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## CONTENTS

1. Mona–Constanța CIUBOTARU – The use of information technologies in education and training .....5
2. John SMITH – English spoken by speakers of latin languages ..... 10
3. Maria TUREAN – The management of aggressive behavior in preschool children..... 14
4. Magdalena DUMITRANA, Valentina OLĂRESCU – The inclusion of the children with deficiencies - not yet a feasible task .....20
5. Victoria DANILA, Stela BALAN – Implementation of active-participatory methods in training the design engineer from light industry .....24
6. Alexandru TATU, Mircea COSMA – Information war reality of XXI century .....29
7. Ion CIOBANU, Alina Gabriela NEGOESCU – Evocation and oblivion: unequal dosage of social memory.....38
8. Andreea TATOIU – Attitude theory applied in couple relationship .....45
9. Gabriela NEACȘU, Veronica NEGUȚU, Sorina JIANU – Influence of the economic crisis on families with children aged between 3 and 10 .....53
10. Mariana MARINESCU – Intercultural education – a component of the new education .....59
11. Mirela Elena MAZILU – The future of universities and research in time of crisis .....66

12. Visarion NEAGOE – Security environment evolutions and military power in the context of the global economic crisis .....	73
<i>Author's instructions</i> .....	80

## THE USE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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**Abstract:** The use of information technologies in education requires from teachers a range of knowledge, skills and attitudes that enable them to use the new technologies in teaching. In other terms, it is necessary to form a specific information culture which is understood not only as specialized knowledge and skills, but also as a new orientation and approach to reality.

**Keywords:** information technologies, education, e-learning platforms, educational software.

**Rezumat:** Utilizarea tehnologiei informației în educație solicită profesorilor o gamă de cunoștințe, abilități și atitudini, care le permit să folosească noile tehnologii în procesul de predare. Cu alte cuvinte, este nevoie de formarea unei culturi specifice a informației care este înțeleasă nu numai ca și cunoaștere specializată și abilitate, dar și ca o nouă abordare și orientare la realitate.

**Cuvinte cheie:** tehnologia informației, educație, e-learning, program educațional.

The increasing capacity of processing and storing data, the change of equipment size as well as the appearance of friendly interfaces and their interaction with the user, lead to a greater utilization of computers in all fields of activities.

New information technologies are suitable for many kinds of uses in education, for the direct or indirect benefit of students.

The contribution of information technologies in teaching activity is materialized by:

- resources for teaching – learning activities;
- applications for the activity of teaching;
- training systems with Web support.

The resources used for teaching and learning are educational software products, applications which contain a strategy addressed to these ones who learn in order to help them to acquire information a skills

through demonstration, examples, explications or simulations.

As a support to teaching activities, computers are used by teachers for:

- preparing and implementing teaching material;
- student assessment and their progress check;
- achieving briefings and training;
- time learning/ implementing timetable and the schedule of activities as well.

Students can use new technologies in different ways and purposes such as all the information given on the Internet or they draw subjects from using word processors.

Some other aids electronic dictionaries, support systems such as CAD (Computer Aided Design) or music editors and simulators.

While the first achievements in computer – assisted instruction were built on the pedagogical principles of programmed instruction, now educational systems

encourage an active construction of knowledge, provide meaningful contexts for learning, reflection, release students of many routine activities and stimulate intellectual activity similar to that made at work.

The interconnection of computers has resulted in major consequences in education, the possibility of communication and of sharing resources led to the development of training systems with Web support and e-learning platforms.

The evolution of these platforms is a consequence of the continuous growth of capacity and flexibility of information technologies with application in educational situations. It is accompanied by a continuous decrease in cost of equipment.

The unprecedented dynamics of information and communication technology has as effect an inclusion in more and modern teaching equipment and learning techniques, all being in accordance with the psycho-social profile of the student in our society.

The best way of presenting content by encouraging an active and collaborative learning approach, also offers quality and increase the flexibility of the educational systems strongly connected to each phase of the cycle of learning and the peculiarities of each student.

Teachers must be able to identify the pedagogical situations and information solutions with beneficial effects for education and training.

The conversion of information technologies in instructional strategies, education and training, has already imposed as reality that characterized the educational systems having an impact on the efficiency of educational activities by:

- operative use of logical, selective and analytical thinking;
- development of visual perception;
- structure of matter;
- increased confidence in our own abilities.

The continuous improvement of information and communication technologies as well as the continuous adaptation to the

requirements of the development of society, more this technologies the best place for sharing information and knowledge. As we all know this is a necessary condition but not sufficient for success in the educational process.

The effectiveness of training depends on the way selected for communication content and the choice should be influenced by content and not by technology.

The possibilities of conveying information in Computer Aided instruction are more numerous, compared with traditional training. In the following lines are highlighted the main characteristics of some of them.

The text is a basic element of the training, but we should avoid the use of excessive transmission of information, because it may become a way, too slow and monotonous which requires attention and concentration at a higher level.

More ever, every time, we have to follow these aspects:

1. Student's ability to read is facilitated by:
  - using words which are familiar and clear sentences as well;
  - dividing the content into small paragraphs, easily assimilated and of higher attractiveness;
  - using a conversational tone that brings content to the pupils personal level of understanding.
2. Writing is another important factor when a text is edited and, there for, it is important to know:
  - the choice of types of letters which are easy to read;
  - keeping the same type of letters for the entire text in order not to create confusion or slow down the reading process;
  - the use of empty spaces around paragraphs in order to avoid being so crowded.
3. The use of explanation for a better understanding of what is intended to be sent.

As these explanations aren't required by all students, they can be displayed only on request, by clicking the mouse.

Lists – a way of organizing content by which similar information is grouped together, creating a listing.

Each list item is associated with a new paragraph. It creates spaces that increase the target text while structured information from a list is easy to be assimilated by the reader.

Graphic representation – were used since the beginning of human existence to convey certain messages, cave drawings being eloquent in this respect.

Nowadays we can use clipart, digital photos, diagrams and even 3D images to illustrate data and trends, to describe concepts, to make correspondence with the descriptions or just for decoration.

Replacing a graphic representation with eloquent explanations can be better. Structure the information and have a better impact on user.

The main advantage of using graphics is the ease an image is retained, this could express quite a lot in a small space; the lexical memory is considered superior by many psychologists.

Animation can be used to attract attention, to be add colour and relax the presentation or to demonstrate and exemplify the conduct of various processes difficult to play only by text.

In the latter situation, each animation can be interrupted and resumed at any time. In order to study thoroughly, animations can be correlated with vocal or textual comments.

To remove monotony generated by the visual impact, animation effect can be added to content elements and to properties such as height, position, colour.

Live cameras – can be used for educational purpose, to observe various aspects of the real world as well as to remove the feeling of isolation felt by a remote student enrolled in the learning process based on Web technologies.

There are many uses of audio format in training. It is easier to understand if the explanations of intonation and diction.

Sound, although the oldest and most subtle of all the media, is the most effective way to attract attention.

Music can be used to create atmosphere for presentation, to increase emotions or to illustrate a particular point of view.

Video recordings are used in education not only to motivate students but also to give them the opportunity of receiving information that can not be presented as text only.

Video resources allow presentation of real scenes, making demonstrations, illustrate certain processes and procedures. Generally sparing they materialize ideas which turn to be abstract.

Audio – video combination, however, has its limitations.

Some details of the information provided by these means may be more comfortable watching a video or listen to something when they don't make too much effort compared to the understanding of the content by reading a text.

To avoid situations in which students watch video recording or listen to audio recording without focusing on the message, we have to consider these aspects:

- records should be short;
- student must have control of the ongoing (forward, rewind, pause);
- breaks should be incorporated which permit reflecting on the sequence presented;
- inclusion of certain questions in these breaks which determine students to focus on important details of the presentation.

Hyperlinks – a component of computer – assisted instruction which is not found in traditional methods of training but being available after the appearance Web technology.

They allow students to participate actively in their training and lead them to a profound understanding of the information presented.

They can be used for explanations, for links to examples, providing opportunities for exploring the additional information in order to facilitate understanding of material.

Through hyperlinks information can be accessed in an unlinear form.

E-mail, discussion forums, chats – diminish the sense of isolation of students involved in long distance education due to the elimination of classical interaction.

Discussions, problem solving, interaction with peers and instructors are just some of the activities that will provide students the opportunity of social interaction directed towards learning.

Web – based training diminishes the consequences physical isolation of the student through a asynchronous (e-mail, discussion forums) or synchronous communication (chat rooms).

Discussion forum is an asynchronous communication means that allows students and teachers to exchange information related to course modules and opinions about the course.

An effective and efficient management of Web – based training requires storage, management and monitoring of real appreciation of the students.

Chat lives allow a high degree of individualization of the relationship between students and teachers. By this instrument, the interlocutors can communicate directly, in real time and using the keyboard.

Web technology new offers a chat system that incorporates audio and video communication, in addition to written communication. If the analysis of the future students is possible, the choice of the support disclosure must take into account their peculiarities such as the level of cognitive development, the intellectual ability, aspects of learning style as well motivational and attitudinal factors.

Human being is capable of seven different ways of processing information.

#### 1. Based on words

People who like to play with words, to narrate, to read and write, people who can easy remember names, data, given places after reading a text.

#### 2. Asking questions

People who like to shape their ideas by asking questions, exploring and

experimenting. They can learn well when they classify and order information, work with abstract things and their relationships.

#### 3. Watching images

People who like to draw, look at pictures, slides, movies and being able to imagine, to bring change, do puzzle, read charts and maps. These people can assimilate information more easily by viewing, using the „mind eye” in controlling images and colours.

#### 4. Listening

These people excel in remembering the songs, they feel the rhythm of life and have a good motion of time. For this people is very important the narrator’s intonation and diction.

#### 5. Watching movies

People who have a good visual memory and auditory at the same time.

#### 6. Talking with others

Persons who cooperate to perform the tasks. These people have the ability to understand and to be understood.

#### 7. By home study

It is about perseverance people who usually learn alone, without asking questions or talking to others. When choosing the best way of sending information we must think that it is a difficult task for the accomplishment of which we are supposed to take into account that learning is facilitated by the interaction between student and educational content.

Another important aspect is the specialists conclusion which show that active learning methods implemented by a combination of doing and talking magnify the power of accumulation. They are characterized by a higher level of memorizing than the passive ways of learning: seeing, reading and listening.

To send the same information we can use more presentation techniques leaving the choice of the best place for learning up to the student.

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## ENGLISH SPOKEN BY SPEAKERS OF LATIN LANGUAGES

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**Abstract:** The development of the English language has been strongly influenced by the Latin languages of mainland Europe. While English has evolved through a series of migrations across the centuries and has developed in the European periphery, it has become the *lingua franca* of the modern world, despite its complexity. It is still evolving, now importing words and phrases from the Anglophone world where it has been adopted as the official language over the last three centuries.

**Keywords:** ecclesiastical language, lingua franca, technical language, peculiarity, linguistic register, orthographic history, local dialects

### 1. Introduction

To understand the English language thoroughly it is necessary to have knowledge of Latin. This is due to the fact that the Anglo-Saxon language, that Germanic language group, spoken in Britain and known as Old English, had borrowed many words from Latin, either directly or indirectly through French. This had been taking place both before and after the Norman Conquest (AD 1066). As a result, modern English and Latin are quite closely connected.

### 2. Latin language

**Latin** was an ancient Indo-European language spoken across the Roman Empire. It was also the *de facto* international language of science and scholarship in mid and Western Europe until the 17th century. Through Roman conquest, Latin spread throughout the Mediterranean and a large part of Europe, later evolving into the languages spoken in France, Italy, Romania and the Iberian Peninsula, and through them to North, Central, South America and Africa. There are two distinctions of Latin: *classical*, the form used in poetry and formal prose, and *vulgar*, the name given to a common set of Latin based dialects, until they diverged into the various Romance languages.

After the fall of the Western Roman Empire and the rise of the Catholic Church, Latin became the ecclesiastical language of the Catholic Church and the *lingua franca* of educated classes in the West.

The Latin alphabet, together with its modern variants such as the English, Spanish and French ones, is the most widely used in the world. Today, Latin is widely used in the terminology and abbreviations of, amongst other things, philosophy, medicine, biology, and law. Latin terms are also used in isolation, as technical terms. The largest organisation which still uses Latin in an official context is the Roman Catholic Church.

### 3. English language

**English** is an Indo-European, West Germanic language originating in England, and is the first language for most people in the Anglophone Caribbean, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and the United States (sometimes referred to as the Anglosphere). It is used extensively as a second language and as an official language throughout the world, especially in Commonwealth countries and in many international organisations.

Modern English is sometimes described as the first global *lingua franca*. It is the dominant international language in communications, science, business, aviation, entertainment, radio and diplomacy. The influence of the British Empire was the primary reason for the initial spread of the language far beyond the British Isles, although since World War II, the growing economic and cultural influence of the United States has significantly accelerated the adoption of English, albeit in a somewhat derived format.

