is not the advancing age, but the stressful and traumatic factors that the elderly go through, after retirement, that aggravate the mental and physical health of the elderly.

2. The statistical analysis of the results in our study indicates a statistically significant positive correlation of medium intensity between anxiety and loneliness. This result indicates that a higher level of anxiety in the elderly may contribute to a more pronounced level of loneliness. In the case of the relationship between loneliness and stress, the correlation is statistically significant and the level of correlation is considered moderate. This suggests an association between loneliness and stress, indicating that older people who experience higher levels of stress tend to feel more lonely, although the link is not very strong. Also, a statistically significant positive correlation was identified between loneliness and depression, at an average

level of intensity. This result suggests that increased levels of depression in the elderly are associated with increased levels of loneliness.

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## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE DEVELOPMENT TECHNIQUES

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Affectivity, as a particular part of psychic life, plays an imperatively important role in man's relationship with the world and with others around him. Emotions are involved in building interpersonal relationships and conditioning harmony in groups and collectives. There is no social situation or communicative influence that is not predicated and evaluated affectively and that does not generate reactions and emotional states. Thus, depending on the nature, criteria and intensity of emotional experiences and states, emotions can be constructive or destructive.

An important contribution in maintaining the functional nature of emotions and the performance of activities in stressful conditions is due to emotional stability, which combines the role of regulation and stabilization, allowing the maintenance of inner emotional balance, and the role of flexible adaptation to the changes that occur, without negative repercussions, caused by emotional reaction.

**Keywords:** *emotions, feelings, emotional intelligence, psychological techniques.*

### TEHNICI DE DEZVOLTARE A INTELIGENȚEI EMOȚIONALE

Afectivitatea, ca o parte specială a vieții psihice, joacă un rol imperativ important în relația omului cu lumea și cu ceilalți din jurul lui. Emoțiile sunt implicate în construirea relațiilor interpersonale și în condiționarea armoniei în grupuri și colective. Nu există situație socială sau influență comunicativă care să nu fie predicată și evaluată afectiv și care să nu genereze reacții și stări emoționale. Astfel, în funcție de natura, criteriile și intensitatea experiențelor și stărilor emoționale, emoțiile pot fi constructive sau distructive.

O contribuție importantă în menținerea naturii funcționale a emoțiilor și a desfășurării activităților în condiții stresante se datorează stabilității emoționale, care îmbină rolul de reglare și stabilizare, permițând menținerea echilibrului emoțional interior și rolul de adaptare flexibilă la schimbări. care apar, fără repercusiuni negative, cauzate de reacția emoțională.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *emoții, sentimente, inteligență emoțională, tehnici psihologice.*

### Introduction

Emotions are daily life experiences, both in the intimate environment and at work. They represent both our response to the events and situations we encounter and, at the same time, can determine, in turn, other emotional reactions, which are reflected in the professional behavior of the employee.

Thus, their emotional stability contributes to ensuring the dynamic balance between the internal and external emotional state and the achievement of maximum efficiency in emotional and behavioral reactions in stressful situations in relation to civil society, with colleagues in the subdivisions, but also with leaders, and in order to achieve an emotional balance, it is necessary to know and apply certain reference psychological techniques, both individually or personally and under the guidance of the specialist psychologist of the subdivision of which he is a part [1].

In this article, we carry out a brief analysis of the concept of „emotion/feeling” and „intellectual intelligence/emotional intelligence”, as well as present several techniques for developing emotional intelligence, showing how important it is to apply them in practice.

People dedicated to the field of human resources, including psychologists, know what differentiates ordinary employees from those who stand out. We do not mean technical skills that are easy to learn and it is easy to determine whether a person possesses them or not, nor do we mean cognitive intelligence [2, 3]. We refer to the personal skills whose synonym is emotional intelligence. In order to better understand the term emotional intelligence, I went for the idea of analyzing by comparison, emotion and feeling.

Emotion (from Latin „emoveo” - „I shake”, „wave”) is a mental process of medium duration, which reflects a subjective evaluative attitude towards existing or possible situations and the objective world [4].

The process of generating emotion has the following path – first comes the stimulus from the outside world, then, in the subcortex of the brain, the processes responsible for emotion are launched [5].

They are characterized by three components:

1. Perceived in the psyche by the sensation of emotion;
2. Processes that occur at the physical level of the body;
3. Nonverbal elements.

Like many other mental phenomena, emotions are understood by different authors in different ways, so the above definition can be considered neither right nor wrong.

Emotions and feelings are not the same thing, although many psychologists consider these phenomena the same. Below (tab.1) we present the difference between emotions and feelings:

**Table 1. Difference between emotions and feelings.**

Emotions	Feeling
Emotions are short-lived. We react to a situation with emotions, for example, you write a document at work and do not save the information, an emotion of anger or upset arises. These emotions are short term, when you get home they will be gone.	The feelings are long and stable. They establish a close emotional connection with an object/subject that has motivational significance for a person. For example, when we think of a loved one, we can smile, feel an emotion of joy, or when we think of our parents' house, pleasant memories give us a „warmth” inside.
A person is not always aware of emotions, why they experience them and what specific emotions they are experiencing at the moment. When a person says, „Hot,” what does that mean? What emotions does he feel? -Anger - Fear - Desperation - Anxiety	A person is almost always aware of feelings: friendship, love, envy, hostility, pride.
Emotions are hard to control and hide. For example, you received a valuable prize unexpectedly, the surprise and joy that overcame you in those moments will unconsciously appear on your face, it will be clear that at that moment you experienced the emotion of surprise and joy.	Feelings, as a rule, are internalized, they do not disappear and simply may not appear for a long time on the outside.

### Materials and methods

To carry out the given study, the method of logical deductions, comparison, analysis, study of specialized literature, as well as international and national practices, was applied.

**The purpose of the research:** Presentation of techniques for developing emotional intelligence.

**Research hypothesis:** We assume that there are techniques for raising the level of emotional intelligence.

### Research objectives:

1. Researching specialized literature in order to define the concept of emotion, feeling, emotional intelligence;
2. Researching specialized literature in order to identify techniques for developing emotional intelligence;
3. Presentation of emotional intelligence development techniques;
4. Formulation of research conclusions, elaboration of relevant recommendations and their submission to psychologists within the subdivisions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

## Results and discussion

Generalizing the information specified above, we conclude that emotional intelligence is a person's ability to recognize emotions, to understand the intentions, motivations and desires of other people and their own, as well as the ability to manage their own and other people's emotions in order to solve certain problems. Emotional intelligence is one of the most popular concepts of the last decade. Experts from the World Economic Forum ranked it among the top 10 most important skills in 2020. On Amazon.com, we can find more than 6,000 links in the field of emotional intelligence.

Unlike intellectual intelligence, a term with which emotional intelligence is frequently compared, it is not related to reason but emphasizes energy, information, creativity, relationships with those around, trust. Intellectual intelligence, unlike emotional intelligence, appeals to reason, identifies alternatives and possibilities, makes important and conscious decisions. Emotionally intelligent people have the ability to recognize their own feelings as well as those of those around them in order to relate as well as possible. While intellectual intelligence emphasizes academic learning, language, rational thinking and analysis, emotional intelligence is characterized by interpersonal or even social skills [6, 7].

A person with high emotional intelligence understands his emotions, knows what role feelings and emotions play in communicating with people, is able to express his emotions in such a way as to establish and maintain friendships with others, seeks to know and to enrich his inner world, knows how to regulate his emotions, knows how to manage internal motivation, to maintain the mood for achieving the goal.

A person with low emotional intelligence is conflicted, irritable, indecisive, seeks to keep everything under control, subject to strong feelings of anger.

There are no bad or good emotions. We need all emotions, important to know how to manage them.

„It is very important to understand that emotional intelligence is not the opposite of intelligence, it is not the triumph of the heart over the head – it is the only way to overcome both” D. R. Caruso [3].

If emotional intelligence is not developed, it is very difficult for a person to recognize his emotions and read the state of other people [8].

The first and most important thing is to develop the ability to be aware of your own emotions. Let's learn to understand in each moment (if any) what emotion we are experiencing. This is not so easy to do, because there are a number of objective difficulties. For training, it is advisable to start tracking the emotional state every day at a certain time. Any emotion is a release of a certain hormone. Therefore, it is important to trace where the sensations originate in the body [9].

To improve police officers' ability to understand other people's emotions, we can guide them to pay attention to the non-verbal behavior of the people they interact with, thus developing empathy skills. If the communication takes place with a loved one, or an acquaintance, I can check the correctness of the assumptions by asking them: „How do you feel?” or suggesting, „I think you're upset about something right now.”

Managing emotions should not be confused with suppressing them. Often, for employees, the only way they have perfect control is to suppress their emotions [10]. However, emotions cannot be permanently suppressed, they will either break through into another situation (what is called „accumulated”), or will manifest themselves against a psychosomatic background (for example, a headache will begin). Little children are often told, „Boys don't cry”, „Good girls don't do that”. Therefore, many of us are used to suppressing our emotions to fit society's standards [11]. There are other ways to manage emotions. Many of them are familiar to us: breathing, walking, physical activities. One of the effective ways of emotional management is verbalization – a description out loud of the state that the person is experiencing: „I'm a little worried, anxious, slightly irritated”, etc.

***Below, we present a series of exercises that can help in the process of detecting and managing emotions:***

- **The „Small silent screen” exercise**

Start a movie you haven't seen yet and mute the sound. Follow by observing the gestures, facial expressions, location in space of the characters, reflecting on the emotions they are currently experiencing. This is a very interesting process. If you don't like watching feature films this way, watch some TV debates or news. Watch a segment of a familiar movie and a segment of an unfamiliar movie with the sound off. What

is the difference in the observation process? What are the similarities and differences in nonverbal behavior across cultures? Watch a movie with famous actors and some cheap series. Compare the non-verbal expressions of actors with real people in a news program.

