

POSITIVE EDUCATION AND STUDENT DEVELOPMENT THROUGH COMMUNICATION

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MOTTO: *The education institution is where one learns communication; where we learn and improve communication; where we develop (create) communication; where we educate (cultivate) communication. Here, communication has the meaning of a human and social value, reason for what the education for communication is an end in itself, a major objective of education, to which all subjects must give their contribution.*"
(Prof. Dr. John Cerghit)

Abstract: *Communication, both as a didactic process and as social interaction remains a current issue and an open field for research. It takes place in a subtle way in the world today, through various means and enjoys an active and passive reception from the different categories of public. Taking into consideration the educational impact of mass-media, which exert a growing influence in modern society, educational communication should be given a particular significance, because it must become the all comprehensive tool that will help the taught to integrate, structure, analyze the information already acquired. Didactic communication must be a cooperation between the student and the teacher, allowing the transmission of knowledge, integrating information in a framework of prior acquired knowledge and adding of new knowledge, at the same time enabling personal vision on the issues discussed. An open pedagogical communication, unrestricted by excessive formalism and useless rituals will increase participants' confidence in their ability to solve problems and accomplish tasks.*

KEY WORDS: education, communication, positive education, feed-back, interactive didactic methods

1.Introduction

Education comes from the Latin verb "educere" and designates the process of nurturing with ideas for elevating someone from a *inferior-natural* state to a *superior- cultural* state. The substantive "educatio" signifies in latin "growth", development of intelligence, affection, of the will of the child, young person and adult. Education is integrated in life, and its results should be the realization of its main purpose, namely the creative personality of the educated.[1]

What is education? One of the

definitions coming from the anthropology of culture states that education is a complex anthropological process of forming the human personality through the transmission of cultural values. According to the *Explicative Dictionary of the Romanian language*, (2009), education may refer to: a set of measures applied systematically to train and develop the intellectual, moral or physical capabilities of children and youth, individuals, of society as a whole, etc.; the result of this pedagogical activity being cultural development and civilized behavior in society. Education is a fundamental part

of life, and a lifestyle, a social phenomenon of transmission of life experience and cultural values of adult generations to younger ones, an empowerment for their integration in society, is participation to culture and contribution to it. „*Education is the best provision that you can do for old age*”, states Aristotle. Another definition of the concept of education, as given by the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, emphasizes education's role in the perfecting of the individual: „*Education is the work of disciplinary cultivation of human civilization, and the purpose of education is to develop individual perfection all of which is possible to be achieved.*”

2. Education is communication

The educational act is in itself a communication act. The transmission of information, knowledge, values is being achieved in all educational systems through communication. The classroom environment is an ideal context for communication. In this context, the relations teacher – taught can be enhanced with new dimensions - methodological, moral, affective, in which, through didactic communication, the teacher becomes mediator and guide in the learning process. The educational process involves ensuring continuous social interaction between the two poles of the educational act.

The teacher is the one who designs, projects, transmits information, and his role is to sustain, guide, control, monitor, correct, encourage the student. The role of the pupil / student is to seek, investigate, discover by himself, analyze the information transmitted by the teacher : he makes notes, reads, compares, stores, reflects on the received information , does research work that will turn into the products of his activity.

Communication serves as education, education is achieved through communication. At any time, the teacher is a communicator; any verbal or nonverbal

behavior in this context is communication. This assertion is, however, subject of scientific and ethical determined limits. Not every communication is a pedagogical act. But the school is the organization where the communication process is essential and manifested in all forms. The teacher facilitates and participates in the act of communication which implies that he should become a professional communicator, not only in mastering techniques for transmitting information but especially in approaching the student as a partner of dialogue.

Educational communication is a complex interpersonal communication that can be achieved in the following ways:

- Verbal communication - the messages are codified and transmitted by words, sentences, phrases, verbally. Verbal communication's essential dimensions are the question and the answer.