The English language is actually based on the amalgamation of regional dialects spoken in Latin, vulgar Latin, Germanic, Gothic, Celtic, Greek and Spanish, a process that took about 8 centuries of lingual evolution until the Norman Conquest of England in 1066. It was the French, and most especially the Normans, who used Anglo-Norman, which was close to Old French who actually helped most to improvise, refine and shape the Anglo-Saxon (Old English) language for 3-4 centuries after the Conquest. Anglo-Norman borrowings had contributed roughly 10,000 words to English, of which 75% remain in use. The best example of this stage of development is Geoffrey Chaucer's famous work, *The Canterbury Tales*. However, it was King Edward III of England who, concerned about the unfair disadvantage of his English-speaking subjects apropos the French-speaking nobility, decided to make English the official language in the government, the court system and business affairs in mid-14th century. After that, the English language evolved gradually, incorporating spoken words and dialects from around the world through the centuries.

Later, during the English Renaissance, many words were borrowed directly from Latin and Greek, leaving a parallel vocabulary that persists into modern times. *e.g.* cactus-cactuses-cacti, genius-geniuses-genii, bureau-bureaus-bureaux, terminus-terminuses-termini, symposium-symposiums-symposia etc. The foreign plural form is mostly used in technical language while the plural with -s is used in everyday speech. The English language belongs to the western sub-branch of the

Germanic branch of the Indo-European family of languages.

Approximately 375 million people speak English as their first language: today it is probably the third largest language by number of native speakers, after mandarin Chinese and Spanish. However, when combining native and non-native speakers it is probably the most commonly spoken language in the world. Estimates that include second language speakers vary greatly from 470 million to over a billion depending on how literacy or mastery is defined. It is claimed by some that non-native speakers now outnumber native speakers by a ratio of 3 to 1.

Because English is so widely spoken, it has often been referred to as a "world language", the *lingua franca* of the modern era. While English is not an official language in most countries, it is currently the language most often taught as a second language around the world. Some linguists believe that it is no longer the exclusive cultural sign of "native English speakers", but is rather a language that is absorbing aspects of cultures worldwide as it continues to grow.

English is the language most commonly studied as a foreign language in the European Union (by 89% of schoolchildren), followed by French (32%), German (18%), and Spanish (8%). A large proportion of the population of the EU reports being able to converse in English to some extent.

English grammar has minimal inflection compared with most other Indo-European languages. For example, Modern English, unlike Modern German or Dutch and the Romance languages, lacks grammatical gender and adjectival agreement. Case marking has almost disappeared from the language and mainly survives in pronouns. The patterning of strong (*e.g. speak/spoke/spoken*) versus weak verbs inherited from its Germanic origins has declined in importance in modern English, and the remnants of inflection (such as plural marking and the ending for regular verbs in the past tense) have become more regular. At the same time, the language has become more analytical, and has developed features such as

modal verbs and word order, as rich resources for conveying meaning. Auxiliary verbs mark constructions such as questions, negative polarity, the passive voice and progressive aspect.

#### 4. Vocabulary

The English vocabulary has changed considerably over the centuries. Like many languages deriving from Proto-Indo-European (PIE), many of the most common words in English can trace back their origin (through Germanic) to PIE. Such words include the basic pronouns *I*, originally *ic*, (cf. Latin *ego*, Greek *ego*, Sanskrit *aham*), *me* (cf. Latin *me*, Greek *eme*, Sanskrit *mam*), numbers (e.g. *one*, *two*, *three*, cf. Latin *unus*, *duo*, *tres*, Greek *oinos* "ace (on dice)", *duo*, *treis*), common family relationships such as mother, father, brother, sister etc (cf. Greek "meter", Latin "mater", Sanskrit "mat"; *mother*), names of many animals (cf. Sanskrit *mus*, Greek *mys*, Latin *mus*; *mouse*), and many common verbs (cf. Greek *gignōmi*, Latin *gnoscere*, Hittite *kānes*; *to know*).

Germanic words (generally words of Old English or to a lesser extent Norse origin) tend to be shorter than the Latinate words of English and more common in ordinary speech. This includes nearly all the basic pronouns, prepositions, conjunctions, modals etc. that form the basis of English syntax and grammar. The longer Latinate words are often regarded as more elegant or educated. However, the excessive use of Latinate words is considered at times to be either pretentious or an attempt to obfuscate an issue. An English speaker is often able to choose between Germanic and Latinate synonyms: *come* or *arrive*; *sight* or *vision*; *freedom* or *liberty*. In some cases there is a choice between a Germanic derived word (*oversee*), a Latin derived word (*supervise*), and a French word derived from the same Latin word (*survey*). The richness of the language arises from the variety of different meanings and nuances such synonyms harbour, enabling the speaker to express fine variations or shades of thought. Familiarity

with the etymology of groups of synonyms can give English speakers greater control over their linguistic register. An exception to this and a peculiarity perhaps unique to English is that the nouns for meats are commonly different from, and unrelated to, those for the animals from which they are produced, the animal commonly having a Germanic name and the meat having a French-derived one. Examples include: *deer* and *venison*; *cow* and *beef*; *swine* /*pig* and *pork*, or *sheep* and *mutton*. However, there are other Latinate words that are used normally in everyday speech and do not sound formal; these are mainly words for concepts that no longer have Germanic words, and are generally assimilated better and in many cases do not appear Latinate. For instance, the words: *mountain*, *valley*, *river*, *aunt*, *uncle*, *move*, *use*, *push* and *stay* are all Latinate.

#### 5. Specific terms and the alphabet

English easily accepts technical terms into common usage and often imports new words and phrases. Examples of this phenomenon include: *cookie*, *Internet* and *URL* (technical terms), as well as *genre*, *lingua franca* and *amigo* (imported words/phrases from French, German, modern Latin, and Spanish, respectively). In addition, slang often provides new meanings for old words and phrases. In fact, this fluidity is so pronounced that a distinction often needs to be made between formal forms of English and contemporary usage, the latter frequently coming from US English.

English has been written using the Latin alphabet since around the ninth century. The spelling system, or orthography, is multilayered, with elements of French, Latin and Greek spelling on top of the native Germanic system; it has grown to vary significantly from the phonology of the language. The spelling of words often diverges considerably from how they are spoken. In general, the English language, being the product of many other languages and having only been codified orthographically in the 16th

century, has fewer consistent relationships between sounds and letters than many other languages. The consequence of this orthographic history is that reading can be challenging. It takes longer for students to become completely fluent readers of English than of many other languages, including French, Greek, and Spanish.

### 5. The future of the language?

Some researchers claim that English, as spoken today, will have disappeared in 100 years having been replaced by a new *lingua franca* called “Panglish”, an adulterated and simplified form of the English language that follows constructs commonly substituted for the proper ones by people who learn English as a second language. For example, non-native speakers tend to have trouble with the “th” sound, which they frequently substitute with a “z” or an “s” for it. Similarly, such people commonly forget to add an “s” to third person singular verbs and omit consonants from the ends of other words. Furthermore, non-native speakers tend to add an unnecessary “s” in an attempt to pluralise an already plural group noun. All of these things are characteristics of Panglish. Some linguists currently theorize that by 2020 there could be as many as two billion people speaking English, of whom only 300 million would be native speakers, whilst others assert that English is just as likely to splinter into a multitude of local dialects that

may or may not be mutually unintelligible. For instance, Braj Kachru, of Ohio State University - one of the world's leading experts in English as a second language - said non-native English dialects were already become unintelligible to each other. Singaporean English, for example, combines English with Malay, Tamil and Chinese and is difficult for English-speaking Westerners to understand.

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## THE MANAGEMENT OF AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN

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**Abstract:** After defining terms and presenting the informed opinions of experts regarding the issue of aggression, the reasons that cause aggressive behavior in children from kindergarten were presented as well as working techniques that can be used in educational work with preschool aggressive children. It was concluded that preschool-family partnership looks to be one of the most effective measures in preventing and managing aggressive behavior in preschool children because it ensures the continuous improvement of children's behavior through the action of convergent educative factors and through adopting the most appropriate disciplinary measures according to situation.

**Keywords:** emotional problems, deviance, disorder, risk factors, educational factors, the educational team, origins, causes, manifestations, methods of prevention, educational partners, parental style, active listening, negotiation, climate, limits.

**Rezumat:** După definirea termenilor și prezentarea părerilor avizate ale unor specialiști în ceea ce privește problematica agresivității au fost prezentate motivele care determină apariția unor comportamente agresive la copiii din grădiniță precum și tehnicile de lucru ce pot fi utilizate în munca educativă cu preșcolarii agresivi. S-a ajuns la concluzia că parteneriatul grădiniță-familie pare a fi una dintre cele mai eficiente măsuri în prevenirea și gestionarea comportamentelor agresive la preșcolari deoarece el asigură îmbunătățirea continuă a conduitei copiilor, prin acțiunea convergentă a factorilor educativi și adoptarea celor mai potrivite măsuri disciplinare în funcție de situație.

**Cuvinte cheie:** problemă emoțională, devianță, tulburare, factori de risc, factori educativi, echipă pedagogică, origini, cauze, forme de manifestare, modalități de prevenire, parteneri educaționali, stil parental, ascultare activă, negociere, climat, limite.

Aggressive behaviour constitutes one of the great problems of today's world. In the written press and the audio-visual there are permanent occurrences referring to the manifestations of this phenomenon. The concept of aggressiveness comes from the Latin "agressio", which means "to attack". Aggressiveness is a behavior oriented towards persons, objects or even towards self. The semantic sense is that of defense and it leads towards the instinct of self-preservation, and the direct, main sense is that of attacking. In both situations, the hostile behavior is tense, impulsive, manifesting itself through

excitability and hastiness. Usually an aggressive act is associated with physical attack, with hitting and eliminating obstacles, but aggressiveness manifests in latent forms too, extremely refined ones, such as: silence, refusal to speak, refusal to act, irony, etc.

"Aggressive behavior is often used to test the social movement space. Children act aggressively to see how far they can go. The others' response indicates the limits of tolerance and the cultural norm of the culture

they belong to”<sup>1</sup>. In some cases, children use aggressive behavior to gain an identity. What’s sure is that aggressiveness imprints in thinking, imagination, mimic, behavior, speaking and can be controlled only by willpower.

From the psychological point of view, the aggressive act hides childhood suffering, frustration, fears, tensions, failures etc.. A complete and detailed analysis of the causes that may lead to deviant behavior in children is carried out by N. Mitrofan in "Judicial Psychology”<sup>2</sup>. The author speaks of two categories of factors underlying juvenile delinquency: a) internal, individual factors b) external, social factors.

In the category of individual factors there are: a) cerebral dysfunction (EEG research has shown specific routes to juvenile offenders), b) intellectual shortcomings (it was found a large number of cases of juvenile offenders with a low intellectual level, this preventing them to anticipate the consequences of the acts committed), c) disorders of affectivity (insufficient emotional maturity, leading to lack of objectivity in self-evaluation), d) character disorders (immature characterology).

In the category of social factors there are: a) the educational family climate (dysfunctional families, family atmosphere of conflict, hyper authoritarian climate or hiperpermissiv climate) b) failure of school integration (low level of both academic performance and satisfaction of the students felt about school activities).

Although problematic behaviors in preschool children were often regarded as normal manifestations of age, respectively that expressions of development or transient responses caused by adverse circumstances, a

series of research support the idea of installing early behavioral deviance.<sup>3</sup>

The results of the prevalence studies vary depending on sample characteristics and methods used. Studies made in the USA on the community preschool determined a sample rate by the type of oppositional behavior (ODD - Opposition Defiant Disorder) between 7% and 25%. In a study sample of 3860 children aged between 2 and 5 years identified by paediatricians, 16.8% of children met diagnostic criteria for oppositional behavior, half of the cases (8.1%) were considered severe. The percentage was higher (22.5%) in three years old children and lower (15%) for five years old. In this study attention deficit disorder was identified in 2% of the participants, co-existing in almost all cases of oppositional-type behavior.<sup>4</sup>

Behavioral disorders were identified mostly among children from families with poor economic conditions.

Research has shown that behavior problems often present at an early age and is still the root of behavioral problems later. Such longitudinal studies have revealed that ~ 50% of preschool children with behavior problems have continued to have behavior problems at school, hence a high percentage of persistence.<sup>5</sup>

It seems that there is evidence of early onset of deviant behavior patterns, starting with aggressive, impulsive and oppositional behavior symptoms during preschool period, evolving toward symptoms as behavioral deviance like beatings, lying and stealing in the middle childhood and resulting in serious misconduct violent behavior in adolescence as interpersonal violation and property violations.

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<sup>1</sup> Eibl-Eibesfeldt, I. (1995), *Agresivitatea umană – Studiu etologic*, p.118, Editura Trei, București.

<sup>2</sup> Mitrofan, N. (coord.), (1994), *Aspecte psihologice privind delincvența juvenilă*, în *Psihologie judiciară*, Casa de editură și presă Șansa SRL, București

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<sup>3</sup> Campbell, S.B., (1995), *Behavior problems in preschool children: A review of the literature*. *Journal of child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 36, p.113- 120

<sup>4</sup> Fox, L., Dunlap, G. și Powell, D., (2002), *Young Children with Challenging Behavior*, *Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions*, vol.4, no.4, Fall 2002, p. 209

<sup>5</sup> Idem 8.

<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, children who exhibit behavioral problems at an early age prone to develop antisocial behavior from adolescence into adulthood.<sup>7</sup>

Favorable risk factors influencing child's development course to toward desirable or problematic behaviors are complex and they act synergic. The more you expose the child to risk factors, the more likelihood of negative effects apparition, including emotional and behavioral problems.