- **The „Bus” exercise**

Follow people. What do these people feel? If you see a couple, what kind of relationship are they in? If someone tells something to someone, is the story funny or sad? How do people react?

- **„Body Methods” exercise**

Choose a body method for managing emotions that can be used in almost any situation. For example, clenched fists. Stand up on your toes a few times. Get up, walk around a bit and sit down again. Practice at least once an hour.

- **The „Problems” exercise**

Write a list of problems that are relevant to you. Remember the maximum number of problems. Now reframe these problems into goals. Be sure to formulate the goals in a positive way, that is, without using the words “no”, as well as the words „give up”, „stop”. Formulate goals as clearly as possible, make sure to set the date by which you intend to achieve them. Notice how your emotional state has changed since you started.

- **„Emotional motivators in my company” exercise**

Gândiți-vă și scrieți ce puteți face pentru a menține o atmosferă constantă de entuziasm în compania dumneavoastră. Think and write what you can do to keep a constant atmosphere of enthusiasm in your company.

- **The „Emotional Balance” exercise**

Choose a personal or work relationship that is meaningful to you. For personal relationships, it is enough to remember a period from a few days to a week, for work relationships, it is better to take a longer period – one to at two months. Divide the sheet with a vertical line in half, designate the left column as „+”, the right column as „-”. Write down in the left column all the actions that, in your opinion, improved the partner’s mood, on the right – made it worse. See how it affected the emotional balance in that relationship during the given period. Were you able to improve it or at least keep it the same? Or is the number of shares in the right column starting to depressingly prevail? If you’re in the category of people who only have a bunch of great activities in the left column, ask yourself if you’re out of balance here too? Do you give too much to your partners and ask too little in return? In both cases, it is worth drawing up an action plan to help you maintain balance in a more or less balanced state. It is useful to conduct such an analysis for yourself at least once a month, and once every few months – for people important to you.

- **The „Paraphrasing” exercise**

Use rephrasing/paraphrasing models as much as possible in communicating with people, practice until you get used to it:

*“I think you need...”*

*“I understand that...”*

*“What I understand is that you want...”*

*“I have the feeling that...”*

Emotional reflection:

*“And that makes you feel quite...”* “

*“I’m sorry, you sure feel... about it.”*

*“It’s human to feel...”*

- **The „Breathing” exercise**

Sit comfortably in a chair with your spine straight, palms on your thighs and feet on the ground, close your eyes. Focus your attention on your breath, and hold it there, refusing to be distracted by thoughts. Feel the oxygen breathed in, notice the short pause between inhalation and exhalation, then feel the oxygen exhaled, and again notice a short pause, this time between exhalation and inhalation. Do not interfere with the natural rhythm of exhalation by lengthening or shortening one of its stages, but simply let the breath unfold naturally, becoming quieter as your body and mind relax in meditation.



• **The „Present here and now” exercise**

For a week, try to see something beautiful every day: in people, in nature, in the work environment, etc. Write down and verbalize to loved ones and colleagues what you saw.

**Conclusions**

Leading us by the quote written by Daniel Goleman „*At the heart of every powerful emotion is an impulse to act. The ability to manage this impulse is the essence of emotional intelligence*” [4], we conclude that emotional intelligence alone does not ensure success. Incorrect management of emotions can have destructive consequences at the personal level and interpersonal relationships, which can subsequently generate a series of negative consequences. But, in addition to the quality of being a good user of emotional intelligence, there is also the understanding that it is not and should not be replaced by skills, knowledge or skills accumulated over time. Emotional intelligence increases the chances of success, but does not guarantee it in the absence of the necessary knowledge [12].

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## PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE LIFE OF YOUNG PEOPLE DIAGNOSED WITH DIABETES

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This article aims to provide a review of the risks associated with diabetes mellitus (DM) in young people, which contribute to the diabetes-specific distress, personal and interpersonal difficulties experienced by young people with diabetes since diagnosis, as well as the need to include psychologists in the multidisciplinary teams responsible for the care of people with diabetes. In this sense, we will present an analysis of the MEDLINE and PUBMED databases of the National Library of Medicine, in the USA. The diagnosis of DM presents a significant psychological burden, affecting individuals and families. Managing DM requires extensive lifestyle adjustments, often leading to depression, anxiety and emotional withdrawal. Despite the psychological challenges, psychological support is underutilized among DM patients. Recognizing the barriers to seeking help and advocating for multidisciplinary interventions are essential steps. The review underscores the urgent need for research and interventions aimed at enhancing the psychological well-being and quality of life of young people with DM.

**Keywords:** *diabetes, distress, anxiety, depression, psychologist, interventions.*

### ASPECTE PSIHOLOGICE ȘI SOCIALE ALE VIEȚII TINERILOR DIAGNOSTICATI CU DIABET

Acest articol își propune să ofere o trecere în revistă a riscurilor asociate cu diabetul zaharat (DZ) la tineri, care contribuie la stresul specific diabetului, dificultățile personale și interpersonale cu care se confruntă tinerii cu diabet zaharat încă de la diagnosticare, precum și necesitatea de a include psihologi din echipele multidisciplinare responsabile cu îngrijirea persoanelor cu diabet. În acest sens, vom prezenta o analiză a bazelor de date MEDLINE și PUBMED ale Bibliotecii Naționale de Medicină din SUA. Diagnosticul de DZ reprezintă o povară psihologică semnificativă, afectând indivizii și familiile acestora. Gestionarea DM necesită ajustări extinse ale stilului de viață, ducând adesea la depresie, anxietate și retragere emoțională. În ciuda provocărilor psihologice, suportul psihologic este subutilizat în rândul pacienților cu DZ. Recunoașterea barierelor în calea căutării de ajutor și susținerea intervențiilor multidisciplinare sunt pași esențiali. Revizuirea subliniază nevoia urgentă de cercetări și intervenții menite să sporească bunăstarea psihologică și calitatea vieții tinerilor cu DZ.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *diabet, suferință, anxietate, depresie, psiholog, intervenții.*

### Introduction

The World Health Organization defines chronic conditions as those disorders characterized by a long duration, of at least three months, with symptoms of variable intensity and often having a progressive but slow evolution [19; 22]. Diabetes mellitus is one of the chronic medical conditions, which has an impact on the physical level, affecting the function of the pancreas, but which also affects the psychosocial aspects of life.

Diabetes is a serious chronic disease, associated with devastating effects both on an individual level, physically and psychologically, and on an economic level. Moreover, since 2011, diabetes has been included among the four non-communicable diseases that occupy a leading place on the list of priorities of world leaders [19, 22]. But despite this status, its incidence and prevalence continue to have a worryingly upward trajectory. The special feature of the 21st century is the diabetes pandemic. Regardless of the successes of clinical and experimental diabetology achieved in recent years, the prevalence and morbidity of diabetes continue to increase, according to the data of the World Health Organization [2, 11, 19].

Diabetes is a long-term disease that requires treatment, but also important changes in lifestyle.

Healthy eating, physical exercise, giving up vices, following a schedule of the day are also a treatment for diabetes [2]. It is important to pay close attention to this condition because, in the absence of permanent control, the disease will evolve.

According to international statistics: every 11th person suffers from diabetes; one out of 2 people suffering from diabetes does not know that they are sick; every 7 seconds a person dies from diabetes; diabetes is the first cause of limb amputation; diabetes is the first cause of blindness (loss of vision); diabetes is the first cause of dialysis treatment; diabetes increases 2-4 times the occurrence of cardiovascular diseases. Although these data are worrying, the good news is that, in the situation where the person with diabetes is responsible, knows all the particularities of the disease and follows the recommendations of specialists in everyday life, the complications of diabetes can be avoided [2, 23, 24].

Diabetes is a disease with a significant psychological impact on patients, given that its management requires a significant reconfiguration of lifestyle and constant efforts to comply with medical procedures and indications indispensable to survive or reduce the risk of serious, irreversible complications - all of which with neither the prospect of healing, nor certain or immediately perceptible rewards to the person. Receiving the diagnosis of diabetes is a moment of reckoning for the person, and the news comes as a shock to both the patient and the family, regardless of the type of diabetes [5].

The management of diabetes mellitus (DM) requires both biological and psychological management, diabetes also brings a series of psychological difficulties that can disrupt the lives of individuals, behavioral and affective. Diabetes mellitus involves a daily set of self-care behaviors: insulin treatment is required before each meal and the dose of insulin is set in relation to the blood glucose value, but maintaining a good blood glucose value during the day can prove to be a tiring process, because there are many other factors that can influence this balance. Some of these factors can be controlled by sufferers, such as the number of carbohydrates consumed, the level of physical exertion performed that day, the time between meals, while other factors are difficult to manage [12; 18].

The main emotional difficulties associated with poor glycemic control in patients with DM are depression, anxiety, sadness and emotional withdrawal [15]. Even though these emotional difficulties may decrease after the first year after diagnosis, coping strategies developed during this time period may have an impact on later psychological development [10, 15, 17].

The complex interactions between psychological disorders and medical conditions is an ever-expanding field of interest that has attracted the attention of the world's institutions in the field of health psychology over time. Thus, the World Health Organization proposes a program to promote an integrated vision regarding the approach to psychological disorders in the case of diabetes [23].

Depression, whether major, moderate or mild, dysthymia and subclinical depressive symptoms, which occur without meeting the criteria for a psychiatric diagnosis, represent a risk factor in patients with diabetes in terms of diminishing the quality of life [4, 6, 8, 9]. People suffering from depression and anxiety are at increased risk of developing other conditions as well [23]. The association between anxiety and diabetes is not clarified in the specialized literature, but there are studies that indicate that in these patients the association of anxiety can lead to cardiac events and increase the risk of mortality [1].