- Written communication –the informations (thoughts, ideas, concepts, graphic representations) are transmitted in the form of written text.

- Non-verbal communication - the messages are encoded and transmitted by means of body language, such as facial expressions, gestures, posture, body movements, physical appearance: dress code, etc

- Paraverbal communication - the information is transmitted through voice and prosodic elements that accompany the speech: voice characteristics, particularities of pronunciation, power, volume, intensity, tone, fluency, etc.

The communicative competence of the teacher is part of his psychosocial competences, and refers to his knowledge of a language's *syntax*, *morphology*, *phonology* and the like, to his social knowledge about how and when to use the language but also to his knowledge to select and structure his message by the curriculum requirements, having in view the achievement of the operational objectives. Communicative competence involves

knowledge and skills in several areas: knowledge of the communicational context and its influence over the content and form of communication; knowledge of the rules of communication and of the impact of paraverbal and nonverbal communication in teaching; knowledge of human psychology and the ability to relate to students. Teachers should prepare the learners to use the spoken language with fluency and accuracy, and be *politically correct* with people who have different cultural identities, social values and behaviours.

The structuring and presentation of the content, the ability to capture the attention and interest for the discipline, indicating the tasks to be solved, combining theoretical and practical elements are the methods by which the teacher seeds interest in the matter and creates motivational frameworks that will enable the accumulation of new knowledge. The teacher must take into account the individual particularities of age, personality and perception, the level of intelligence and knowledge of the student, must strive to maintain the good climate of the didactic act, and boost motivation for the study of the discipline.

3. Positive education through dialogue and classroom interaction

Education has always been connected with the good, with the transmission of the cultural and moral values, with the overcoming of the evil, of the primitive self, of the bad habits, etc. Education also aims to achieve a state of possible happiness.

Positive education is a relatively new concept and designates a psychological approach designed to promote happiness and the well-being of the students. Positive psychology examines the concept of happiness in three areas, each of which field is measurable, and most importantly, rely on skills that can be taught [2]. Positive education helps reduce anxiety, promoting self-esteem and helps young people to have

better performance in school. (Euronews, 2014) The student will feel supported, he will more easily integrate into the group, will become more receptive and open to cooperation. Significant prevalence of depression among youth, low satisfaction, negative emotions and reactions connected with the school environment lead to the realization that the skills that increase resilience, positive emotion, engagement and meaning can be actually taught in schools.[3] By using an understandable, appropriate language, through expressive and compelling communication, the teacher will try to submit content delivered in an attractive way, easy to follow, using the whole arsenal of methodical and logistical features and try to generate participation and activism

Nowadays there are a large number of institutions that recognize the need to determine student development by holistic means, with an emphasis on their wellbeing. [4] For this reason, one of the duties of academic institutions is to implement actions to increase the optimal state of the students and staff to reduce the likelihood of mental illness and psychological problems.

Thus, in the classroom interaction, communication will perform several functions:

- Informative function (transmission of didactic educational message)
- Formative function (stimulating thought and imagination, skill training)
- Educational function (creating skills)
- Evaluation function (analyzing the teaching-learning results)
- Function of solving problems and conflicts

To be effective, communication must meet certain criteria of didactic exigency:

1. From the professor:
 - Clarity of the message
 - Accuracy
 - Using accessible language

- Using appropriate language (scientifically correct)
 - Logical structuring of the messages transmitted;
 - Interesting presentation training content;
 - Ensuring an adequate climate of communication
2. From the students:
- Having the ability to concentrate (to receive and understand the message the teacher);
 - Possessing prior knowledge and learning;
 - Be motivated to learn (in general and a specific object of study, in particular);
 - Know the codes (language, rules, etc)