In 1975, Sameroff and Chandler<sup>8</sup>, proposed a transactional model of development based on the idea that child development is the product of dynamic mutual relations between the characteristics of the child, the parents and environmental influences. Starting from this model were studied associations between multiple risk factors and children's behavioral problems resulting in a new model to illustrate the multitude of risk factors involved in the development of behavior problems in preschool children.

According to this model preschool behavior problems are the result of the interaction between child characteristics (language development, social networking skills, emotional status, cognitive skills, gender), characteristics of parents (negative discipline, maternal stress, depression, absent father), and factors sociodemographic (education, number of children, family income, intrafamilial conflict, low social support, etc.).

To speak of aggression where we expect to find the best conditions for training and harmonious development of personality may seem an unlikely fact. The aggressiveness

of children is one of the most difficult problems facing educators and parents in education. At present the extent of this phenomenon is worrying, because more and more "problem" children are in groups of preschool and there are many parents who do not know how to react in these situations. The modern family is going through a "crisis of education", which leaves its mark sharply. Unemployment, poverty, the increasing number of broken families, misunderstood liberalism of education fall onto children from infancy, negatively influencing their moral. The teachers are confronted with the daily aggressiveness of very difficult children.

The aggression problem must lie in the attention of all educational factors and especially pedagogical teams who must find optimal feasible, solutions, to restore harmony and balance for normal, natural psychological development of children groups where such preschoolers are present.

Even tough it represents a delicate theme; the seizure of the phenomenon of aggression can't be made if we do not know its causes, origins, manifestations and prevention methods.

There are multiple *causes* for a behavior disorder in children. If *genetics play a role* is still a controversy and the subject of long debates. Still, it was documented that children who present behavioral disorders early on, have been manifesting as slightly irritable, not responding to confort and having an irregular program even since birth.( Turner, 1992).<sup>9</sup>

Another cause could be the *inappropriate education of the child*, an education characterised by inconsistency, exaggerated freedom or an authoritarian education, too inflexible or contradictory. This situation is more frequent in unexperienced families, with prolonged marital stress, with obvious disagreements between parents.

<sup>6</sup> Loeber, R., (1990), *Development and risk factors of juvenile antisocial behavior and delinquency*, *Clinical Psychology Review*, 10, p. 1-41

<sup>7</sup> Tremblay, R.E., Phil, R.O., Vitaro, F. & Dobkin, P., (1994), *Predicting early onset of male antisocial behavior from preschool behavior*, *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 51, p.732- 739

<sup>8</sup> Huaqing Qi, C. & Kaiser, A., (2003), *Behavior problems of preschool children from low- income families, Review of the literature*, p.188 -216, 1a <http://tec.sagepub.com>

<sup>9</sup> Turner, S., Calhoun, K.& Adams, H. (1992), *Handbook of Clinical Behavior Therapy*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., USA



Andrei Cosmovici<sup>10</sup> speaks of two main axis of the parental attitude towards children:

a) a positive attitude, of acceptance and warmth towards the children – as opposed to a rejection attitude, disguised or not, that manifests through hostility (brutal authority);

b) Psychic autonomy given by the parents (it goes as far as neglecting the schedule and activities of the child), versus control forms (lax, firm, harsh);

To make an analysis of aggressive behavior pre scholars must understand the reasons that determine it. The occurrence of such behavior may have the following reasons:

- children can hit, beat each other, when do not want to do something or dislike something;
- to get revenge when he is frustrated, when his whims are not appeased, when he is punished;
- To get unlimited attention from parents. Thus, he noted that manages to attract attention when they hit, scream or bite
- power struggle may lead to aggressive behavior;
- jealousy;
- fear (fear of the doctor, animals, darkness);
- an undeserved punishment may trigger aggressive behavior towards teachers, parents or other children;
- feeling of abandonment can lead to aggressive reactions (the first day of kindergarten, when hospitalized, if the parents divorce, the death of a close person or animal)
- they may react negatively when they feel powerlessness (a child who can not ride a bicycle, hits it)
- Boredom can be another reason for aggression
- etc.

To combat aggressive behaviors we should consider creating an enabling environment for collaboration and cooperation between educators and parents, who can

become real partners in achieving the same goal: the prevention and management of preschool behavioral disorders and aggressive in-game events and activities. According to Adina Vărăjmaș family educational style is indicative of educational model in the family, the subjective impression that characterizes that environment. This is the most important element, which depends on the quality and efficiency of education in the family, being mainly dependent to parental style, which they often confuse. Parental style reflects how parents should act on children and it can be a harmonic or disharmonic unit between the personal styles of education of the two parents.<sup>11</sup>

Among working techniques that can be used in educational work with aggressive preschoolers, we can include:

- *Active listening and negotiation.* Listening involves a partnership relationship with the child in terms of listening and communication. This process makes both partners able to understand each other's feelings and use them in solving problems;
- *Establish an individualized relationship with preschoolers showing violent behavior.* It's good to have a positive image of these children, to encourage them, to stimulate their efforts in behavioral plan without expecting spectacular results immediately. They need to overcome the feelings of inferiority, powerlessness and gain confidence in their abilities to change their own image.
- *Grup's climate and environment are a very important factor for aggressive children integration.* The educational programs are good enough to create opportunities for preschoolers to know themselves better, to discover and make friends. Children must be understood, they needs love and affective security.

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<sup>10</sup> Cosmovici, A. , Iacob, L. (1998), *Psihologie școlară*, Editura Polirom, Iași

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<sup>11</sup> Vărăjmaș, E. (1999), *Educația copilului preșcolar*, p.203, Editura Pro Humanitate, București

- *It is important to know the family's situation* in order to compensate through our attitude some deficiencies of the child in family education. It is a matter of tact that requires special pedagogic skill.
  - *The group of children* is a small society that requires clear rules to be respected by all the members of the group in order for it to function. Abiding rules is a condition of socializing, which means to learn in an environment guided by respect, excluding violent behavior.
  - *Establishing limits and contracts* is another way to intervene in the cases of aggressive conduct in the children group.
  - Establishing limits means expressing in positive terms the border between acceptable and unacceptable behavior. Pre-schoolers must know the rewards and sanctions for certain conducts and to understand the logic consequences of the problem-behavior.
  - The contract is a type of agreement between the teacher and the aggressive child. Together they establish that the child's behavior is a problem and the type of consequence the child will have to suffer for that behavior.
  - Through game we can ameliorate many of the children's problems, such as aggression, difficulties to attach, negativism, oppositionism, troubles to adapt to the collective etc. through playing, children are thought to initiate and cultivate friendships, to appreciate certain behaviors.
  - Pre-schoolers with special situations that necessitate immediate interventions react positively to game therapy.
  - The activities that develop the sensibility to others are welcome in the educative act. For example, analyzing mimicry and gestures, analyzing voice tonality, activities that require drawing human faces, discussing images/stories etc.
  - The partnership between kindergarten and family seems to be the most effective way to prevent and manage deviant behaviors; it ensures the continuous improvement of the child's conduct, through a converging action of the educational factors and through choosing the best disciplinary course depending on the situation.
  - Developing and implementing an educative programme addressed to children with behavior problems could lead to children learning moralizing lessons and ways to handle conflictual situations.
  - The methods that can be successfully used in the educational program addressed to children: role-playing, imaginative relaxation techniques, verbal self-instruction, support through offering points, stories with an ethical character, intuition based discussions, reading after images (for example "Good deeds / bad deeds"), didactical games (for example "So yes / so no", "Thinking Hats", "Stellar explosion").
  - Having an educational program addressed to parents through the course of parental education "Educate like this", a project financed by the "Our Children Foundation", representing a mode of informing and supporting parents to prevent some severe education problems and some children's behavior problems.
- The course contains 5 lessons, each approaching themes of great interest in children's education: praise and giving positive attention, setting limits and behavior rules, forbidding, ignoring, rewarding, isolating, confiscating something that they like, punishment and avoiding punishment. Through exercise and games that need participation from parents, we are trying to make them realize the powerful influence the childhood experiences may have on the

development of a child's personality. Lessons take place in 5 sessions (one session/week).

The participants in the class may learn that an authoritarian education style and negative feed-back is not indicated. That means if the child is always told that his behavior is wrong, it won't necessarily help change his behavior.

What's certain is that every situation a teacher meets has unique causes and forms of manifestation, and that's why there are no certain solutions or failsafe recipes to prevent and fight aggressive behavior in kindergarten. The most effective solutions can be found into the partnership between kindergarten and parents. Considering the parents as partners in the educational process, leads to the possibility to negotiate solutions for the common problems, to make common front in approaching the child's aggressivity.

In order to prevent behavior difficulties, the kindergarten environment must become more sensible to the emotional and educational needs of children.

What is essential to remember is that all intervention methods are based on the drastic change of the perception on the problem-child: any child can learn self-control. Correlating this change in perception, the mission of the teacher and her role in intervention is to offer these children as many

opportunities to know themselves and to practice self-control.

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## THE INCLUSION OF THE CHILDREN WITH DEFICIENCIES - NOT YET A FEASIBLE TASK

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**Abstract:** One of the educational concepts more and more spread over the world, stipulated both, by the international and national documents, is the concept of the inclusion. Deriving from a long history of the migrations, it presupposes today a change of the vision. If for the most part of the deprived children the solution can be found quite fast, the things are different when the special needs children are in discussion.

The costs of a real inclusion are very high and need a special preparation both of the educational institutions and of the teachers. At this moment, the Romanian school is far from granting a minimum of the conditions necessary for a concrete inclusion and in the benefice of the special needs children.

**Keywords:** deprivation, education, inclusion, training, special school.

**Rezumat:** Unul dintre conceptele educaționale tot mai răspândite în lume, stipulate de documentele internaționale dar și naționale, este conceptul de incluziune. Derivat dintr-o lungă istorie a migrărilor, el presupune azi, o schimbare de viziune. Dacă pentru cea mai mare parte a copiilor deprivați, soluția poate fi găsită relativ repede, lucrurile stau diferit atunci când este vorba de copii cu nevoi speciale.

Costurile unei reale incluziuni sunt foarte mari și necesită o pregătire specială a instituțiilor educaționale cât și a cadrelor didactice. În acest moment, școala românească este departe de a asigura minimum de condiții pentru o incluziune concretă și în beneficiul copiilor cu nevoi speciale.

**Cuvinte cheie:** deprivare, educație, incluziune, pregătire, școală specială.

### The necessity of the changing in the attitude

There are, no doubt, a number of things that the modernity marks as an important progress; one of the most visible refers to the attitude that the international educational politics has concerning the attention that has to be paid to the persons with a handicap. It seems strange to remember today how marginalized were these persons, how outside of the society were obliged to live. Behind this attitude there is a long history, based upon an entirely pragmatic view about life. The ancient world was reluctant toward these deficiencies considering them rather punishments for some sins.

Perhaps a contribution to the rejection had some texts of the New Testament in which appeared parables concerning blind or deaf people. But if we look carefully, we understand that an entire culture, built actually upon a concrete action basis ("to be or not to be useful, good for work) has lead to a structure of "traditional" prejudices concerning the different deficiencies.

*Are the special schools, still useful?*

The existence of the special schools for people with deficiencies has constituted a big step ahead of the special psycho-pedagogy. They have the best expressed the requests of

the educational politics, settling concretely the special needs children' right to education. More than that there was an affirmation of the right to a specific education, according to the didactic principles, taking in account the child's characteristics, offering him information and education through specific path that there are accessible in the widest sense, to his/her individuality. These schools have offered the specific means that the children could not obtain in their families. To not be forgotten the fact that at the beginning but even now, the special needs children came from extremely different environments: a large number from the rural areas, where the underprivileged situation was the rule; and a lot from the urban areas, coming from families that could not cope with the difficulties generated by the need to compensate the handicap of their children.

Then, the vocational schools have appeared, ensuring the families' peace of mind and heart that their son or daughter will be able to earn their own money.

At this moment however, the trend that has been initiated in the world educational politics, has as a prime and visible effect, the abolishment of the special schools. Leaving aside the financial motivation that is actually essential (the special schools need money to work efficiently), there is a strong promotion of a concept that in itself can be only a positive one: education for all. The difficulties appear when the differentiation is explained as: education for all, at the same time/rhythm, in the same place, in the same way.

This is the moment when, the democratic request can appear at least, unrealistic.

### **Inclusion**

The concept of inclusion has two major effects: one concerns the child and his/her family, the second- with an impact upon the local community.

Concerning the first effect, the child remains in his family. In this way, the sentiment of abandon of a child in a special school, very far from his family, is totally abandoned. Also, the family needs to recognize the child's difficulties and find the most suitable ways to help him. The second effect of the inclusion refers to the local community, broadly understood from the play partners to the state institutions. Growing up together his/her siblings, with the children in the playground, coming in contact with people in the neighborhood, these ones succeed to understand the special needs child, even to organize activities he will be able to take part in. Actually, s/he will develop in regular, familiar surroundings, will be known by all the local community members and will not be considered any more as a strange guest for a holiday. Thus, in a indirect way, an educational influence is exerted upon the social environment of the community.

However, to decide simply for a special needs child to remain in his family, it is just a simplistic way of thinking.