Psychosocial support has an important impact in managing anxiety and can reduce anxiety in people with diabetes. According to scholars, social support in stressful life situations is associated with lower levels of depression and psychological distress [10, 18]. Loneliness, the feeling of loneliness, is a predictor of the incidence of depressive events, even when variables such as demographic, behavioral and biological risk factors, depressive symptoms, and the number of friends and family members are controlled, as shown in a longitudinal study by over 19 years by Thurston and Kubzansk, 2009. In addition, life situations that can cause chronic major stress can contribute to the erosion of social relationships [2, 7, 17].

Diabetes mellitus can represent an important stressor in itself, but especially when associated with psychological conditions or other stressors of a psychosocial nature. Therefore, the investigation of the support group and possibly the approach of this theme in the psychological intervention may represent important objectives in the assessment and counseling of patients with diabetes [18].

Also, personal factors that act as impediments to effective diabetes management when negatively va-

lence include: knowledge about the disease and treatment, feeling empowered in the treatment of one's disease, health literacy, motivation, cognitions about health, self-efficacy, coping and problem-solving skills, locus of control, depression, anxiety, forgetfulness, alcohol abuse, other health issues that may influence diabetes management [17, 18].

While environmental factors that interfere with self-care of the disease include: social support, factors related to the quality of services received, socio-economic aspects, distance to health care centers, other competing responsibilities and duties, factors related to the availability of quality medical options, access to healthy food, the opportunity to exercise, etc. [3, 8].

Evidence from the literature shows that living with diabetes during youth is not a linear experience, and the voices of young people can inform researchers to develop evidence-based, personalized interventions to help them achieve better emotional and metabolic control [3, 10, 11].

### **Objective**

Evaluation and analysis of the available literature dedicated to psychological and social problems in young people with diabetes.

### **Material and methods**

PUBMED and MEDLINE search were performed to select the works available from the last 10 years based on the keywords: diabetes, affective status, distress, anxiety, depression in Romanian, English, French and Russian languages. Multiple scientific sources were found, from which 50 selected scientific papers presented a value for the given review.

### **Results**

Diabetes and hyperglycemia are among the most important elements responsible for the increased incidence of mortality and morbidity worldwide, thus we recall one of the statements of the International Diabetes Federation (IDF): „diabetes is one of the major health emergencies of the 21st century worldwide” [2].

Research in recent years is bringing increasingly clear data on the connection between diabetes and affective disorders.

The metabolic disturbances expressed in diabetes mellitus (DM) lead to pathological changes in many systems and organs, but also have a profound psychological and social impact [3, 5, 8]. However, unlike the clinical picture of the condition, the depth of psychological disturbances in diabetes is very little studied and elucidated in the contemporary literature. There is a need for an in-depth view of what it means to live with DM in young people, focusing on the various psychological and relational factors that impact on the day-to-day management of diabetes. The results of the studies in this summary article add to the limited base of specialized studies from the Romanian context [6, 7, 8, 16].

Starting from the end of the 19th century, with the development of modern psychology, the biomedical model, according to which somatic diseases are exclusively associated with disturbances in the biological plane, began to lose its power. Currently, thanks to the contributions from psychology, the preference for the biopsychosocial model dominates, which brings to the fore the idea that health is an objective that can be achieved when attention is paid to all the functioning plans of the individual [3, 4, 22]. Diabetes is a very suggestive example of what the biopsychosocial model means and how it can be used to the advantage of patients and the general population, and the close connection between the biological, psychological and social levels is manifested both in the etiology of diabetes and during the life of patients [3].

On the other hand, diabetes, right from the moment of diagnosis, tends to be a real burden both for patients and for the people close to them. According to some authors, the diagnosis is experienced as a sentence to a life threatened by multiple irreversible and disabling medical complications and made difficult by constant efforts to manage the disease and keep the associated risks under control [2, 4, 7].

Together with the problems given by the obligation to precisely follow a complicated treatment and the sentence of living with an incurable disease, diabetes brings a series of psychological difficulties that can significantly disrupt the lives of patients on a personal, professional, social and family level. Moreover,

depression and emotional distress are common in patients with diabetes [6, 9, 15] and is associated not only with an impairment of their quality of life [2, 4], but also with poor disease management [2, 4, 13].

Diabetes can strongly interfere in patients' lives, on several levels: professional, social, at the level of family relationships. Along with the diagnosis, the person also receives the label of “diabetic”, and this brings with it a series of social, legal and life implications for individuals [5]. Stigmatization of patients with diabetes seems to be quite a serious problem, but undetected and researched [17]. Although people without diabetes generally believe that the disease is not a cause of social stigma, many patients with diabetes report that there are many contexts in which negative social evaluations affect their lives at work, from studies, in interpersonal relations, etc. [8, 12].

From a practical point of view, the quality of life of people suffering from chronic conditions was and is the subject of interdisciplinary research extremely important for the global therapeutic approach. The term “quality of life” refers to the subjective perceptions of both the patient and the specialists in the field, it is a reflection of the individual's ability to adapt to the new evolutionary conditions of the chronic disease [20].

In recent years, many studies have tried to quantify the changes in the quality of life of patients with diabetes, unfortunately, most of them were carried out on non-homogeneous therapeutic groups of patients, with the application of different methods of tracking the effect achieved in relation to the therapeutic gesture practiced [20]. Measuring the quality of life is difficult, problematic and constitutes a complex, dynamic collection of objective and subjective, social and individual, positive and negative, continuously interacting dimensions [24].

It should be mentioned that, currently, the real impact of diabetes on the patient's quality of life, its correlation with the type of diabetes, the severity and the rate of complications is insufficiently investigated. In this context, it is necessary to carry out an analysis with quantitative and qualitative interpretation of the implications of the diagnosis and treatment on the state of health and on the level of quality of life, of the degree of psychological and social adaptation in different types of diabetes. Through the research of the domestic specialized literature, the proportion of scientific works that address the quality of life of patients with diabetes proved to be very small and sporadic in nature. Evaluation studies of the quality of life are needed with the help of specific questionnaires devoted to diabetes, able, along the different stages of treatment, to provide a complex picture of the patient's perception of his own state of health.

The lack of such tools has so far limited the development of specialized services in the Republic of Moldova, because the results of specialized studies abroad cannot be extrapolated to our case study. Thus, with reference to the problem presented, there is an imminent need to develop, translate and adapt the Romanian version of some specific questionnaires for evaluating the degree to which diabetes and the therapeutic process influence the patient's quality of life. The evaluation of the quality of life is also important when we refer to the time monitoring of the evolution of diabetes.

The quality of life of patients with diabetes (DM) is affected by a multitude of factors. From this point of view, the medical complications that patients often develop due to diabetes (DM) represent one of the greatest threats to quality of life [4; 8; 14]. Specific predictors for a reduced quality of life are older age, female gender, a reduced socioeconomic status, the existence of health problems such as cardiovascular disease, microvascular complications, congestive heart failure, peripheral vascular disease, chronic lung disease; the presence of depression; use of insulin; the number of drugs included in the treatment plan, etc. [2, 19].

Despite these contradictions, regardless of which variable makes the greatest contribution to adherence to desirable diabetes management behaviors, both diabetes-specific distress, depressive symptoms and pathologically severe depression require specific, differentiated attention and treatment [2].

What seems to matter more is the ability to correctly identify what the problem is in order to apply the right therapeutic strategies and techniques. And both dimensions of the problem – assessment and appropriate therapeutic recommendations – require the presence of a clinical psychologist in the multidisciplinary team responsible for the care of patients with diabetes [12, 18].

The inclusion of psychological services in the care package for people diagnosed with diabetes is consistently accepted and encouraged among professionals [2, 19], and the effectiveness of psychological interventions in support of these people is scientifically supported [13, 17, 18].

Although the obvious benefits of an extensive interdisciplinary approach to the treatment of the diabetic patient have been demonstrated, there are still numerous barriers to the integration of all methods of treatment of affective disorders [18]. Extensive future studies are needed to identify the full range of emotional problems associated with diabetes and chronic complications, as well as methods of prevention. In this context, the importance of the psychologist in the diabetes patient care team is emphasized again [2, 24].

However, few people with diabetes end up seeking psychological help even if they need it [18], and in the Republic of Moldova, based on empirical observations, it can be said that assessment and psychological support do not seem to be a rule in the care scheme long term of these patients. Moreover, access to psychological intervention services seems to be still sub-optimal, although some improvement could be noted over time.

Seeking psychological support tends to be hampered by a multitude of psychosocial factors such as social stigma, social norms, fears associated with therapy, fear of getting in touch with one's own emotions, avoidance of self-disclosure, negative expectations about the usefulness and risks of working with a psychologist or self-esteem, not only by objective conditions such as the lack of medical insurance to cover the costs [19, 24].

In the case of the care of patients with diabetes, regardless of their age, it is found that interventions on several levels, delivered by multidisciplinary teams that also contain specialists with training in psychology, are encouraged more and more [8, 10, 13, 17, 18]. In addition, the American Diabetes Association includes psychological testing and intervention on the list of standards of primary care for patients with diabetes and formulates a series of recommendations for the identification and management of psychosocial difficulties specific to diabetes [2, 24].

### **Conclusions**

The results obtained, through the use of an analytical tool, allowed us to highlight the problematic aspects of the lives of young people diagnosed with diabetes, raising the awareness of the scientific community on a current topic.

Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a disease with a significant psychological impact on young people, given that its management requires a significant reconfiguration of lifestyle and constant efforts to comply with the procedures and medical indications indispensable to survive or reduce the risk of serious complications, irremediable – all this without the prospect of healing, nor certain rewards or easily perceptible by the person. Receiving the diagnosis of diabetes is a moment of balance for the person, and the news comes as a shock for both the patient and the family, regardless of the type of diabetes.

Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a very suggestive example of what the biopsychosocial model means and how it can be used to the advantage of patients and the general population. The close connection between the biological, psychological and social level is manifested both in the etiology of diabetes and during the life of the patients. The study results in this article add to the limited body of research that highlights diabetes in the young is not a linear experience.

The inclusion of psychological services in the package of measures for the care of people diagnosed with diabetes is consistently accepted and encouraged among professionals, and the effectiveness of psychological interventions in support of these patients needs to be scientifically supported.

In this context, both understanding the reasons why some patients with diabetes encounter difficulties in seeking psychological help and finding measures to remove the barriers between patients with diabetes and psychologists become as important as identifying successful therapeutic strategies and techniques.

Educating the community, in the direction of highlighting the usefulness of psychological services in assisting patients with diabetes and increasing doctor-patient-psychologist collaboration, strengthening the behaviors of seeking psychological support, become equally important.

Taking into account all this, we encourage the realization of some research efforts, in the direction of highlighting the usefulness of psychological services in assisting young people with diabetes and increasing their quality of life.

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[https://doi.org/10.59295/sum5\(175\)2024\\_29](https://doi.org/10.59295/sum5(175)2024_29)**SOCIAL AND COGNITIVE BIAS IN THE CONTEXT OF ROAD TRAFFIC****Olga AXENTII,***Moldova State University*

Currently, there is a great concern for the components related to road traffic, and especially for the central element represented by the man himself, i.e. the driver. In the specialized literature, there are a number of concepts from social or cognitive psychology already established in explaining risky driving behaviors. The article analyzes the types of social and cognitive biases, which represent specific illusions of traffic participants, distortions that in certain contexts can influence the behavior of drivers and cause accidents or human losses. Many of the drivers, especially those with little experience, do not know the inherent risk they are in, it being in some places veiled by these biases, and accordingly do nothing to prevent or avoid risky situations. Information and education about these issues can save lives.

**Keywords:** *drivers, risk, social and cognitive biases, prevention.*

**BIASURILE SOCIALE ȘI COGNITIVE ÎN CONTEXTUL TRAFICULUI RUTIER**

Actualmente se atestă o mare preocupare pentru componentele ce țin de traficul rutier și în special de elementul central reprezentat de omul în sine, adică conducătorul auto. În literatura de specialitate există o serie de concepte provenite din psihologia socială sau cognitivă deja consacrate în explicarea comportamentelor riscante la volan. Articolul analizează tipurile de biasuri sociale și cognitive, care reprezintă iluzii specifice ale participanților la trafic, distorsiuni care în anumite contexte pot influența comportamentul conducătorilor auto și cauza accidente sau pierderi umane. Mulți dintre conducătorii auto, în special cei cu puțină experiență nu cunosc riscul inerent în care se află, acesta fiind pe alocuri voalat de aceste biasuri și, respectiv, nu întreprind nimic pentru a preveni sau a evita situațiile de risc. Informarea și educația cu privire la aceste aspecte poate salva vieți.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *conducători auto, risc, biasuri sociale și cognitive, prevenție.*

**Introduction**

In obtaining a driver's license, all people follow the same path, there is a universal and equal form of training for everyone who wants to drive a motor vehicle, so, if every driver would respect and strictly follow everything that is taught in a driving school, with great certainty the overall picture in road traffic would be different than what can be observed currently. When we talk about the image of road traffic, we refer to: the various forms of aggression, the risky behavior, the number of accidents, the number of traumas, the number of violations, etc. Regardless of the behavior shown by the drivers, and how much or how little risk the drivers assume, it is certain that in the evaluation of traffic situations each person has a certain predisposition towards certain biases, which do not always have a positive role.

Bias is a subjective tendency of the individual, manifested through an error of judgment or reasoning, often unconscious, in a positive or negative sense, caused by internal or external influences on the person. For a general translation into Romanian, the most appropriate terms are distortion and prejudice, in social psychology – tendency or subjective preference, in cognitive psychology – error of judgment or influence of a phenomenon, in traffic psychology – illusion of drivers. As a whole, precisely these illusions can cause the distortion of the driver's psychological reality when driving a motor vehicle [3].

In this context, we can delimit two categories of biases: biases of a social nature that are based on the evaluation of one's own person and the evaluation of others, and cognitive biases that distort the subjective reality through errors of judgment or processing of information received from the external environment. Even if they are divided into two distinct categories, most biases are still a sociocognitive combination, so that in each bias we will find elements related to subjective reasoning and judgments, as well as elements related to the image of one's own person. And, because we live in a world where, as the author Michael Føessel states, arrogance has become a social passion, we cannot get over a first bias that is based on this

arrogance, namely the illusion of superiority [10]. In this case, it is about that type of behavior in which the person tends to place his own performance above that of others, even if in reality it is not quite true.

It is interesting to notice a sociological study led by James Reason, professor emeritus at the University of Manchester, England. In an attempt to understand what exactly causes traffic accidents, Reason surveyed 520 drivers, asking them to estimate how many times they committed violations and what the cause was: Did they not carefully check their position in the rearview mirror? Did they enter the wrong lane when approaching an intersection? Did they signal or not when they changed lanes? Alongside the questions, Reason asked them to self-assess their driving capabilities compared to others. Of the 520 drivers, only five rated themselves as weaker than average – less than 1%. The others, even the truly abysmal drivers who constantly made mistakes, considered themselves to be at least as good as most, or thought themselves much better. It was, essentially, a mass delusion that made them completely blind to their own failings. The consequences of this „blindness” are caused, in large part, by the tendencies of a society obsessed with success, which does not allow mistakes and which cruelly condemns any slip-up. But these slips exist, even if they are cosmeticized, and can be from serious to fatal – because the arrogance of a driver who thinks he is better than he really is can be the arrogance of a doctor, or a judge, or a political leader [2]. The greatest danger of this bias, and living it in traffic, is that it causes people not only to reach erroneous conclusions and make unfortunate choices, but the incompetence they indulge in prevents them from recognizing their own inabilities.

This type of bias can also take shape against the background of the phenomenon of social comparison described by the author L. Festinger. The evaluation process that each person carries out since childhood on their own physical and mental attributes, abilities, behaviors, performances in relation to others, continues in adulthood. Thus, people tend to resort to social comparison for several reasons: to self-evaluate; to strive for self-perfection, to strengthen and maintain their self-esteem. People compare themselves with others, not only to obtain relevant information regarding self-evaluation, but also to maintain and strengthen their self-esteem. This can be achieved most easily by comparing with those who have succeeded in life less than us, have more modest achievements (material, family, professional, etc.). This tactic is called „downward social comparison”, and it is a very good therapeutic tool that we use in our everyday life to maintain and strengthen our self-esteem [4].

The phenomenon of social comparison can be complemented by two other biases such as: the illusion due to exaggerated optimism and the illusion of control. Optimism error refers to an excess of optimism that usually characterizes drivers and causes them to judge that the chances of being involved in a negative event are lower than in reality. The error occurs when the majority assesses their own risk significantly below the group average and is produced by perceiving a low probability of negative events and a high probability of positive events. Thus, people are guided in their behavior by such thoughts: if something bad can happen, it will not happen to me in particular. In this case, people tend to believe that only others are vulnerable to the consequences of risky or unhealthy behaviors. It is believed that the optimism error could increase the chances that drivers will take risks or reduce the chances that they will take preventive and protective measures, such as wearing a seat belt. Also, due to this type of error, we could have a major inefficiency in the persuasiveness of some accident prevention campaigns, because these people will think that those messages are not addressed to them, but to other drivers, because they do not perceive themselves to be threatened by possible dangers. The illusion of control represents the belief that a person can deal with risky situations, in other words, it is the tendency of individuals to perceive that they have more control over their own behavior than they actually have [3]. Thus, people tend to believe that in the event that something unforeseen happens, they are very good drivers and will act in such a way that they will definitely be able to avoid an accident. Such an approach is nothing but an underestimation of the danger of risky situations for one’s own person and, at the same time, an overestimation of one’s own capacities and abilities.

Another type of bias commonly encountered in traffic is self-justification, which is the tendency to believe that one’s own behavior is justified and justifiable, when the behavior of others is not. This type of bias can be seen in situations where the driver expresses their dissatisfaction with other drivers who speed past them, using criticism or specific remarks, while they themselves exhibit this type of behavior at the wheel,

but the fact that they are speeding is perfectly normal and usually justified by a „noble cause”. For example, a common justification for such drivers is related to the type of car driven, more precisely the brand of the car. Thus, the drivers of very technically well-equipped cars with powerful engines claim that such cars are made for speed.

In the article by the authors B. Claus and L. Warlop, we find an addition regarding the type of car and its connection with the risk in traffic. Starting from the idea that higher levels of social connectivity can give people a sense of security that positively affects their tolerance for risk in financial decisions – a mechanism he labels the „cushion hypothesis”, he comes to the idea that risk perception – not attitude toward risk – determines risk-taking behavior. Risk appraisals are much more affective than cognition-based appraisals, and risk tolerance is closely related to feelings of control. Comfort, stability and security in the social realm can make one feel supported, making financial risk seem less daunting. Conversely, losing control in one domain (a game) affects subsequent financial risk-taking, and focusing on loss control affects risk-taking in domains such as health, social environments, ethics, and gambling.

Similar to the general cushion hypothesis is proposed – the „car cushion hypothesis”: Larger cars give people a sense of security and control which — similar to other cases of security and control – will lead to taking more risks [7].

Even if this hypothesis was confirmed in a study, this would only represent one side of the coin, because we cannot overlook the fact that it is precisely the large and highly technically equipped automobiles that also have the highest survival rate in case of accident. At the same time, the accident is not always caused by the driver of this car, it can be another driver or other external factors, which would only justify the choice of drivers in favor of these cars, people choose comfort and safety.