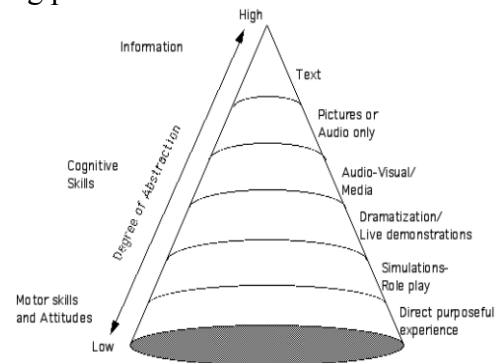
The teacher must empower students to feel that they are a reliable partner who wants an authentic dialogue, who allows students' freedom of expression, which does not make them feel judged or manipulated, who offers them the sense of security and freedom to communicate.

The researcher I. O. Pânișoară proposed a classification of educational interaction methods with five categories [5]:

1. Development of communication skills (*integration in group, interactive listening, socratic method*);
2. Cultivating creativity and problem solving (*brainstorming, creative problem solving method*);
3. Group based discussion (*Philips 66 meeting, focus groups, creative controversy, debate*);
4. Observation of the interaction within the group (*Aquarium technique, the Socratic seminar*);
5. Construction team (*icebreaking exercises, team building*).

According to Edgar Dale, people remember 10% of what they read, 20% of what they hear, 30% from what they see, 50% of what they hear and see, 70% of what they say and write, 90% of what they say and of the task they fulfil [6]. Dale's Cone of Experience is a

model that incorporates several theories related to the instructional design and learning processes:



The hierarchy of the six cognitive processes is ranging from the most concrete, to the abstract, the highest rating:

- *Knowledge*: the ability of the student to remember and reproduce previously learned material
- *Comprehension*: student's ability to understand the meaning of the material and express it in own words
- *Application*: student's ability to use learned material in new and concrete situations
- *Analysis*: student's ability to divide material into its component parts and to understand their organisational structure
- *Summary*: student's ability to combine pieces of material to form a new whole
- *Assessment*: student's ability to judge the value/use of the material

In this respect, it is important to choose the best interaction modality or to combine different methods in order to stimulate interest and enable the learning process. The question remains an essential teaching tool. Even if we speak of the limited or closed (yes / no) question, or of the comprehensive/ open question, the teacher will formulate questions throughout the lesson and accept answers, helping to form student learning critical thinking.

4. Praise and criticism – tools for successful didactic communication

Evaluating the student's activity and results is a most important and sensible aspect of the teaching-learning process. The examination of the student's progress is done at all the stages of the educational process by praise and criticism.

Praise - assessing and encouraging students, boosting interest and motivation, stimulating performance, mentioning what is most valuable, showing appreciation for the student's talent, capacity and effort to achieve the goal, awarding success.

Criticism – highlighting the mistakes, discussing shortcomings, the causes of them and indicating means of remedying what went wrong.

To be effective, criticism must meet several conditions:

- To be accompanied by praise for the good things that have been accomplished

- To be conducted if possible in a private place ("privately")

- To be based on fact, and the student to be told where he was wrong;

- To suggest possibilities for improving the situation;

- To leave the student the opportunity to express feelings, attitudes;

- To avoid high tone, sarcasm and verbal labeling.

The criticism and the self-criticism

of the student should be encouraged, also the different projects and ideas should be discussed in class, in order to develop a correct judgement of the value of the work, for assuming the results, and the course of actions that must be further undertaken.

5. Conclusion

The efficiency of communication in the context of the lesson depends on the individual qualities of the speaker and the listener, and of the relationships that develop as a result of the exchange of information between them. The teacher must not monopolize the conversation; if he dominates the communication relationship then he will permanently issue unidirectional messages to students, and as a result, the communication between him and the students will lack *feedback*, in which lies the most important aspect of efficient communication.

If we accept that the lesson is (or should be) an open dialogue between the student and the teacher, then effective communication should be the first step towards the improvement of the educational process: the good conduct of this process, the good results and students' performance resulting in the main factors of job satisfaction among teachers.

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