### **To prepare for the inclusion**

The moment of the effective application of the concept of the inclusion is actually an extremely difficult one. And this is true starting with the kindergarten. It is supposed that a special needs child can do the most part of the preschool activities. This is an error, at least in our kindergartens. One has not to forget that unlike many countries which has provided an ancillary person in kindergarten and primary school, our situation does not contain this provision. The kindergarten teacher, as well as the primary one is obliged to offer an individualized instruction to a number of children. Obeying to the request (often misunderstood by the supervisors) of the inclusion, the teacher must take care of several children with learning difficulties or very different handicaps, beside the mainstream children. Alone with all these children, each of them with different and specific needs, the teacher is helpless.

So, if in a special school the special needs child, being in a classroom with a small number of children, had the benefit of a multiple specialized support along the whole day, this time he is alone and unable to perform the simplest tasks- he must understand the message, know to find his material, to perform. But what if is deaf or blind or have motor problems or is an autistic child? What a kindergarten teacher can do, when she has about twenty children in her class, each of them having different needs requesting a different approach. Not to mention the lack of the specialized instruments and material for an efficient educational activity. The things become more complicated when the school begins.

Here again, the special school offers adequate notebooks, handbooks, different didactic means that are designed specially for different kinds of deficiencies. And very important, the special school offers specialists in the special needs children's psychology and education.

Which one of these absolute minimal conditions are fulfilled by a mainstream kindergarten or primary school? None of them, in the rural settings as well as in the urban ones.

### **The prime necessity**

We are now between two situations/affirmations that are both true: on one side, we need to have a realistic opinion about the concrete facts and on the other side we have to recognize that the inclusion is a humanist approach of the special needs children education.

However one must understand that an uncritical application of a directive can generate the most dangerous, the most noxious effect possible in a triple way: upon the child in difficulty and his/her family, upon the school performances and the local community. In other words it will generate precisely a reverse effect.

Therefore, the emergency is not constituted by emitting laws for eliminating the special schools and affirming the compulsoriness of the inclusion (as it was the procedure in the case of the children's homes, making a number of "collateral victims").

The real emergency is related to the preparation of all the necessary conditions to a real inclusion of the special needs children and not just placing them in a classroom of a mainstream school. Here there are some of the basic elements of a minimum care for a correct educational policy: a) the stipulation in the local budget of a section that could be activated in the case of an inclusion of the children with problems; b) the endowment of the mainstream schools with the necessary equipment and the technology destined to make easier the special needs child's learning. The school libraries must include audio books and books adequate to the different learning problems; c) the teachers, at least the ones from kindergartens and primary schools must study, both during the initial training and the continuous one, the psycho-pedagogy of the special needs child, as well as the utilization of the high technology for compensatory purposes; d) the family must be supported financially to be able to meet the special needs of the child and by counseling séances concerning the behavior and intra-family relations for ensuring a comfortable and emotionally balanced environment.

### **Conclusions**

Speaking about the special needs child's right to education, about the necessity of the inclusion, it is honest not to limit oneself to external affirmations or actions equally formal. One cannot forget that the child as well as his/her family, has the right to choose and in order to choose, s/he needs alternatives. To operate an inclusion by force is as harmful as operating an exclusion by force. Unfortunately, the educational policies have the tendency, as always, to consider that "they know better" what is good and necessary for the wellbeing of the different special

categories of children. No doubt however, despite of the all good intentions that are behind the concepts of “education for all” and “inclusion”, there is no possibility of a real efficient application without a significant financial support of the government and the institutional provisions. The integration of the special needs children in a mainstream classroom without a solid training of the child’s family and teachers, without the existence of the didactic material, books and technology designed precisely for the special needs child’s learning can only unfairly contribute to the falling into derisory of an important humanist educational concept-the one of the inclusion.

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## IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVE-PARTICIPATORY METHODS IN TRAINING THE DESIGN ENGINEER FROM LIGHT INDUSTRY

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**Abstract:** The contemporary education requirement is to form active involvement of student's skills. They are to develop the student's ability of creative thinking and free acting in the training process.

Active-participatory methods determine the teacher to create situations where students are forced to use a wide range of mental processes and operations, to provide students the opportunity to gain experience implementing the various mental operations adequate to circumstances. Consequently, active training of design engineers is a necessity, due to the fact that of enterprises in the country lack competitive specialists.

**Keywords:** cooperation, skills, competitive, training of character.

**Rezumat:** Cerința învățământului contemporan este de a forma la studenți deprinderile de implicare activă. Acestea urmează să fructifice la studenți capacitatea de gândire și acțiune liberă și creativă în propriul proces de formare.

Metodele activ-participative determină cadrul didactic să creeze situații în care studenții să fie obligați să utilizeze o gamă vastă de procese și operații mintale. Să ofere studentului posibilitatea să obțină experiență de punere în mișcare a variatelor operații mintale adecvate situațiilor date. În consecință, formarea activă a inginerilor proiectanți este o necesitate, aceasta se datorează faptului că un șir de întreprinderi din țară duc lipsa de specialiști competitivi.

**Cuvinte cheie:** cooperare, competențe profesionale, competitiv, caracter formativ.

### Introduction

Higher education occupies a privileged role in the social system, its business purpose is to train high quality human knowledge, to promote the creative skills and their application in practice.

In this context the university education is aimed at improving the training process and implementation of methodological approaches in training of engineers, given that complex functions such as:

- providing high quality training of specialists;
- thorough training of young scientists;
- providing innovative principles of knowledge, etc.

All that needs appropriate training in the training process.

The nature and methods of instruction used in the study process facilitate understanding and ultimately transforming objectives in the phenomena.

Working methods of education are a realization of the strategic direction which means systematic operations to concrete action. From another point of view they are seen as concrete expressions of the training of students during the study years.

One of the main guidelines of didactic teaching is to depart from the methods based on conditioning, memorization and repetition-based methods to promote active participation



of students in their training and cognitive development.

Active-participatory methods ensure high student participation, which in turn is the key that must be taken into account in university education.

Active-participatory methods are procedures that are based on the idea that learning is a personal activity that encourages students to think and reflect independently.

The essential problem is that effective learning depends on the problem involving and engagement of the learner in the act of learning.

What is very important for active-participatory methods is precisely their ability to stimulate active participation and full physical and mental, individual and collective student learning process, to bind the student body and soul of what makes up his/her identification of with the task of learning.

In contrast to passive methods, considering the assets, predominantly, intellectual development, development of logico-mathematical operations (such as the ability to compare and object, to categorizing and organizing, calculating and check) of scientific operations (ability to explain the various causes, to link, to establish functional relationships, to predict outcomes); the capacity to collect, synthesize, organize, assign and communicate information. The purpose of the methods we refer here is to create conditions conducive to such involvement in the act of learning capabilities (Cerghit, 1997, p.80).

The increase in asset-participatory methods does not mean renouncing at classical methods of education, at the transmission and assimilation of information. Modern operating methodology for changes related to weight, especially the valuation, the increase of the formative potential of the classical methods by emphasizing their heuristic nature and active-participatory.

### **Active-participatory methods in the process training designer engineer**

Modern education promotes active learning methods, learning experience conceptualized based on ownership of humanity, but also the investigation of reality and creating their own knowledge and experience through their own effort. Coaching does not mean to induce the student to store a volume of knowledge in mind, but to learn to take part in the production of new knowledge.

Thus, they prefer modern heuristic methods of teaching and learning because they focus on the following capabilities (Albulescu, 2000, p.99):

- ability to answer questions and build;
- cultivation of skills, abilities and intellectual qualities;
- develop critical thinking and creativity;
- application of concepts and algorithms in projects or works in different contexts;
- formation of opinions, attitudes or behaviors desirable.

The key to this approach of teaching is the student placement in the position of the agent to discover solutions of the training and education. Change in attitude or behavior can not be achieved only if the student listens to a small extent or mechanically reproduce some knowledge that however are not understood or accepted as useful.

Certainly, not in any context, for every unit of learning traditional expository methods can be eliminated. Instead there are operational objectives that can be achieved by students by attempting to discover. There are too extensive content, which can not be discovered by students through their own investigative activities.

Interest in active-participatory methods is generated by the current of open high school for new goals and content, to new experiences of knowledge, experience and action. There is also an acute need to prepare students which are future engineers for working life and creative work, greater participation of youth in all of the problems of life, is a key indicator of

the effectiveness of education. It is natural, therefore, that a university education to seek out and choose their own participatory training methods and education.

Learning is a personal act and requires personal participation. The key issue on which depends the production of effective learning involving problem, the engagement of the learner in the act of learning. Are considered active-participatory all those methods that students are able to mobilize energies, and to pay attention and to follow with interest and curiosity lesson, to gain his adherence to the logical and emotional from newly learned that urges him to put his imagination into play, understanding the power of anticipation, memory, etc.

Also, focusing on operational knowledge on learning by doing, both in manual and mental, these are just some of the characteristics of active-participatory methods.

Active-participatory methods are also the methods collective of interaction, interaction between learners, methods that attract students from collective discussions and intense collegial cooperation, which facilitates and enhances the spontaneous exchange of information and ideas, impressions and opinions, the confrontation of opinions and alternatives within the group of students.

### **Implementation of active – participatory methods**

Through application and practice, the educational process provides such an opportunity for affirmation and full recovery and multiple levels of knowledge and creative potential of students. Participation may be the cradle of creativity, of affirmation, of self-achievement.

All these characteristics of active-participatory methods print a strong formative educative aspect. Formative effects of higher education are directly related to the level of commitment and participation of students in individual and collective learning process (Cerghit, 1997, p.

81). Here are some of the active-participatory methods that are implemented in the preparation of design engineers in the field of textile industry.

**Brainstorming** - is a group discussion method (initiated by A. Osborn -1953) - The purpose of the given method is to stimulate creativity and thinking through the group (Cerghit, 2006).

Methodological approach: it starts with a word or a theme and requests many associated cognitive calls within a certain period of time, introduces students the basic rule: delay critical judgments at the time of saying ideas, focusing on quantity and not quality, it necessary for students to be stimulated and encouraged throughout the session, writing ideas that then will be sorted, analyzed and evaluated, it can start with an exercise session "warming".

The strengths of this method are:

- produce a positive atmosphere of relaxation and confidence, so that shy students can participate actively;
- can be used as creative training in any type of activity;
- is a source of finding solutions, to solve different types of activity;
- facilitate inter-evaluation objective.

**Cluster** – the purpose of the method is practicing free thinking and structuring information in a graphical form of organization available.

Methodological approach: there are many ways that the cluster development can be achieved at the front in conjunction with brainstorming, in groups, using text, images or individually. Just as with other graphic organizers, the cluster can be used when reflection as a means of summarizing.

Strengths of the method are:

- speed and efficiency in the production of a volume of knowledge, information;

- linking knowledge and systematize their hierarchy provides a framework for ideas, collecting ideas group;
- stimulates cognitive ability: reasoning, analysis and synthesis, reflection, association;
- of means awareness of knowledge, correlations.

**Cube** - the method is to explore a new topic or enrichment of a known issue, following six-step algorithm: description, comparison, analysis, assembly, application, and reasoning.

Methodological approach: students are grouped by 6 and will be given the task of approaching a topic from one perspective or from all six, depending on the allotted time and the subject scale. Optionally you can select only certain tasks. Also in the group, each student can perform a certain role during solving common tasks: "roll" (cube roll), "knows everything" (Note the tasks presented by colleagues), "smart" (read the images and formulate the question or explain tasks), "timer" (measure time during the interventions colleagues), "humorist" (encourages colleagues come up with ideas to solve).

Strengths of the method are:

- organization and systematization of knowledge;
- differentiation, learning styles appropriate for any subjects, themes, subjects or age groups;
- automation through practice algorithm approach to the subject, determines the construction of cognitive, rezolvative and transdisciplinary strategies.

**TWC** - Think, work in pairs, communicating - the purpose is to develop the capacity to use reflection, synthesis and summarizing the concepts and information, individually and in cooperation.

Methodological approach: to communicate individual work and the given time, and then forward the requirement that each colleague to share this task, in turn, everyone will listen the method of solving proposed by his colleague, the ideas held in work in pairs are frontal analyzed / comments.

Strengths of the method are:

- combine individual work with the pair and the frontal one;
- each student is aware that in some cases becomes a source of learning and support for his colleague;
- students learn one of the easiest methods to find answers: asking a question or discussion with someone else;
- students learn to communicate in a language to be understood and learn to formulate questions they have not understood what they were told;
- it is easier to communicate with the pair than to communicate with the teacher before the whole group;
- increase student confidence and is not afraid to publicly express their opinion or answer that reflected the duo
- this technique does not require much time and can be used several times during a lesson in the evocation of previous knowledge to achieve meaning.

We know that "traditional" teaching, teaching functioned as an end in itself, is centered on the "transmission", "exposure", "communication" knowledge, while modern education seeks to maintain a balance between individual work and group work, to combine interdependent learning with the individual one through cooperation or collaboration to associate, individual exercise with others.

## Conclusions

By implementing an active-participatory methods, including those mentioned in teaching students active involvement in learning has succeeded, pursuing them simultaneously developing thinking, creativity and motivation for learning.

Thus, in practical applications for the subject "Fundamentals of clothing design" have been applied: brainstorming, cluster, stellar

explosion, Venn diagram, the cube and TWC, etc.

Also active-participatory methods that were used had an impact on encouraging exchange of ideas, skills, promoting interaction between minds and personalities of the participants, leading to effective learning.