Another bias that is on the same segment as self-justification, only at the opposite pole is – the false consensus. In the dictionary of psychology this concept is defined as the tendency to assume that one’s own opinions, beliefs, attributes or behaviors are more widely shared than they actually are. The false consensus effect is often attributed to the desire to see one’s thoughts and actions as appropriate, normal, and correct [5].

One of the main reasons this bias occurs is because it helps boost self-esteem, because believing that other people think and act the same way we do makes us feel good about ourselves, so we are motivated to think that other people are just like us.

Moreover, this type of thinking can justify our own behavior, which happens in traffic when drivers who engage in certain violations believe that other road users also commit the same violations and even with a higher frequency [6].

Thus, a driver under the influence of this type of bias will most likely tend to exhibit risky behavior considering it common and appropriate.

As I mentioned before, most biases are still a socio-cognitive combination, and when we talk about the cognitive side, we mean the errors that inevitably occur at the level of cognitive-sensory mental processes – perception, higher mental processes – memory, thinking, or mental states – attention, which can cause any of the following effects:

- Distortion of some aspects of the reality perceived by the driver compared to the objective reality;
- Logical errors (judgment or information processing);
- Inappropriate or contraindicated actions in regulating driving behavior [3].

Perception consists in a knowledge of objects and phenomena in their integrity and at the moment when they act on the sensory organs [1].

Perceptual bias refers to the tasks that a driver has to perform when behind the wheel, such as: estimating the speed of travel and the surrounding elements, the distances between these objects, as well as the combinations of all these variables in order to act efficiently according to the available time. These estimates become difficult when we depend on the dynamics of the movement. Linear perspective plays an important role in the perception of depth and distance, because more distant objects are higher in the field of view, and the result of this is that the angle of inclination from which one looks influences the distance estimate. Thus, if we are in a vehicle that is closer to the ground, such as sports cars, we will tend to perceive objects

further away than they actually are, and conversely, if the vehicle is higher, we will perceive objects at a smaller distance. This bias is extremely important in avoiding collisions, especially when drivers are trained in overtaking.

In the research of the author Groeger J., an average underestimation of the speed by 5-10 km/h is reported. This is because drivers rarely look at the speedometer. In natural studies, engine sound and background noises help to better perceive speed, while simulator studies mainly highlight the importance of visual perception [8].

In the given context, we can ask what will be the impact of electric cars over time, because they are technically created in such a way that they practically do not produce any sound, while engine is powerful and, respectively, the speed is very high.

The cognitive category also includes attention biases, which are considered to be the main cause of accidents. Attention is a synthesis function, gathering all available data and resources around an object or phenomenon, and when drivers are engaged in other cognitive tasks while driving, there is a delay in making a decision such as whether to brake. One type of attention error is the phenomenon of inattentive blindness, which is the refusal to see certain things that are as visible as possible. In this case, the attention is very much requested by an informational element, so that it abstracts from other elements in the same context [3].

In relation to memory biases, there is such a phenomenon called „pink retrospection”, which refers to the fact that a biased perception of the past in relation to the future can lead to inaccurate assessments of both time periods. When we monitor progress over time, one is more likely to perceive the past as better than it was. Pink hindsight is a product of how our brains process memory over time. One reason older adults have a rosier picture of the past, which for them is young adulthood, may be that those periods of time coincide with more emotionally important memories. If we make an analogy with the activity of driving, then the danger of this bias lies in the impact on the thinking of drivers who in the past either showed risky behavior in traffic, or committed violations or were part of road accidents and now, thanks to the bias, have thoughts which sounds like this: „It wasn't really that serious”, „If I didn't suffer anything, it means I know how to handle myself” or these events can be completely excluded from memory [9]. Distorting or removing from memory these elements without extracting a lesson from them, will lead to the repeated manifestation of risky behavior with the intensification of „dangerous courage”.

However, the differences between real and perceived safety are most frequently found, a fact that can be explained by the discrepancy between real and perceived risk. Sometimes we worry about minor things and ignore the important ones, so we have some biased estimates. Among the most common ways of distorting the perceived risk compared to the real one are:

- most people fear new risks more than those they have experienced in the past;
- most people are more afraid of natural risks – earthquake, volcanic eruption, than of man-made ones – accidents;
- most people are more afraid of the risks imposed by others – the threat of other drivers, than the risks they take – their own behaviour;
- most people are less afraid of the risks that bring them the desired benefits;
- most people are less afraid of taking risks when they feel in control – in traffic, and more afraid when they feel they are out of control – flying;
- most people are more afraid of risks they are aware of than of unknown risks;
- people fear risks that directly affect them more than those that threaten others;
- adults fear the risks their children may be exposed to more than the risks to themselves;
- most people fear more when uncertainty is greater than when they have a lot of information [3].

Thus, we notice that consciously or not, but people have a tendency to distort reality, which is why they often do not perceive the danger they are venturing into and even more so do not have the resources and skills necessary for a prompt reaction, essentially: risk without realizing that they are in danger.

In **conclusion**, we reiterate that bias represents an individual subjective tendency that is part of human nature, being a natural result of the imperfection and subjectivity of each of us. It is precisely for this reason

that it is within our control to alter this trend pattern. The moment we learn about the existence of these biases, we can identify them in our own behavior and manage them so that we invest in our safety and health. Information and education about these concepts are the main pillars in preventing risky driving behavior and reducing the number of road accidents.

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## RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ANXIETY AND GLYCATED HEMOGLOBIN IN ADOLESCENTS WITH TYPE 1 DIABETES

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This study examines the correlations between physiological and psychological parameters in teenagers with type 1 diabetes. Notably, increased HbA1c levels, indicating poorer glycemic control, are significantly associated with heightened general and school-related anxiety. Such anxiety could stem from the daily pressures of disease management and fear of acute complications, particularly in school settings. Older teenagers and those with longer disease duration exhibit less frustration related to success, potentially due to improved coping mechanisms and disease familiarity. Moreover, higher HbA1c is linked to perceived lower physiological robustness. The study also finds that age inversely correlates with anxiety about teacher relationships, suggesting maturation reduces such concerns. These findings underscore the complex interplay between diabetes management, age, and psychological wellbeing in adolescents.

**Keywords:** *type 1 diabetes (T1D); teenagers, anxiety, glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c), anxiety, disease duration.*

### RELATIA DINTRE ANXIETATE ȘI HEMOGLOBINA GLICATĂ LA ADOLESCENȚII CU DIABET DE TIP 1

Studiul analizează corelația dintre parametrii fiziologici și starea psihologică la adolescenți cu diabet tip 1. Nivelele crescute de HbA1c, care indică un control glicemic slab, corelează cu anxietatea generală și cea școlară. Această anxietate poate proveni din presiunea gestionării bolii și frica de complicații, accentuate în contextul școlar. Adolescenții mai în vârstă sau cu o durată mai mare a bolii arată mai puțină frustrare, posibil datorită unor mecanisme de coping mai bune. De asemenea, HbA1c mai înalt este legat de o rezistență fiziologică percepută ca mai scăzută. Studiul relevă că maturizarea poate reduce anxietatea legată de relația cu profesorii, subliniind interacțiunea complexă dintre managementul diabetului, vârstă și bunăstarea psihologică.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *dabet zaharat tip 1, adolescent, hemoglobina glicată, anxietate, stagiul de boală.*

### Introduction

The prevalence of anxiety disorders among adolescents with type 1 diabetes (T1D) is notably higher compared to their non-diabetic peers, drawing a pressing need for more profound research into this correlation. The physiological stress of chronic disease management, particularly the rigorous blood glucose monitoring and the constant vigilance over hypoglycemic episodes, posits a substantial psychological burden. Anxiety, in this demographic, has been linked to suboptimal glycemic control, evidenced by elevated levels of glycated hemoglobin (HbA1c), which is a marker for long-term glucose control and an indicator of diabetes management effectiveness [1].

Studying the relationship between anxiety and HbA1c is critical for several reasons. First, it has immediate implications for the medical management of T1D, as anxiety can interfere with the ability of adolescents to adhere to treatment protocols, thereby exacerbating their condition. Second, heightened anxiety can also precipitate the onset of diabetes-related complications, which can have a profound impact on the quality of life and the overall health of these young individuals. Lastly, the teenage years are formative periods where individuals establish lifelong health behaviors. Understanding and addressing the psychological factors associated with T1D management can lead to more tailored interventions that could improve both the mental and physical health outcomes for this vulnerable population. Therefore, delving into the nexus of anxiety and glycemic control is not only relevant for current clinical practices but is imperative for shaping the future trajectory of healthcare provision for adolescents grappling with T1D [2].

### Theoretical delimitations

Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune condition characterized by the destruction of insulin-producing beta cells in the pancreas, leading to an inability to regulate blood glucose levels. Unlike type 2 diabetes, which can often be managed with lifestyle modifications, T1D requires continuous insulin administration for survival. The management of T1D is a delicate balance, necessitating frequent blood glucose monitoring and precise insulin dosing to mimic the body's normal insulin response [3].

Glycated hemoglobin serves as a pivotal marker in the monitoring of diabetes. It reflects the average blood glucose concentration over the previous two to three months, providing a more comprehensive picture of long-term glycemic control than daily blood sugar tests. A higher HbA1c level indicates poorer control of diabetes and is a predictor of diabetes-related complications. As such, HbA1c is instrumental for healthcare providers in assessing the efficacy of diabetes management plans and for adjusting treatment as needed [4].

Anxiety, a condition characterized by persistent and excessive worry that disrupts daily activities, is a common comorbidity in adolescents with T1D. This psychological state can be triggered by the constant concern over blood sugar levels, potential complications, and the social stigma associated with chronic illness. Anxiety has been found to negatively impact self-care behaviors in diabetes management, potentially leading to inconsistent blood glucose monitoring and insulin administration, thereby increasing HbA1c levels. The bi-directional relationship between T1D and anxiety can create a cyclical pattern of stress and poor glycemic control, which can further exacerbate each condition [5].

Understanding T1D, HbA1c, and anxiety is vital for developing holistic treatment approaches that address both the physiological and psychological needs of adolescents with T1D. Conceptual delimitation in this context serves not only to differentiate and define these terms but also to underline their interdependence, which is crucial for effective intervention strategies aimed at improving the lives of those affected by this chronic condition.

### Methodology

This investigation aimed to elucidate the relationship between anxiety levels and HbA1c, a key indicator of diabetes control, in adolescents with Type 1 Diabetes (T1D).

The research, carried out in the field in 2022, sought to understand how anxiety might affect diabetes management among younger individuals. A cohort of 132 young patients with clinically confirmed T1D were enrolled from the Pediatric Clinic at the Endocrinology Department of IMSP Mother and Child in Chisinau, Moldova. These participants, ranging in age from 12 to 18 and with T1D for one to fifteen years, provided a diverse sample to assess the interplay between chronic disease management and psychological health.

1. Psychometric tool used in studying the anxiety levels: **Philips School Anxiety Scale** (Philips, 1978) [6] makes it possible to study in detail the level and nature of school-related anxiety in children and adolescents, to assess the emotional characteristics of the child's relationships with peers and teachers. The indicators of this test give an idea about both the general anxiety and the emotional state of the child, associated with different forms of its inclusion in school life, as well as about the particular types of manifestations of school anxiety. The test consists of 58 questions that can be read to subjects or provided in writing. Each question must be answered unequivocally: yes or no.

The scales detected and their characteristics are:

- General school anxiety: The general emotional state of the child, associated with various forms of inclusion in school life.

- Experiencing social stress: The child's emotional state, against which his social contacts develop, primarily with peers.

- Frustration of need to succeed: Unfavorable mental terrain, which does not allow the child to develop his needs for success, achieve academic performance, etc.

- Fear of self-expression: Negative emotional experiences of situations associated with the need for self-disclosure, presentation to others, demonstration of one's own capabilities.

- Fear of testing situation: Negative attitude and anxiety in situations of testing, in particular, of knowledge and skills in public.

- Fear of not meeting expectations of others: Anxiety and exaggeration of the importance of opinions about oneself and the evaluation by others of one's own value, knowledge, skills.

- Low physiological resistance: Characteristics of the psychophysiological organization, which reduce the child's adaptability to stressful situations, increase the probability of an inadequate, destructive response to an alarming environmental factor.

- Problems and fears in relationships with teachers: General negative emotional background of relations with adults at school, which reduces the child's academic success.

2. Data regarding glycated hemoglobin and disease duration: For this study, patient information concerning glycated hemoglobin levels and disease duration was collected from their medical records, with the consent of their caregivers and physicians.

### Results and discussions

**Manifestation of anxiety.** we will provide a detailed analysis of its occurrence, with the results presented in the following table (Tab. 1):

**Table 1. Distribution of results regarding anxiety in the experimental group with type 1 diabetes.**

Anxiety scale	Clinical significance	Distribution within type 1 diabetes sample
General anxiety	Subclinical	71,2 %
	Clinical	28,8 %
General school anxiety	Subclinical	60,6 %
	Clinical	39,4 %
Experiencing social stress	Subclinical	81,8 %
	Clinical	18,2 %
Frustration of need to succeed	Subclinical	86,3 %
	Clinical	13,7%
Fear of self-expression	Subclinical	42,4 %
	Clinical	57,6 %
Fear of testing situation	Subclinical	63,6 %
	Clinical	36,4 %
Fear of not meeting expectations of others	Subclinical	69,6 %
	Clinical	30,4 %
Low physiological resistance	Subclinical	68,3 %
	Clinical	31,7 %
Problems and fears in relationships with teachers	Subclinical	51,5 %
	Clinical	48,5 %

Upon examining the data, we observe variability across different metrics. Notably, half of the individuals surveyed fall within the normal range on a spectrum of concerns, including General anxiety, General school anxiety, Experiencing social stress, Frustration of need to succeed, Fear of testing situation, Fear of not meeting expectations of others, as well as Low physiological resistance. However, there is a marked increase in anxiety indicators connected to „Fear of self-expression” and „Problems and fears in relationships with teachers”.



Several intertwined elements may escalate the anxiety levels in these youths. Concerning health-related anxiety, the rigorous regimen required to manage type 1 diabetes can intrude on daily life and educational participation. The possibility of blood sugar variances during school hours can amplify concerns about expressing themselves, as they might face potentially disruptive or embarrassing incidents related to their glucose management.

Social integration and peer perceptions become critical during the teenage years, and for those with type 1 diabetes, there's an increased self-awareness that may lead to feelings of stigma or being judged, particularly in situations where checking blood sugar or insulin administration is necessary. Such concerns are magnified in social settings that necessitate assertiveness and vocal interaction.

Furthermore, the teen years bring about a surge in scholastic challenges and the expectation to perform well academically. Anxiousness linked to self-expression and academic achievement may arise from unrealistic goals and the fear of not meeting high standards. This stress can intensify if adolescents struggle to communicate openly about their difficulties, especially with their educators.

Teenagers managing type 1 diabetes might also encounter obstacles in communicating about their health needs, possibly due to a reluctance to draw attention or experience embarrassment. This can impede their ability to seek help or express their requirements, contributing to anxiety around the ability to convey their concerns related to diabetes effectively.

Lastly, the degree of support and understanding from educational staff regarding type 1 diabetes can significantly influence anxiety levels. A lack of proper accommodations or support in the school setting may lead to worries about managing diabetes effectively, particularly if complications such as hypoglycemic events could occur during school hours.

### Correlation between anxiety, glycated hemoglobin and disease duration

**Table 2. The correlation between age, HbA1c, and disease duration and anxiety in the experimental group with type 1 diabetes.**

Anxiety		Age	Hba1c	Disease duration
General anxiety	Pearson Corr. Sig. (2-tailed)	-, 144 , 100	,239** ,006	-,086 ,330
General school anxiety	Pearson Corr. Sig. (2-tailed)	-, 090 , 304	,253** ,003	-,125 ,155
Experiencing social stress	Pearson Corr. Sig. (2-tailed)	-,139 , 111	,133 ,128	-,035 ,689
Frustration of need to succeed	Pearson Corr. Sig. (2-tailed)	-,360** ,000	,153 ,080	-,252** ,004
Fear of self-expression	Pearson Corr. Sig. (2-tailed)	,005 ,954	,102 ,244	,024 ,787
Fear of testing situation	Pearson Corr. Sig. (2-tailed)	-,115 ,187	,249** ,004	-,133 ,198
Fear of not meeting expectations of others	Pearson Corr. Sig. (2-tailed)	-,119 ,174	,145 ,097	-,133 ,127
Low physiological resistance	Pearson Corr. Sig. (2-tailed)	-,060 ,495	,241** ,005	,018 ,838
Problems and fears in relationships with teachers	Pearson Corr. Sig. (2-tailed)	-,238** ,006	,075 ,394	-,162 ,063

This analysis of the correlation results (Table 2) between age, HbA1c, and disease stage and anxiety offers the following observations:

**General anxiety and HbA1c**

The significant positive correlation between general anxiety and HbA1c levels indicates that as blood sugar control decreases (higher HbA1c), general anxiety increases. This may be due to the stress associated with managing a chronic condition like diabetes – poor blood sugar control can result in a fear of complications, leading to increased anxiety. The psychological burden of managing diabetes daily and the fear of long-term consequences can also play a role.

**General school anxiety and HbA1c**

A similar positive correlation is found between school-related anxiety and HbA1c levels. The management of diabetes within a school setting poses unique challenges, such as needing to monitor blood sugar and potentially needing to inject insulin during school hours. These actions can make teens feel different from their peers, contributing to heightened school-related anxiety. Moreover, worries about hypoglycemic events during exams or in-class activities can add to this stress.

**Frustration of need to succeed and age**

The negative correlation indicates that as teenagers with type 1 diabetes get older, they tend to experience less frustration regarding their need to succeed. With age, adolescents may develop more effective coping strategies and a more nuanced understanding of their condition, leading to better emotional regulation and reduced frustration.

**Frustration of need to succeed and disease duration**

The negative correlation suggests that the longer the individual has been managing their diabetes, the less frustration they feel about their need to succeed. Over time, these individuals likely become more adept at managing their condition and integrating it into their lives, which can reduce the conflict between their diabetes management and their goals for success.

**Fear of testing situation and HbA1c**

The positive correlation here may reflect the stress of academic performance in the context of diabetes management. Teens who struggle to control their blood sugar may have more concerns about the impact of their diabetes on testing situations – worrying, for example, about the possibility of a hypoglycemic episode during an exam, which could impair their performance.

**Low physiological resistance and HbA1c**

Again, a significant positive correlation with HbA1c suggests that teens who have higher HbA1c levels feel a lower sense of physiological robustness. High HbA1c can be associated with a greater frequency of symptoms like fatigue, which may be interpreted by the teens as low resistance, and the stress of constant management can take a physical toll as well.

**Problems and fears in relationships with teachers and age**

The significant negative correlation could be attributed to the increasing maturity and communication skills that develop with age. Older teens might be better at advocating for themselves and may have established stronger relationships with their teachers. They might also feel less intimidated by authority figures as they grow older, leading to a decrease in anxiety related to these relationships.