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## INFORMATION WAR REALITY OF XXI CENTURY

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**Abstract:** Increasing global dependence on information systems to sophisticated and interconnection between them can produce significant opportunities but also vulnerabilities information increasingly larger. With this development information technology have opened a series of new security threats to individuals, governments and organizations that need to be foreseen and mitigated threats.

**Keywords:** information warfare, information system, electronic warfare, information vulnerability, threat information.

**Rezumat:** Creșterea dependenței mondiale față de sistemele informaționale sofisticate și interconectarea dintre acestea poate produce oportunități semnificative, dar și vulnerabilități informaționale din ce în ce mai mari. Odată cu această dezvoltare a tehnologiei informației, au apărut o serie de noi amenințări la adresa siguranței individului, a guvernelor și organizațiilor, amenințări ce trebuiesc prevăzute și diminuate.

**Cuvinte cheie:** război informațional, sistem informațional, război electronic, vulnerabilități informaționale, amenințări informaționale.

### Introduction

Information Society represents a new stage of human civilization, a new superior quality lifestyle that involves intensive use of information in all spheres of human activity and existence, with a major social and economic impact.

Information society allows its members broad access to information, a new way of working and knowledge enhances the possibility of economic globalization and increasing social cohesion.

Despite these advantages listed above, to increase global dependence on sophisticated information systems and interconnection of these risks and vulnerabilities can produce such information becoming larger.

With this development information technology has opened a series of new security threats to

individuals, governments and organizations that need to be foreseen and mitigated threats.

All these elements act as information specific to the war, and the issue will next approach the subject.

### 1. Conceptual

Information War is often understood as the information age war

For most military analysts, the information war is the military use of computers and other technologies against a State, as an alternative to conventional attacks. This includes activities which do not normally correspond to military rules, but which reflect increasing reliance of government and commercial activities on various systems that are vital for the functioning of modern military operations.

For other analysts, it is about a broader idea of the information era that overlaps with the development impact of various types of social and political conflict leading to erosion of nation state and its monopoly on organized violence. The concept of war has evolved with the advancement of societies' culture, technology, values, and infrastructure. Referring to the phenomenon of contemporary military, the literature mentions that there are at least three perspectives in terms of philosophy and physiognomy war<sup>+</sup>:

- in the future, war will probably be a high-tech one, held between super-technologies and information powers or entities for technical and Information supremacy;

- in the future, there will be probably as many types of wars as many types of entities will face;

- the war, in the traditional sense, is possible to be the violent military confrontation resulting in casualties and material damages, and to be placed entirely (or mostly) under control and even to disappear, letting place to another type of confrontation .

Information War ‡ is, without doubt, a continuous war, performed in the spectrum of information. Some speak even about a revolution in military affairs that enshrines information as the alpha and omega of the new device defense. Information becomes a weapon of deterrence. Information is by definition the raw material of knowledge.

Information War is both a physical war which aims to destroy the sensor information and communication channels of the opponent, and a war in cyberspace, designed to achieve information supremacy. Who controls the information controls the whole. Will can not be imposed, unless information superiority is achieved.

As to the current conflicts, the domination over the information spectrum is as critical as

it used to be in the past the domination over land or airspace. Currently, they talk more and more about information war "The XXI century will be one in which information warfare will play a decisive role (...). Information has become a vital strategic material for both managers to secure the conquest of markets and governments to ensure prior assessment of their freedom, autonomy necessary for the success of any policy decision and success of any policy" (Malis, C., December 1997 / January 1998).

In military affairs, information war is like an iceberg and one can see only its tip but essence remains hidden, shrouded in secrecy. As to the U.S. military information warfare, this is presented as "information warfare is any action aimed at the rejection, exploitation or destructing the adversary's information as well as at protecting the own functions and actions against enemy's actions" (Păun, V., 1997).

In addressing the concept of information warfare we should not neglect any features of this phenomenon.

The key features of information warfare are: permanence, transversal character and duality.

Permanence means that the threat against our information is not limited only to periods of conflict. Information warfare takes place even in peacetime; (an aspect that makes the clear difference from the classical form of war).

Transversal character refers to domination of meta-systems. The value of information resides in its ability to be available to the person who needs it when needed. If the use information may be specific to each device, its nature must be general, and thus transversal.

Duality refers to the fact that information war is not inherent only to defense and the problem arises in other areas: media, culture, science, economy, etc.

Broadly, the information war is fought among companies, organizations or even individuals, aimed at information superiority against adversaries and even partners.

<sup>+</sup> Mureșan, Mircea; Văduva, Gheorghe - Future war, future war, NDU Publishing House., București, 2004, p. 506.

<sup>‡</sup> Ibidem, p. 499.

Narrowly, it means all actions used to achieve information superiority during the war that can be legally recognized as such.

Information war requires means of action / influence that circumvent conventional power and boundaries of states. Most means act directly at the command and control, decision, and critical infrastructure levels of a country. Also, the information war wants to avoid conventional conflict, casualties and damage, using these new means at the limit between conventional war and conventional state of peace.

Information War aims structures of political, economic, social or military domains, not only to neutralize them but also to influence the decision-making processes. Thus, the transition from organized violence to hostile influence is made.

In the current security context, the most common form of aggression is that of enemy's information that takes the form of unprovoked information actions against information field with the purpose to damage data, information systems and decision processes.

In our opinion, it is essential for Romania to have permanent capabilities for warning, assessment, analysis and response that would allow the achievement of national interests in the information environment.

In conclusion, we can say that information war reshapes the concept of conflict-competition adding new attributes, and this triggers further development in the studied phenomenon.

## 2. Typology of Information War

Like any war, the information one aims through its specific actions at gaining superiority, but this time it is about information supremacy and its manifestations are: offensive information war and defensive information war.

Offensive information warfare includes data damaging or theft, erroneous or false information insertion, denying access of the enemy to the friendly data, physical

destruction of items that are part of the data storage and distribution.

Defensive information war uses means such as detecting and removing viruses, encryption systems, authentication and certification protocols of the information systems, access control etc. (Moliner, J.L., 1998).

Defensive information warfare takes many forms: command - control, information based war, electronic warfare, psychological warfare, and war codes hackers.

The literature clearly defines the forms of information war but there are some peculiarities in their approach. According to specialists (Libicki, M., 2008), information war may be divided as:

- Command and control warfare - C2W;
- information based War - IBW;
- Electronic warfare - EW;
- Psychological warfare - PSYWAR;
- Hackers war - HW;
- Information economic warfare - IEW;
- War against global information infrastructure - CW.

Each type of information war has specific issues as well as components that make this complex phenomenon comprehensive.

Thus, war for command and control is intended for the "decapitation" of the command structure, annihilation of command and neutralization or destruction of adversary decision-making systems together with the protection of their own forces. Performed as an effective defense against the information war, countermeasures can be considered analogous to ensure command, control and communications in military action. It has a philosophical view that "the best defense is the attack".

We underline that the command and control warfare is conducted in all military actions, regardless of conflict and has two components:

an offensive one and a defensive, protective one.

The offensive component is the effective action to neutralize enemy forces, destroy or influence its command and control systems and components defensive protection ensures uninterrupted C2 and communications systems in terms of adversary information attack executed by physical or radio-electronic means.

We consider that the command and control warfare is intended to annihilate the command and control systems for controlling an opponent through the integration of psychological operations, disinformation, electronic warfare and physical destruction.

Having determined the importance and the conduct of C2W, we assess that its actions affect, interrupt or delay the decision cycle of the opponent and, if conducted successfully, contributes to the security of friendly forces, and the enemy will face a disadvantageous situation and thus initiative will be maintained, the freedom of movement will be obtained and surprise achieved to isolate enemy forces command level and create conditions for the systematic exploitation of adversary vulnerabilities.

As to the War on information - IBW, it is used against the entry of information in real-time command and control systems of the adversary.

This is an action against the management and use by the enemy of information under all forms and at all levels of conflict, to achieve decisive military advantage, especially in the integrated environment, while taking measures to ensure information integrity, availability and interoperability of own and allied forces. War on information is applied in the political, economic and social fields to provide information for national security at peace, crisis or war. It is also directed towards the command centers that use information technology to dominate the battle space. It is characterized by two forms of struggle: an offensive one, directed towards the technical

means of information gathering by opponent and the defensive one, intended to preserve invisibility informational component of the war led by own forces.

War based on information is applied in the political, economic and social fields to ensure national security at peacetime, crisis or war. It is also directed against the control centers that use information technology to dominate the battle space. It is characterized by two forms of struggle: offensive, directed against technical means of gathering information by the adversary and the other - defensive, intended to preserve invisibility of this component of information war carried out by their own forces.

Electronic Warfare - EW as a core component of information war is seen as an interaction between electronic systems and those of the enemy, and a key element both in war and in other than war operations. Electronic warfare, as a whole, is characterized by a very special character of inventiveness and smart decisions to ensure the success of military actions. The anticipation of possible developments in the field of electronic warfare and the great flexibility of action have an important role in modern combat (Topor, S., 2002).

Electronic Warfare, according to "Army operations doctrine" (2006), includes all operations involving the use of electromagnetic energy to determine, exploit, invalidate, reduce or prevent hostile actions in electromagnetic space and measures to ensure the safety of own forces and / or allies. It is an action that uses electromagnetic energy to control and direct the electromagnetic spectrum and attack the enemy. It has three main components: electronic attack, electronic support and electronic protection.

Referring to the conduct of electronic warfare and given its objectives and missions (according to "Army operations doctrine" (2006) and "Army electronic warfare concept in Romania" (2002)) we assess that it is intended to:



- obtain timely and complete information about the enemy;
- gather data and conduct ongoing assessment on the electromagnetic situation;
- performing successful strike missions;
- deny / hamper the deployment of action in the electromagnetic space by enemy;
- establish appropriate protection measures to maintain control and action capacity of friendly forces.

The electronic warfare as a form of action of the information war has the role to diminish the combat potential of the enemy concomitantly with the multiplication of the friendly forces' capability to win the confrontation in the electromagnetic space.

Currently, the electronic warfare is one of the most dynamic fields of development, not only in military technology, but also in tactics and their use, raising new questions especially for the conduct of troops and guidance of weapons, thus getting an operational function that is fundamental to fully contribute to the success of actions in the information war.

Today, in the modern battlefield, where most weapons systems are based on sophisticated electronic systems, electronic warfare retains a primary role in ensuring the success probably for those who use electronic warfare in a confrontation having the chance to succeed, as one thing is clear: who does not use it that will be defeated.

As a special kind of information war, psychological war - PSYWAR ensures the use of information from people's minds through actions of information, disinformation, manipulation, propaganda and subliminal techniques to influence the purpose of changing the concept, attitudes, and behavior options of enemy or neutral forces.

Operations are carried out as intended: the national will, leadership of state, political structures, and the opponent's military, cultural heritage etc..

Psychological actions can be hardly identified because of their concealed nature. They do not cause material damages, are ubiquitous at peacetime, and crisis and, especially at war, they have a great range and can produce special effects.

This kind of war can be conducted by means of specialized information and by their temporary use for this purpose.

Today, increasingly hackers War - HW, which consists of the unauthorized persons' actions (hackers) on equipment and information systems, computer networks to change their original information content, data destruction and computer systems, using data on behalf of the opponent and making piracy software. Hackers exploit security flaws systems computer networks for their penetration and attack software and even hardware components to achieve their neutralization or incorrect functioning at physical, syntactic or semantic information infrastructure with the intent to produce chaos.

Another type of information war is the war of economic information - IEW is a result of information integration and the economic war which allows the use of the information block with the same economic effect as blocking some targeted nations to achieve economic supremacy. Actions aimed at blocking or channeling convenient economic information, to determine the facilities or not to grant loans invaded the market with goods to bankruptcy adversary national economy, currency devaluation and uncoated monetary mass production, affecting commercial and banking operations, etc.

The war against global infrastructure - CW is also called the fight in virtual space or in cyberspace and it is the most complex form of expression of the Information war.

Military specialists (Wilson, M., 1993) assess that the targets of the new war in Cyberspace can be: Telephone communications networks (fixed and mobile), electricity supply, transport and logistics, communications media (radio, television, and press), government,

social services, software and hardware, and financial and banking systems. We estimate that this form of information war includes actions directed on information technology, computer networks and communications, as well as other critical information infrastructure targets.

We assess that the general imperatives of these forms of information war in the modern military action are:

- Imposing political will on the enemy;
- Deterring the adversary actions;
- Achieving and maintaining the strategic initiative;
- Dominating the theater or theaters of military action;
- Destructing the enemy armed forces or denying their effective use;
- Imposing peace;
- Obtaining advantages (political, economic, geographic, strategic) objectives.

Since they have implications for the individual's lifestyle, reflecting each activity in the social environment, we conclude that through its forms of manifestation information war gradually affects individual behavior, micro-groups, organizations and spheres of interest and military structures and actions undertaken at peacetime, crisis or war.

### **3. Current information vulnerabilities and threats**

Contemporary technology provides no longer the framework for carrying out acts of violence or classic war.

Currently, the information environment is characterized by vulnerability and uncertainty about future developments in the security of states which increases the interdependence between them in the adoption and implementation of security measures.

Internationally, it is often more about the damage the national interests of states and organizations of different types through

violent and invisible actions consisting mainly in those specific to information war.

Thus, taking into account internal, foreign and transnational threats in the current geopolitical and geo-strategic environment, Romania and the entire society as a whole must take all necessary measures to ensure information security and to protect its own values and interests of any kind.

Therefore, we can contribute as a state to ensuring a high rate of economic development, improving social relations and maintaining stability, while increasing the contribution to strengthening international security environment in Europe and in the world.

Our national security is achieved by preventing and combating failures, vulnerabilities, threats and risk factors, especially those of external nature.

As in any other fields, the information one and information systems for national and organizational security have certain vulnerabilities that are not caused by enemy action, but by their own solutions that can be easily attacked, as well as by threats triggered by the exacerbation of differences that may generate real dangers. They must be identified, known and prevented and as a result the opponents are not allowed to exploit them for their benefit.

Information vulnerability is a component of security vulnerabilities generated by the facts, processes or phenomena in the internal life of the national community that diminish the response capacity of the society to existing or potential risks of any kind, including information ones or to those favoring their emergence and development, with consequences on the achievement of national security.

In general, information vulnerabilities are even greater, as information networks and information structure are more complex, making it difficult to optimize, manage and protect.

The main vulnerabilities to the information infrastructure that could be considered are the following:

- opportunities to intercept information from communications and computer networks by both users and opponents;

- very large volume of information in information systems that may be subject to enemy attack being destroyed, falsified or stolen;

- existence of information networks with large numbers of nodes and wide interconnectivity, difficult to be synchronized and managed and thus allowing fraudulent access, physical capture of equipment or nodes (centers), interception or interruption of important information flows and/or false information insertion to affect decision-making process;

- possibility of physical, electromagnetic or cyber attack against information and information systems;

- possibility of using electronic war against the radio electronic communications systems by the enemy;

- intercepting the radio communications their decryption in a timely manner by the enemy in case of the use of inefficient cryptographic systems;

- Disposal in the inappropriate functional or secure locations of information equipment systems, mainly the means of communications and computers, that increases vulnerability for information interception and physical attack;

- insufficiently studied measures to ensure communications security (COMSEC), computer (COMPUSEC) and other electronic equipment (TEMPEST), used in information networks.

Information threats define the potential dangers that may occur or not, within a period of time, created by hostile forces through attitudes and actions that trigger information imbalance and instability with impact on national security.

Information threats are more dangerous as the real and timely information necessary for decision-making and enforcement actions is greater and must be provided as soon as possible.

They can be generated by both external factors determined by deliberate actions of the enemy against the information, based on management vulnerabilities and internal factors of the information systems which fraudulent activities are generated by the organizational, technical and operational conditions that reflect weaknesses and gaps that are not related to enemy's activities.

The external factors may be known in advance by studying the doctrine and hostile forces' modus operandi, and by reconnaissance conducted on them, but their concrete actions will be felt only when threats are initiated exploiting vulnerabilities of information systems in order to destroy or neutralizing them.

Internal factors consisting of malevolent persons, intruders or traitors in information systems can be identified on time through counterintelligence actions and their actions can be neutralized by efficient communications equipment and high performance computing and secure systems setting precise and detailed operating, usage and secure information systems.

External threats include all actions performed by adversaries (hostile forces) to deny or hinder the decision-making and implementation functions of central and local governing bodies of state, of national and security structures, of departments and business agents and thus creating disorder and chaos across the country.

They pursue the limitation or exclusion of activities to gather information and destroy the sensors or, where appropriate, develop information choking by flooding their information systems with false data and information with the purpose to influence national and organizational decisions in the desired direction by the opponent.

Equally, it aims to intercept, interrupt (block) or insert false data into information flows in communication networks and computers, preventing their normal functioning.

According to the conclusions in the green literature or to personal experience, the main threats to information can be the following:

- Physical assault on the production, collection, transmission, processing and dissemination of information;
- Electronic attack (electromagnetic) against means of information collection, transmission, storage and processing;
- cyber attacks against information systems (information systems, communications networks and computers) of the central, departmental and economic structures;
- software piracy;
- attack on national, information or decision-making structures (information centers, command headquarters,);
- psychological attack.

The abovementioned facts generate the conclusion that the threats are, in fact, components of information warfare that takes place without limits and borders, at peace, crisis or war, tending to become a main form of military action.

These threats are not entirely new as they are generated by the very development of the information age but they must be known and given appropriate protection measures against.

Military specialists and those in other fields who have studied modern warfare assert that war has expanded enormously taking forms that once were not specific and takes place continuously, manifesting itself as a permanent war due to confrontation in various fields (political, economic, informational), through crises and military conflicts.

As such, the information war plays an increasingly important role, as both a physical war, aimed at delaying the enemy use of the means of collection, transmission, processing

and dissemination of information through information networks, disorganization, and a virtual war, through which the rule or at least information superiority is achieved, because "whoever controls the information, dominates everything" and thus becoming the main fighting weapon.

We can say that the primary resource of the moment is the information and the major objective is to obtain information of any kind against enemies either military, political or economic.

### Conclusions

We assess that the importance of information and communications systems for society and global economy is increasing at the same pace with the value and amount of information transmitted and stored by these systems.

We can conclude that the society becomes increasingly more dependent on access and rapid processing of information.

In the information society, the concept of war as a human manifestation intended to achieve superiority over the enemy by force or will has changed fundamentally in line with scientific and technological development, and new forms of action occur based on information .

In our opinion, warfare has become more than a reality, representing in the context of information revolution globalization the support and the way to increase or neutralize a crisis situation in order to support an armed struggle and to weaken the enemy's force.

In the current security context, the most common form of aggression is the opponent's information one, expressed through unprovoked information actions performed against information field with the purpose to damage data, information systems and decision process.

Romania has to have permanent warning, evaluation, analysis and response capabilities that may allow the achievement of national interests in the information environment.

Information age creates new means of influence and new goals, and this process determines new ways of achieving success.

The following conclusions may be drawn:

- Information warfare is neither a new principle of influencing the action, nor a change in the logics of war; it does not represent the end of the traditional war, it is not only a form of war only through the aspects triggered by information;

- Information warfare is domination through and by information, both at peacetime and wartime;

- Information warfare is a constant novelty and creativity, not limited to particular elements, techniques and equipment.

We consider that in future conflicts, the ability to organize information systems and the ability to exploit the information environment by damaging information, processes and information systems will be crucial resources for states and organizations of any kind.

Increasing global dependence on information sophisticated systems and interconnection of these systems may produce significant opportunities but also increasing information vulnerabilities.

As a result, the issue of information war becomes a major center of interest for

theoreticians and for activities related to preventing and counteracting their negative influences.

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## EVOCATION AND OBLIVION: UNEQUAL DOSAGE OF SOCIAL MEMORY

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**Abstract:** Collective memory is a group memory. Subjected to numerous pressures by successive reorganising, reconstructions (not reconstitutions) of some events and characters recognised as relevant for the group's historical background, social memory has continuously provided interpretation for the present by connecting both past and future, through means of an original dosage of update and oblivion.

**Keywords:** collective/social memory, update, community, social psychology, identity.

**Rezumat:** Memoria colectivă este o memorie a (membrilor) grupului. Supusă la numeroase presiuni în încercarea de a fi controlată prin (re)organizări succesive, prin (re)construiri (nu reconstituiri) ale unor evenimente și personaje recunoscute sau proclamate ca relevante pentru istoria grupului, memoria socială a oferit permanent interpretări pentru prezent, punte între trecut și viitor, printr-un original dozaj de reactualizare și uitare.

**Cuvinte cheie:** memorie colectivă/socială, reactualizare, comunitate, psihologie socială, identitate.

### 1. Introduction

Deciphering the concept of social memory is due to the French psychologist Maurice Halbwachs. In his works, marks for all those interested in studying the issue in question – *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire collective* (1925), *La mémoire collective* (1950), *La topographie légendaire des Évangiles en Terre Sainte. Étude de mémoire collective* (1941) – he established, inter alia, the distinction and relationship between individual memory, collective memory and social memory as well as the laws involved in the evolution of collective memory.

Without going into details of various theories, for reasons of economy of this text, we point out, however, that many subsequent investigations have emphasized the role of history, traditions, commemorations of public events in structuring social memory

(Constantin, 2001), ways of restructuring the social memory, of amending its marks (Chelcea, [2008] 2010), and the new directions of research methodology of social memory. However, the issue of social memory has never been covered, especially since the call to collective memories didn't miss whenever conflicts (interethnic or even interstates) were about to trigger or supranational integration processes were initiated.

The political involvement, the mode of production and dissemination of the history of the group – essential for the meaning of the identity discourse – the effort to control the present by appealing to the past (re)interpreted in the purpose of legitimizing power, often not only with the help of history, but also despite it, with long-term effects on group activities, self-knowledge, acceptance of others or others' identities (Zub, [1991] 2004, pp. 31-

32), were sometimes completed by a certain readiness, different from individual to individual, to receive the illusions contained in legitimate propaganda.

This study aims to clarify aspects of motivations linked to the selection criteria often severe operated by individuals and groups in situations that allow the evocation or elusion of some moments of the past, considered significant for the present and future of the community they belong to, for its collective memory.

## 2. Updating and oblivion: ambivalence of social memory (re)construction

Oblivion, along with other elements (cf., Necula and Constantine [2003] 2004) has a key role in organizing, structuring the collective memories and social memory. In this respect, the French Patrick Rate (2010, p. 19-32) found that history is built, on the occasion of profound changes in society that determines the return to memory, of fragments not only of memory but also of oblivion. Usually, oblivion is the result of a censored transmission, context in which oblivions of social memory are as relevant as its evocations. The concerns of a community for creating, maintaining and developing a positive social identity emphasize the oblivion of some memories and recalling of some historical events painful to be assumed for a group, it has been demonstrated, does not prevent oblivion, as a constant of that group identity.

The role of oblivion has been appreciated since the late nineteenth century as relevant for a collective memory, implicitly for that group identity, testimony in this regard is the explicit formulations of Ernest Renan, in his famous lecture at the Sorbonne on 11 March 1882 and entitled “What is the nation?” This fragment is worth being reproduced: “oblivion, I would go so far as to say the historical error, is a crucial factor in creating a nation, therefore the progress in historical studies is a threat to political parties, even for

those whose consequences have been beneficial” (apud Dungaciu, 2004, 84).

Moreover, Tzvetan Todorov ([1995] 1999, pp.14-16) found that the memory is not the opposite of oblivion, so that the two processes are not mutually excluded. But what contrasts are the *erase* (equivalent to oblivion) and the *retention*, restitution/maintaining the entire past is both impossible and undesirable. On the other hand, the memory involves, necessarily, *selection*, this generating in time oblivion. This approach raises yet another problem, namely the selection criterion and authority of its application. At this point, argued the cited author, what we can reproach to the totalitarian state authorities, of the past and present, is the very fact of establishing and imposing a single criterion of selection (the official), prohibiting citizens the seeking of truth, under its diverse aspects. If *recovery* of the past is dependent on the selection criterion of elements to be retained, updated periodically afterwards, its *use* is even more problematic. Guideline of using the past can be identified *in nuce* from the very content of the criteria, but the need for legitimating of a political power can lead to a mystifying use of the past, exploiting the need of the community members to remember.

Trying to identify the memory abuses as well as the coordinates of the relationship between memory and oblivion, the cited author requires the establishment of two principles that govern the use of memory. The first principle, applicable in the first stage, refers to the prohibition to prevent the recovery of the past. The second refers to the use of memory, from which it derives the role assigned to the past in the present and relates to “good use” and “justice”. The past should not dominate the present, neither the present can dispose arbitrarily of the past, as the totalitarian regimes have done to rebuild “a carefully sorted past, of course, yet a past that can flatter the national pride and that can compensate for declining ideological faith” (Todorov, [1995] 1999, 27). Hence, the author identifies two forms of memory, based on the fact that the past can be recovered / updated

either *literally* or *exemplary*. The first form consists in identifying and specifying the causes of an event, discovering of all persons involved and determining each person's contribution to produce that event, the guilt or the merits and, ultimately, the punishment of the culprit or the praise of those who have imposed to memory the event described through their act (literally withheld, which does not necessarily imply the truth). The memory in its strictly literal form is regarded simply as memory, it involves certain risks (when it wants to be precise and radical), and the individual or community, through this form of memory, establish a continuity between past and present, every moment being impregnated, in case of an iconic / relevant event, by its consequences. On the other hand, remembering an event as an exemplary form means using the event as a model, as an example of a general category, which leads to detachment of theories, of some principles of action that will be applied at present, although their source is given by memories, of past recovery. Through these characteristics, the exemplary memory is loaded with a real liberator potential, even conciliatory, unlike literal memory that cannot exceed the traumatic event, favouring the past on the expense of the present.