**Conclusions**

In conclusion, the study's findings highlight a complex interplay between physiological, psychological, and social factors in teenagers with type 1 diabetes. The significant correlations suggest that tighter glycaemic control, as indicated by lower HbA1c levels, is associated with lower levels of anxiety in several domains, emphasizing the importance of effective diabetes management for mental health. Conversely, higher HbA1c levels correlate with increased anxiety, particularly in areas that involve public aspects of diabetes

management, such as school settings, and in situations that may result in acute diabetes complications, like during tests.

Age and the duration of disease management emerge as factors that can potentially mitigate feelings of frustration and anxiety over time. As teenagers grow older and gain more experience with managing their condition, they tend to report lower levels of frustration and anxiety, indicating that maturity and adaptation to the condition play crucial roles in psychological well-being.

The study underscores the necessity for a supportive environment for teenagers with type 1 diabetes, including comprehensive education on managing their condition, psychological support to address the emotional burdens of diabetes, and a school environment that is informed and accommodating of their needs. This holistic approach can help in reducing the psychological impact of type 1 diabetes and support the youths in achieving better health outcomes, both physically and emotionally.

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## PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTIONS IN THE CARE OF PEOPLE DIAGNOSED WITH EPILEPSY

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This article explores psychological interventions in the care of people diagnosed with epilepsy. The paper includes a literature review of the types of psychological interventions and the most effective psychotherapeutic interventions used in epilepsy centres. The focus is on identifying the most effective current methods, techniques, and psychological interventions for improving cognitive, affective, and behavioural processes in subjects with epilepsy. The article reveals the complexity of psychological interventions at the cognitive level which include compensatory strategies in cognitive rehabilitation (memory, attention, and language), psychological strategies at the affective level and psychological techniques at the behavioural level. Thus, we believe that psychological interventions can contribute to increased emotional stability, increased self-confidence, increased compliance with medication, increased trust in medical professionals, openness to society - all of which contribute to increased quality of life for people with epilepsy.

**Keywords:** *psychological interventions, psychological strategies, psychotherapy, epilepsy.*

### INTERVENȚII PSIHOLOGICE ÎN ASISTENȚA PERSOANELOR DIAGNOSTICATE CU EPILEPSIE

În acest articol sunt abordate intervențiile psihologice în asistența persoanelor diagnosticate cu epilepsie. Lucrarea cuprinde o analiză a literaturii de specialitate privind tipurile de intervenții psihologice, cât și cele mai eficiente intervenții psihoterapeutice utilizate în centrele specializate în epilepsie. Accentul este pus pe identificarea celor mai actuale metode, tehnici și intervenții psihologice pentru îmbunătățirea proceselor cognitive, afective și comportamentale în cazul persoanelor cu epilepsie. Articolul dat relevă complexitatea intervențiilor psihologice la nivel cognitiv care includ strategii compensatorii în reabilitarea cognitivă (memoria, atenția și limbajul), strategii psihologice la nivel afectiv și tehnici psihologice la nivel comportamental. Astfel, considerăm că intervențiile psihologice pot contribui la sporirea stabilității emoționale, sporirea încrederii în sine, creșterea nivelului de complianță la tratamentul medicamentos, creșterea încrederii în specialiștii medicali, deschiderea către societate – toate acestea contribuind la creșterea calității vieții persoanelor cu epilepsie.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** *intervenții psihologice, strategii psihologice, psihoterapie, epilepsie.*

### Introduction

The impact of epilepsy extends far beyond the direct effects of epileptic seizures and includes a series of medical, psychological, social, educational, personal, and economic challenges that can lead to disability and a significantly reduced quality of life. Psychological therapies have been developed to approach epileptic seizures and the psychological problems associated with epilepsy. Cognitive, affective, and behavioural changes in epilepsy determine specific methods of psychological intervention. Right from the onset of the disease, the diagnosis of epilepsy causes distress, anxiety, depression, social isolation, fear of stigma, low self-esteem, and a sense of loss of control over one's own life due to loss of independence, job, and financial income. This new reality initially generates shock, anger, stress, and denial associated with guilt and self-blame.

It is well known that a chronic illness causes a lot of suffering, and people with epilepsy are no exception. In this sense, a particularity of epilepsy lies in the dramatic experience of the epileptic seizure - an event that introduces a fracture in the person's relationship with reality and an ambivalent reaction in relation to the environment, which simultaneously becomes on the one hand hyperprotective and on the other fright-

ening and repulsive. The personality of the person with epilepsy is organised around this unpredictable repetition of seizures and secondary rearrangements staged by the subject and/or his entourage. Thus, H. Beauchesne (1976) considered that the way in which the entourage gives a meaning to the seizure is crucial in the organization of the subject. He also argues that it is always necessary to place the illness in a story that considers the personality at the time, the occurrence of epileptic seizures and the personality rearrangement introduced by these seizures [3].

Despite the progress of drug treatments in epilepsy, about 30% of people with epilepsy suffer from drug-resistant epileptic seizures [14]. In this context, psychological support is very important for these people, because the high frequency of epileptic seizures and the long duration of the disease cause progressive cognitive decline, accentuate affective states, and cause specific behavioural changes.

Despite awareness of the effectiveness of psychotherapeutic interventions for depression and anxiety, they have been insufficiently researched in epilepsy. A study reviewing the effectiveness of psychological treatments in epilepsy (Ramaratnam *et al.*, 2008) concluded that due to the limited number of studies and methodological concerns, there is insufficient evidence to support the positive effect of psychological treatment in epilepsy. The authors reviewed randomised trials of psychological treatments in epilepsy and identified anxiety in three studies (Sultana, 1987; Helgeson *et al.*, 1990; Olley *et al.*, 2001). The interventions used involved psychoeducation programmes, relaxation techniques and behavioural therapy. The results of the studies have been mixed – some studies found no change following psychotherapeutic treatment (Helgeson *et al.*, 1990), while other studies found significant reductions in anxiety symptoms (Sultana, 1987; Olley *et al.*, 2001). Depression was identified in six studies, in three studies psychoeducation was used (Helgeson *et al.*, 1990; Olley *et al.*, 2001; May and Pfaffl, 2002), the other two studies used cognitive-behavioural therapy (Davis, 1984; Tan and Bruni, 1986), and the third study used relaxation techniques combined with behavioural therapy (Sultana, 1987). In conclusion, half of the intervention outcomes reported no change following psychotherapeutic intervention (Tan and Bruni, 1986; Sultana, 1987; May and Pfaffl, 2002), and the other half reported improvement in depressive symptoms (Davis, 1984; Helgeson *et al.* 1990; Olley *et al.* 2001) [18].

Another study (Fisher *et al.*, 2000) found that 17% of 1,023 subjects in the United States showed interest in alternative therapies, although psychological therapies were used less frequently (biofeedback therapy – 2%, breathing/relaxation techniques – 0.4% and mind control – 0.1%) [10]. Other researchers (Haut *et al.*, 2003) found that just over half of the subjects surveyed were willing to engage in stress reduction therapies [12]. This illustrates that there is a demand for alternative treatment and people do not rely exclusively on taking antiepileptic drugs. However, just as one drug cannot be used for all people with epilepsy, so too individual psychological counselling depends on several factors, including lifestyle, individual intellectual abilities, and the person's motivation to change.

According to the psychological practices of European clinics specializing in epilepsy and the recommendations of the ILAE Neuropsychology Task Force, the following psychological interventions have been identified [6, 16, 22].

### **Cognitive psychological interventions**

In epilepsy, compensatory strategies within cognitive rehabilitation are used to minimise the impact of these impairments on daily life and to maximise functioning and improve the quality of life of people living with epilepsy. It is important to consider multiple factors that affect cognitive processes, such as age and onset of illness, seizure type and severity, controlled versus drug-resistant epileptic seizures, comorbid psychiatric diagnoses, and development of coping skills. Despite awareness of the impact that these cognitive impairments have on people with epilepsy, cognitive rehabilitation and psychological interventions are not applied as frequently as they could and should be in people with epilepsy. Considering the multiple cognitive domains that can be affected by epilepsy, the adverse effects of antiepileptic drugs, and psychological comorbidities, rehabilitation planning must necessarily be personalised to the needs of the individual. This makes interventions implemented in cognitive rehabilitation a challenging task.

The ILAE Neuropsychology Task Force Commission recommends compensatory strategies for people with epilepsy both to prevent cognitive decline and to train cognitive processes to cope with difficulties in everyday life [22]. These are associated with educational, vocational and community support in the psychosocial functioning of people with epilepsy [8, 22].

In the early 20th century, cognitive rehabilitation was focused exclusively on the remediation of brain dysfunction (i.e. the recovery of cognitive processes). More recently, cognitive rehabilitation is focused on behavioural compensation to reduce daily difficulties experienced because of brain dysfunction [21]. Cognitive rehabilitation is always preceded by a psychological assessment that focuses on assessing the needs of the person with epilepsy, identifying cognitive deficits, examining emotional and behavioural issues and other medical conditions that affect daily functioning [ibid 21]. It is essential to note that for successful cognitive rehabilitation, individuals must be aware of, recognize their own deficits, and accept the rehabilitation program as helpful. On the one hand, it is necessary to explain to them how these deficits can affect their lives and how they can develop coping and adaptive skills to their individual challenges, and on the other hand, professionals need to help them improve their weaknesses in cognitive domains and maximize their strengths [8].