### **3. Evocation and oblivion: significations and consequences**

Oblivion, as filtering or censorship of a memory, but also a fundamental element of establishing an identity, as a process that ensures the continuity of a system of attitudes and representations, as eradication of pages in the history of the group that could alter the consensus or would constitute a possible source of division, must be understood not as the opposite of collective memory, but as a structural element, its organizer, precisely because the group represents its own history of unequal doses of (re) memory and oblivion. Two examples, the French and the Romanian sustain these statements. The first, due to the researches of Patrick Rateau (2010, pp. 32-40)

has as a starting point the fact that in France in the '80-'90s of the past century it crystallized the phrase „devoir de mémoire” (duty of remembrance), referring to the debt of the society (present and future) to maintain the memory of past persecutions to which the individuals or groups were subjected. Assuming that the remembrance or the recollection of some difficult events or painfully undertaken by a community whose past is referenced, these events have no implications upon “oblivion” (due to the care for maintaining / strengthening of a positive social identity), the Professor at Université de Nîmes tried to determine to what extent the imperative arising from “the obligation of remembrance” can reactivate the memory of an event marked by oblivion (the case of the concentration camps for Gypsies<sup>1</sup>, built near Arles by the Vichy regime, in 1942). Thus, in 1942, the creation of the Salliers concentration camp has been decided, in the Rhone delta, vast surface of wetlands suitable for rice cultivation. Salliers was a hamlet which administratively it belonged to the commune Arles, situated at about 8 km from that place. Because the American and Swiss press qualified the French camps as “places of death”, the authorities said they would build the camp so that it will have the features (appearance, types of housing, etc.) of a village and that they will allow the development of a family life that would respect the customs and beliefs of the nomads. Beyond the fact that the nomads were drawn up an anthropometric book for the purpose of sedentarisation but also of standardization of distinct groups of Gypsy population, the place chosen was situated so far and isolated just to make people forget this population, argues Patrick Rateau. Health and hygiene problems, shortages of all kinds have marked the residents of this camp located in a total improper place. The icy wind of winter and wet cold due to wetlands, the unbearable summer heat, the mosquitoes, the parasites in

<sup>1</sup> We will keep the terms used in the cited paper, without any comment on their “political correctness”, aspect that is not subject of this study.



the roof's straws of the rooms without ceiling, the smoked and too low houses meant to get rid of mosquitoes, which cause respiratory illness, the lack of clothes to change, poor feeding and lack of water, even in the infirmary, led to 26 deaths among 677 Gypsies interned in this camp, originally designed as something to be "put on show-window". In July 1944, the camp was declared a failure and officially disbanded on 15 October 1944 (note that these dates are after the Allied landing in Normandy on 6 June 1944). If we add the fact that the camp had been attacked earlier by mistake by the Anglo-American Aviation, which caused the run of most of those interned there, we have a picture of the tragedies experienced by these people during the two years of internment in that place.

In 1996, a photographer from Arles, Mathieu Pernot, found out about the Salliers camp and in order to find additional details sent a letter to each inhabitant of the Salliers hamlet. He received no answer and he was discouraged. For four years he studied the archives, requested the assistance of other specialists, conducted over 20 interviews, he published a book and organized an exhibition (in 2001) in memory of what happened to Salliers. Subsequently, he managed to create a memory space, project concluded in 2006, by placing a commemorative star in the place of the former camp, an event accompanied by the organization of a colloquium and an itinerant exhibition. All this has been amply reflected in local and national press.

One year after these events a questionnaire-based survey tried to find what traces this effort left in the memory of the local residents, regarding the camp and the gypsy population. Thus, 85% of all the respondents in the sample totally ignored the existence of that camp, which determined the cited author to assert that the recent commemorative and media events have failed to crack "cloak of oblivion" that has enveloped the information from the Salliers camp and its former residents. However, the respondents aged under 65 said they did not know anything about the existence of that camp, while only

20% of respondents aged over 65 said they remember that there were some "barracks" built for the "accommodation" of Gypsies during the war, but they didn't say that there was a concentration camp. Oblivion, discerned in this case, appears not as an attempt to avoid the transmission of an event that would prejudice the identity of the inhabitants of Arles, but especially as a constituent element of that identity (under its aspects mentioned as positive so far and justified by the call to the past, the history of the group, history which still has witnesses). In this case, it is not primarily about an identity protection mechanism that would include the willingness to circumvent the non glorious pages of the group's history, means that we do, considers Patrick Rate (2010, 40) with "a process that ensures the continuity of a system of attitudes and representations". Here's how the episodes of oblivion combined with memory, the dosage of oblivion and memory adjusted by the care to preserve a positive identity, participate and build together the collective memory of that group.

If we also add the fact that respondents, by their responses (in relation to the motivations of the Vichy government to set up concentration camp for Gypsies), they built an image that absolved the government, while maintaining the stereotypes and prejudices towards those who are called today, officially, "nomadic", we add another feature that oblivion induces for the present: the amplification of the possibility of repetition of some regrettable acts or errors, in the absence of some information / memories of the group's history that would provide marks for a more judicious social action. We understand now that the existence of a totalitarian political regime that through a vast apparatus of propaganda and manipulation sets selectively the episodes of memory and oblivion, dosing them according to the imperative of legitimizing their own power, in the absence of any critical debate or pluralism, it can (re)construct group's history aimed not so much to build and maintain a positive identity of the group led, but especially to legitimize

the continuity of a system of *representations* of the past, capable to (re) organize the social memory. It is, we believe, the lesson that the totalitarian communist regimes have practiced it; the Romanian case is, unfortunately, a prototypical one in this case.

But not always oblivion and its implications in the structuring of social memory may be associated with certain negative connotations, this is because “*devoir de mémoire*” does not apply to cases in which episodes of oblivion of events serve to remove the split, (re)establishment of peaceful, harmonious coexistence of certain communities that *volens-nolens* live in a historical time and space that has to share and manage in the community service.

The case of the Biserica din Groapă (Pit Church), building that still exists today in Sibiu, it is I think, an evidence to support the above statements.

Biserica din Groapă has its history linked to the Austrian Emperor’s name Joseph II, who in the context of its reform measures, allowed the construction of churches even for the Orthodox Christians, although they did not adhere to the United Church with Rome (the Greek-Catholic cult). Joseph II visited on three occasions Sibiu, among the important results of these visits is the fact that “*maierii*” or the Romanians (who at that time were not allowed to enter the fortress) have obtained the permission to have an Orthodox Church and a school in their neighbourhoods (Marculet, 2010), aspects recorded in an Emperor’s edict. Based on the provisions of that edict, „Buna Vestire” Church (Church of the Annunciation) was built in 1789, in the Iosefin neighbourhood; the neighbourhood’s name is now forgotten. But the Church has not been forgotten; on the contrary it constitutes an important cultural objective, as the first Orthodox Church built in Sibiu. However, the locals know it as the Church of the pit, although only few can detail the reasons for this name. The explanation was covered by the fog of “oblivion”, for the fact that its evocation would not have served the present of the city

residents who gained a deserved prestige through the status of European Capital of Culture in 2007, led by a German ethnic mayor, Klaus Werner Johannis. To what would have been served the updating or the repeated evocation of the fact that on the date of construction of the „Buna Vestire” Church, the Saxon patriciate offered as land of building a “a land from a pit” (hence the name of the Church of the pit), so that the Orthodox Church wouldn’t be visible from the fortress of Sibiu? The same oblivion comprised with its “veil” the fact that the land offered for construction “determined the Romanians to build a high tower, of 40 meters, visible from the fortress’, a well-known aspect of the parish priest Constantin Mitea (apud Marculet, 2010 , 1), but not by the majority of the Sibiu residents or by tourists.

„*Devoir de mémoire*” and oblivion, two examples that don’t cover the issue just outlined and argued above. Here is why, returning to the case of the Church of the pit where it must be pointed out one more important detail that varies the effects of oblivion. Near the church is its cemetery, the burial place for the leading figures of the Romanian spirituality, leading campaigners for social and national justice: Vasile Moga, the first Orthodox Metropolitan of Transylvania, Moise Fulea, director of the National Romanian School in Transylvania, writers Zaharia Boiu and Ion Codru Drăgușanu, Miron Romanul and Ion Meșianu Metropolitans. In this cemetery were also buried the founders of the church, but their remains were exhumed in 1856 and placed under the altar of the church, by the care of Andrei Șaguna Metropolitan (the tombstone is inscribed in Romanian, German and Greek). The communist authorities have banned the usage of the cemetery, this becoming in time a real cesspit where some nearby residents have thrown even dead animals (Mărculeț, 2010, 2). Thus, oblivion, through the dimension exemplified above, can transform in time these real “places of memory”, according to Pierre Nora’s famous expression (as cited in Collin, 2001), altering the memory of the group and through

it the identity of a community. It was not until 1992 that the cemetery was restored and given to its original purpose. Simultaneously, the wall that surrounded it was knocked down and hidden to the eye, the latter was replaced by a metal fence that allows the funerary monuments to be seen from the sidewalk.

#### 4. Conclusions

The different dosage of storage and oblivion, the selectivity of the updating (as a result of circumvention and not just of the inability to reinterpret and fix all the past), have been and are the result of the effort to fix the frames of the social memory in order to preserve and assert a positive social identity, dependent, however of the constant effort to strive towards truth and its valuing in the benefit of the present.

Likewise, the positive or negative valences assigned to evocation and oblivion must be analyzed in terms of the consequences of the oblivion in the present and the selection criteria operated for the deletion or retention of memories, data from the group's past. In this context, the purpose of preserving a positive social identity should not prevent an alternative discourse, pluralist, intended to reveal the truth to be used first in its "exemplarity", not only in its "literalness".

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## ATTITUDE THEORY APPLIED IN COUPLE RELATIONSHIP

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**Abstract:** Couple relationships are the heart of human experience in forming the subjective part in the drama of life throughout all its stages. We are attracted to certain people, we come to like and to love them, to have romantic and sexual relationship with someone, we get married and offer support and comfort to the partners, we suffer when these relationships end tragically. Intimate couple relationships meet needs / basic and superior human necessities, involving strong emotional attachment to *each other* and very often interdependence with *it*.

Relationship and complex combination of specific psychological and social factors of the partners, result in a characteristic structuring of the couple, having effects in the areas of intimacy, attachment, satisfaction and quality of couple relationship.

**Keywords:** dysfunctional attitudes, expectations, differences in gender role, attachment, relationship, satisfaction, quality of couple relationship, assigning, self-serving biases, mental attitudes.

**Rezumat:** Relațiile de cuplu stau la baza experienței umane în formarea laturii subiective în drama vieții de-a lungul tuturor etapelor sale. Ne simțim atrași de anumite persoane, pe care ajungem să le îndrăgim și să le iubim, avem relații amoroase cu cineva, ne căsătorim și oferim sprijin și alinare partenerilor noștri, suferim atunci când aceste relații se sfârșesc tragic. Relațiile de cuplu intime satisfac nevoi umane superioare și de bază, implicând atașamentul reciproc, puternic emoțional și adesea interdependent.

Relația și combinația complexă a factorilor specifici psihologici și sociali ai partenerilor, rezultă într-o structură caracteristică a cuplului, ce are efecte în zonele intimității, atașamentului, satisfacției și calității relației de cuplu.

**Cuvinte cheie:** atitudini disfuncționale, așteptări, diferențe în rolul de gen, atașament, relație, satisfacție, calitatea relației de cuplu, atitudini mentale

### Introduction

Our judgments on the relationship and on the partner seem to come naturally, as if they were the only reasonable way to see things. Very few of us realize that we *choose* (in most of the cases) the perspective that we use and thus we facilitate or inhibit our satisfaction in the relationship with the choices we make.

The cognitive components of the problems in intimate relationships have received an increasing recognition from couple therapists. (Dryden, 1981, Ellis & Harper, 1975, Epstein, 1982; Hurvitz, 1970, Jacobson

& Margdin, 1979, O'Leary & Turkewitz, 1978, Stuart, 1980). In particular, attention has recently been focused on the fact that having certain attitudes towards intimate relationships may reduce/diminish interpersonal satisfaction, limit the expectations of treatment and may prevent partners to mutual exchange.

The evaluations of Eidelson and Epstein (1982) have found five dimensions of dysfunctional attitudes towards the relationship in the couple's marital framework and defined them as being those beliefs that people have about intimate relationships that may affect the quality of the relationship. They are:

*Misunderstandings are destructive* - the belief that the lack of mutual agreement of partners regarding values, goals, preferences are threats to a safe full of love relationship.

*The mind reading expectancy* - the belief that partners caring about each other, should feel each other's needs and preferences without communicating too much.

*The partner cannot change* - the belief that intimate partners cannot change, neither themselves, nor the quality of their relationship, there being no hope for problem improvement.

*Sexual perfectionism* - the belief that both partners must be perfect sexual partners.

*The perception of gender differences* - the belief that men and women dramatically differ in terms of their personality and needs in a relationship, thus encouraging the stereotypical perception of a partner, which decreases the disincritical sensitivity to his or her desires and characteristics.

Taking into consideration the necessity of knowing the origin of attitudes in relationship, an important part of the information obtained from research shows that the dysfunctional attitudes about the husband – wife relationship are unrelated, in spite of the significant correlation concerning their relationship satisfaction. "This suggests that they could not be determined by events in the couple itself, but are placed in previous relationships, such as that with the family of origin (e.g. conflicts between parents, divorce) that can have negative consequences for their sake and for their adult relationships" (Eidelson & Epstein, 1982).

### **1. The influence of preconceived ideas and confirmational biases in the forming judgments about the other persons**

Our perception and interpretation of the partner has a huge influence on us, because what we *think* can help us determine what we *feel* and therefore how we *act*. This would not be a problem if our judgments were always right.

Normally there are a variety of reasonable ways to interpret an event and to make mistakes, even when we are confident that we got the truth. Some of these errors can occur when we meet someone, as a result of the first impression.