*Strategies for memory.* Memory deficits can impact on social activities, as forming and maintaining relationships depends in part on the ability to do and hold social activities, retain information about others, and previous conversations. Thus, effective interventions to improve memory are crucial to improving quality of life and community participation. One of the oldest and most common ways to improve memory is practice. Studies show that compensatory trainings and strategies are effective in memory improvement and cognitive rehabilitation in people with epilepsy [17, 21]. Rehabilitation approaches to memory impairment usually focus on two techniques: restorative and compensatory. The goal of the restorative technique involves practice exercises and repetition, while the compensatory technique is based on the premise that memory does not need to be restored, the focus is on performance of daily memory tasks, which can be improved if the person learns effective strategies to service lost memory skills. Compensatory strategies used include the use of visual imagery techniques - practice, rehearsal, fragmentation, organisational and self-teaching strategies, as well as external help - reminders to perform the task, written interventions on paper and the use of technical devices. Other examples of compensatory strategies involve a notepad with calendar (things to do, addresses and phone numbers), smart phone (with alarms for reminders of appointments and activities, speech recording), lists, medication box etc. [8].

*Strategies for attention.* Interventions for attention deficits involve training activities that include repetitive target detection exercises in the presence of distractions and sorting words into alphabetical order (underlining the letters M and F in a newspaper, sorting numbers in ascending order, sudoku, puzzles, card games, „find the differences”). For people with high levels of motivation and compliance, cognitive exercises are recommended for one hour a day, 5 days a week.

*Strategies for language.* Recommendations for improving language include allowing time to respond, use of indirect language (talking around the word), visualization, gestures, written format, cues/signs from others, reading aloud, asking questions, and use of synonyms and antonyms [17].

Thus, cognitive, and emotional process training leads to increases in people's self-efficacy beliefs, particularly in their confidence in cognitive and emotional management, which improve both people's subjective well-being and quality of life.

### **Affective psychological interventions**

Psychotherapy is an integral component of the psychological rehabilitation programme in epilepsy, the aim of which is to develop self-awareness, explore feelings of loss and anger and restore the meaning of life. Psychotherapy, together with other counselling methods, helps to adapt and accept illness and disability by strengthening the therapeutic alliance. Establishing trust and providing a safe environment of acceptance underpins any successful psychological interventions that increase engagement in the rehabilitation process. Therefore, in the following we will describe the types of psychotherapies used in epilepsy:

*Psychoanalytic psychotherapy* is a form of psychotherapy, a method of research and a theory of the functioning of the psychic apparatus. Psychodynamic psychotherapy shares the aim of cultivating the ability to recognise what is not conscious – i.e. precisely what is difficult or painful to see in ourselves [4]. Psychoanalysts recommend a psychotherapeutic approach to the person with epilepsy and family counselling in which the fears and anxieties raised by seizures of people with epilepsy and their family members are listened to [3]. Clarification of disease onset, causes, prognoses, interventions, and treatment management reduces family anxiety. At the same time, extreme attitudes of both overprotection and unjustified rejection by relatives should be avoided. Psychoanalytic psychotherapy allows the crisis to be reintroduced into the person's history and provides a sense of crisis that can be psychologised and integrated.

*Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)*. A definition of CBT includes investigating how an individual interacts with their environment, developing and reinforcing positive behaviours, analysing the 'core' of the problem from which the behaviours (symptoms) arise, identifying maladaptive thoughts and behaviours and subsequently replacing them with more helpful behaviours and coping strategies [5]. In epilepsy this type of therapy requires modifications in technique – the hyperventilation method being contraindicated – as this can cause an epileptic seizure. The application of CBT in seizure reduction involves both addressing the negative thought processes associated with epileptic seizures and attempting to equip individuals with more control over their seizures [20]. Psychotherapy is usually individual, but can also be in groups, has clearly defined goals, is time-limited, and is focused on current problems.

*Family therapy* is characterised by the fact that the whole family is seen together, psychologists have concluded that in many cases the origin of a person's problems lies in the existence of family problems. Thus, the therapist's attention is not focused on an individual person, but on interactions within the family. In these sessions, special attention is paid to unconscious processes and past events that have current effects. Family therapy is an essential component in the management of epilepsy especially for the person with drug-resistant epilepsy, as the person with uncontrolled medication seizures rarely lives alone, in many cases remains single and lives with parents. Psychological consultations usually take place with family members, who are also in a constant state of tension and fear, ready to intervene with first aid in the event of a seizure. In this sense, family counselling helps the family to avoid blaming the person for his or her illness and helps the family to achieve a new family homeostasis. At the same time, it is important to listen to the anxieties caused by epileptic seizures of people with epilepsy and their family members during the sessions. Clarification about epilepsy, its causes, prognoses, interventions, advice on first aid in the event of a seizure and treatment management reduces anxiety in the family and helps to integrate the disease psychologically [2, 3, 21].

*Art therapy* allows people to explore their emotions and feelings through the process of creating, painting, and drawing. Art therapy offers alternative means of coping for people living with a chronic illness. S. K. Langer, an American art philosopher, has defined art as the „objectification of feelings”, noting that through art a person can express difficult feelings and experiences and learn to live with these painful experiences. The goal of art therapy is to process emotions, reduce stress and anxiety, increase self-confidence, and manage behaviour. In this regard, the American social psychologist S. Schachter in his book „Visions: Artists Living with Epilepsy” included a unique collection of artworks by people with epilepsy, reflecting the feelings and emotions of these people, highlighting abilities rather than disabilities [19].

*Music therapy* involves using the sounds of music to maintain and improve mental and physical health. It has been found that music can release inner tension and facilitate the expression of emotions that could not be expressed verbally, as well as having beneficial effects in reducing anxiety, depression, insomnia, stress, chronic pain, hypertension, learning difficulties. Classical music has been shown to influence cognitive centres, stimulating memory, logical thinking, spatial orientation, and attention [7]. Despite numerous studies demonstrating the positive effect of music on epileptic seizures, M. J. Maguire argues that the effect of music is complex and poorly understood, the author refers to musicogenic epilepsy which implies that, in extremely rare cases, particular sounds or music can trigger an epileptic seizure [15].

*Group psychotherapy* involves discussing a common problem with people who have similar problems. In the group, negative emotions of anger, frustration, anxiety, guilt, hopelessness, helplessness can be externalised and processed thanks to the support provided by the group. During group therapy, people are encouraged and helped by the therapist and other group members to find the most effective solutions to their problems. It is beneficial for them that other people with similar problems feel the same way, and the discussions can help them understand how they appear and how they can cope with them [7].

*Supportive counselling* is an essential element in every psychotherapy. Key components include conversational style, therapeutic relationship building, self-esteem improvement through praise and reassurance, anticipatory guidance, and advice on increasing adaptive skills through clarification and gentle confrontation [1]. In epilepsy, the psychologist focuses supportively on a reality of epileptic seizure behaviour, helping the person overcome denial, accept the illness, understand its manifestations, and facilitate cooperation with antiepileptic treatment.

*Psychoeducation* is a fundamental component in the rehabilitation programme, the aim of which is self-awareness for effective disease management. This therapeutic intervention is designed to engage, educate, and support the subject with epilepsy and their family members. Educational approaches include written materials containing information on brain function and the causes of cognitive impairment, individual sessions, and group sessions. Quite frequently family members are included in psychoeducational sessions. In group sessions for educational information purposes, people with epilepsy discuss the typical problems they face in a less threatening way. Through this approach, listening to the problems of others, their experience, and the difficulties they face, self-acceptance is promoted. These group activities provide an opportunity for individuals to learn about the cognitive, affective, and behavioural sequelae of epilepsy in a non-threatening way, helping to improve general knowledge, self-acceptance, correct false beliefs about epilepsy and psychosocial functioning in general [13, 16]. In this regard, Gilham (1990) demonstrated the effectiveness of psychoeducation in drug-resistant epilepsy [11].

Other successful psychological therapies in epilepsy include relaxation therapy or autogenic training, biofeedback therapy (neurotherapy), eye movement desensitization and processing (EMDR), clinical hypnosis, integrative psychotherapy, animal-assisted therapy, and mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) [6, 7, 12]. Also, in working with people with epilepsy we consider important the professional consultative approach that encourages active listening allowing subjects the opportunity to discuss their problems. At the same time, we highlight the importance of the central role of coping and emotional well-being, as well as the importance of family factors in adaptation and acceptance of the disease.

### **Behavioural psychological interventions**

While the medication approach searches for the effective dose of antiepileptic treatment and investigates adherence to medication, a behavioural approach involves inserting seizures into an agenda, describing the situations in which they occur and preictal and postictal emotions, representations, and premonitory signs. In this regard, Fenwick (1995) used the ABC (antecedent, behaviour, consequences) technique to propose individually specific behavioural interventions for each subject [9]. The Andrews/Reiter programme (Reiter. et al.,1987) also examined the individual paternity of behaviour, emotions and external factors that could precipitate seizures with the aim of developing positive behaviours and stopping seizures. Compared to drug treatment that is gradually increased to achieve a therapeutic level in seizure control, positive behaviour adjustments may take longer to achieve a desired score.

Thus, an individualised approach to behaviour management includes a functional analysis of identifying the source of the behaviour, antecedents, and consequences. Functional analysis is extracted directly from observing and interviewing the person, the family, and the treating physician. Thus, by generating hypotheses from the collected data we can predict the triggers for the occurrence of the behaviour. Once triggers are identified - we understand when and why, we can prevent and change behavioural consequences. The behaviour optimisation programme also includes the development of self-confidence and self-esteem, ver-



bal and non-verbal communication, assertiveness, cooperation, initiative, creativity, spontaneity, as well as improving interpersonal and social integration skills [6, 20].

In conclusion, we can mention that psychological treatment is necessary because there are many people who do not achieve seizure control with antiepileptic drugs alone or do not want to take them. At the same time, it has been shown that psychological treatment helps people to take control of their seizures to a certain limit, therefore psychological therapy remains rather as an adjunct to pharmacotherapy and not a substitute.

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*Natalia DOȚEN*

INTERVENȚII PSIHOLOGICE  
ÎN ASISTENȚA PERSOANELOR  
DIAGNOSTICATE CU EPILEPSIE

212 PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTIONS  
IN THE CARE OF PEOPLE DIAGNOSED  
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