One of the causes is the stereotype, because, in the first place, each of us is either female or male and the gender role stereotypes lead us to expect different behaviour from a man and from a woman. Also, we cannot tell if someone is beautiful or unattractive, but we just assume that physically beautiful people are also nice.

There are a number of other differences that can interfere: young-old, white-black, from town-from country and many other differences. These details may vary from one person to another, but they do not function similarly for every person. Stereotypes show us preconceptions about how people are. Moreover, we do not decide to use stereotypes, they automatically affect us even when we are not aware that we use them (Kunda, 1999 apud Brehm et al., 2004).

Our judgments about others are influenced by the *initial effect* - the tendency that the first information we receive about others to have a certain value and together with our stereotypes to form us overall impressions about them. There are several important reasons to support the fact that *first impression* counts and that the so-called initial effect becomes operational. One reason concerns the fact that our initial judgments derived from their (initial) source, on other people, influence our interpretation on the later information that we receive. Once the judgment developed, it affects the way we use the following data in subtle ways that are difficult to detect.

People seek information that mostly demonstrates that they are right, rather than seeking examples to prove that they are wrong (Snyder, 1981 apud Brehm et al., 2004), the usual tendency would be to show a confirmatory bias.

The confirmatory strategies problem is that they require only a part of the information

that increase their preconceptions and as a result, we rarely face the unprecedented record that our first impression is wrong. We may believe that we are right much more often and far more than we are. Most people have indeed a very high confidence in their beliefs about the others, making more mistakes than they realize.

*The initial effect* occurs when we form an impression on others because the first thing we perceive directs the attention to certain types of new information, and, at the same time, influences our interpretation of new actions perceived. The result is that we do not process information about others in an impartial manner. Our existing notions, even if they are mere stereotypes or fast first impressions, affect the way we access and use the data we find. Our beliefs about others are similar to our beliefs about ourselves, influencing what we want to hear and what we owe to think about us. Knowing your partner is done much better with time and experience, the personal knowledge about the partner being a measure for intimacy.

The existing general beliefs about lovers and friends are certainly much stronger than first impressions of the new informational acquisitions. The first impression certainly changes the way people gain familiarity with each other. This is also influenced by the fact that interdependent intimacy is emotional involvement (Breschied, 1985 apud Brehm et al., 2004).

In conclusion, the things that complicate our perceptions of the new acquisitions are too strong confidence, confirmatory biases and preconceptions that are activated in establishing relations.

## **2. Theoretical perspectives on mental mechanisms involved in perception and social knowledge of the intimate couple relationship**

### **2.1 The idealization of the partner**

Most of us would wish to have a partner that has very many qualities such as: affectionate, passionate, attractive, exciting, rich and strong, loyal and trustworthy. The level of our satisfaction in relationship depends on how much our partner is close to these ideas because usually what we get is less (Fletcher, Simpson, Thomson & Giles, 1999 apud Brehm et al., 2004).

Building a generous perception about the partner that would emphasize his qualities and minimize his mistakes is a way of staying satisfied with the real person to whom we are attracted. People judge their partners with *positive illusions* that portray the partner in positive light (Murray, 2001 apud Brehm et al., 2004).

*These judgments about the partner may lead to disillusion, if we imagine* qualities that our partner does not have (Miller, 1979 apud Brehm et al., 2004). On the other hand, if we are aware of all factors, but we interpret them only in one direction because this is how we choose to do it, benevolent fashion, we are predisposed to judge the partner's behavior in a positive way and we will commit much more in the relationship to maintain it. The fact of being loved by the person that sees you as disagreeable determines self-esteem's support (Murray, Holmes & Griffin, 2001) and therefore we can easily convince our partners that they are the most wonderful people we know and therefore their self-concept increases the way ours has. The idealized image of our romantic partner is associated with great satisfaction, love, understanding and a much longer duration of the relationship in time (Murray & Holmes, 1997 apud Brehm et al., 2004).

Additionally, this is a way through which we can protect ourselves of disillusionment. Over the time, by getting to know our partner well, we have the tendency to revise our opinions regarding what we want from the partner we have (Fletcher, Simpson & Thomson, 2001 apud Brehm apud et al., 2004). At a certain level, we convincingly

decide that the qualities the partner has are the ones we desire.

## 2.2 The attribution process

For Heider (apud Doise *et al.*, 2002), the explanation we create to see how things happen and particularly why a person accomplishes something or not is called attribution. The causes of events may be: either stable or durable as our abilities, either instable and passing, as the disposition that comes and specific – affecting only some situations from our life (Doise *et al.*, 2002).

Brehm *et al.* (2004) presents *three patters that result from the study of attribution in intimate relationships*. In the first place, even if partners know intimate information about each other, they are affected by the *actor-observatory effect*. The fact of giving different explanations for their own behavior is done for similar actions that they notice to their partners is specific in this situation (Orvis, Kelley & Butler, 1976, apud Brehm *et al.*, 2004).

People are highly conscious about the external pressures that have modeled their own behavior, and therefore they make external attributions for them, but overlook the way the same circumstances affect the others and therefore ascribe other people's behavior to some internal sources such as their intentions and personality. This phenomenon determines the partners to overlook the fact that they personally trigger the behavior they notice to each other. When partners make a conscious effort to understand the other's viewpoint the discrepancy actor/observatory becomes smaller (Rusbult, Van Lange, Wildschut, Yovetich & Verette, 2000), but seldom completely disappears. The safest strategy is to presuppose that, even the best and the closest partner rarely understands all the reasons for which you do what you do.

Secondly, even if partners have a true affection for each other, they are inclined to manifest *self-serving biases* (errors that self-accomplish) through which they try to assume

their success and to avoid guilt when the relationship is going well, but they are not guilty when the partnership is breaking up, even if they do not admit this aspect (Thomson & Kelly, 1981 apud Brehm *et al.*, 2004). A quality that makes this phenomenon interesting is the fact that people expect this phenomenon to manifest itself to others, but they do not feel that it is also manifested to themselves (Kruger & Gilovich, 1999 apud Brehm *et al.*, 2004).

The third important pattern is the following: the general pattern of couple attribution helps us determine how satisfied a couple will be in the present relationship (Bradbury, Fincham & Beach 2000). *Happy people make attributions for the partner's behavior that determine the growth of the relationship*. Thus, the positive actions of the partners are classified as being intentional, usual and an indicator of the partner's behavior in other circumstances as well.

In conclusion, *happy couples make internal, stable and global attributions for the positive behavior of each other*. They also have the tendency to reduce the importance of the other's mistakes, seeing them as being accidental, unusual and delimited; negative behavior is excused by external, instable and specific attributions. In contrast, unsatisfied partners overreact evil and minimize what is good. *Unhappy people make attributions that maintain the problem, regarding the partner's negative actions as being deliberate and habitual and the positive ones as unintentional and accidental*.

## 2.3 Attitudes toward the relationship

People also begin a relationship with predefined beliefs about how a relationship is. These are organized in mental structures named schemes that do not provide a highly organized system for our knowledge about the relationship and, importantly, they do not provide correct assumptions about the way in which relationships work (Baldwin, 1995 apud Brehm *et al.*, 2004).



A set of interrelational attitudes that influence the scheme of the relationship is romanticism, the vision that love should be the most important part in choosing the partner. Romanticism has some facets and four of them may be found in *The Romantic Beliefs Scale* created by Susan Sprecher and Sandra Metts in 1989 (apud Brehm *et al.*, 2004).

In this way, the people that manifest a high level of romanticism believe that: *their lover will be perfect; each of us only has a unique true love; true love will find a way to overcome any obstacle; love at first sight is possible*. A high score in the Scale of Romantic Beliefs is the tendency to express more love, satisfaction and a high degree of commitment, but romanticism cannot predict which relationship may survive in time. Probably that this is a good thing, because romanticism starts to diminish concurrently with time passing – even at couples lining together – and seriously lowers at partners that break up. Our romantic beliefs bring in the relationship the belief that partnership is special, but they do not have an important part in determining the partners' behavior in their relationship.

Same thing cannot be said about other beliefs that are clearly disadvantageous. Certain *beliefs* that people have about the nature of the relationship are *dysfunctional*. They have adverse effects on the quality of the relationship, making it less pleasant, the partners being less satisfied in their relationship. These dysfunctional attitudes have been identified by Roy Eidelson and Norman Epstein (1982, 1981) and since then various studies have proved that these attitudes may trigger the emergence of problems and dissatisfaction in intimate relationships (Crohan, 1992; Fitzpatrick & Sollie, 1999, Knee, 1998 apud Brehm *et al.*, 2004). They are unrealistic. These are: *misunderstandings are fun, thought reading, the partner cannot change, the sexual relationship should be perfect all the time, men and women are different, great relationships (very good) just happen*. The last above mentioned dysfunctional attitude designates the fact that

one does not need to work to maintain a good relationship. People are either compatible with and destined to each other to be capable of being happy together or completely incompatible.

The power of influence of our perception on others is another fundamental reason, because it does not influence only the interpretation of the information we gain, they guide our behavior towards the others. We often get what we expect from others and sometimes this behavior would not have happened without our intervention – but *we are rarely conscious of the way in which our expectancies have created their own reality*.

## 2.4 Expectancies/Expectations towards the partner

The attitudes towards the relationship are global assumptions about the nature of an intimate partnership, and when they are false (such as the dysfunctional attitudes about the relationship), they stay false. In contrast, people may also have much more specific *expectancies* about others people's behavior, but may become true (Rosenthal, 1994 apud Brehm *et al.*, 2004): it is about *the prophecy that self-accomplishes* (false predictions that become true, because they direct people to behave in a certain manner that determines mistaken expectancies to become true/real).

Another individual difference that is closely connected to they way people think about their partner is *the attachment style* (Whisman & Allan, 1996 apud Brehm *et al.*, 2004). People with different attachment styles have different “mental patterns” concerning the relationship; they have different opinions about what a relationship is, expect different behaviors from their partners and form different judgments about what partners do. In particular, people with safe attachment style, as compared to the ones with avoiding or anxious/ambivalent attachment style, are more inclined to make attributions that determine their relationship to grow (Collins & Feeney, 2004). People with secure attachment style are much more predisposed to have more faith in

their partners (Mikulincer 1998 apud Brehm *et al.*, 2004) and more predisposed than unsteady people to remember the previous positive events (Miller & Noirot, 1999 apud Brehm *et al.*, 2004); they also stay much more open to new information when they judge their partner (Green-Hennessy & Reis, 1998; Mikulincer, 1997 apud Brehm *et al.*, 2004); people with avoiding and anxious attachment style base themselves on the current beliefs and assumptions about the partner at a very high level.

All in all, our perception on the partner, the attributions that we make and the attitudes and expectancies that we take in the relationship may have a powerful influence on the events that are due to happen in couple.

### 3. Dysfunctional attitudes in intimate relationships

In recent years, the psychological patterns of the couple that emphasize behavior changes and couples interpersonal characteristics have extended to include a variety of cognitive factors that supposedly stir and maintain *couple stress* (Baucom & Epstein, 1990 apud Bradbury & Fincham, 2000). An accepted assumption is that dysfunctional attitudes (unrealistic) and inadequate of one of the spouses about couple/marriage contributes to couple difficulties.

Cognitive behavioral therapy of couples is destined to alter these attitudes in order to improve interactions quality in marriage and couple relationship. Due to the studies made by Edison and Epstein (1982) by questioning 20 marital therapists, they have identified attitudes about intimate relationships that seem to determine the biggest difficulties in couple, at their clients.

Therefore, there are the following dysfunctional attitudes:

- *Misunderstandings are destructive.* Satir (1967, apud Eidelsen and Epstein, 1982) has described the way spouses may believe that misunderstandings concerning values, attitudes, purposes

or preferences are threats to a sure, full of love relationship. In addition, interpersonal differences may cause conflicts in any relationship, an individual belief that misunderstanding represents less love or even a sign of imminent divorce creates a series of difficulties. Satir remarks that those persons that hold these types of beliefs have the tendency to solve the conflicts through constraint or avoidance of direct communication. This unproductive appreciation has been further detailed by Raush, Barry, Hertel and Swain (1974, apud Eidelson & Epstein, 1982).

- *The expectancy of thought reading.* It is seen as being dysfunctional the belief that partners who care about each other should feel each other's needs and preferences without communicating too much. This expectancy results in disappointment, unclear perception and thus it becomes a starting point for the conflict (Gottman, Notarius, Gonso & Markman, 1976; Jacobson & Mergdin, 1979; Lederer & Jacobson, 1967, apud Eidelson & Epstein, 1982). The person who believes in "thought reading" may make a smaller effort for clear communication and then he/she may feel dissatisfaction when his/her partner makes a mistake or when he/she does not answer the way he/she wants.
- *The partner cannot change.* The belief that intimate partners cannot change, neither themselves, nor the quality of their relationship, is considered dysfunctional because it represents an evolution (Hurvitz, 1970 apud Eidelson & Epstein, 1982), in which there is no hope for improvement of the issue. An individual with such low efficacy expectancy is willing to experiment a lower satisfaction in relationship, feels less dedicated to it and makes less active efforts to solve the conflict

constructively (Doherty, 1981 apud Eidelson & Epstein, 1982).

- *Sexual perfectionism*. Believing that one has to be a “perfect” sexual partner is also very likely to cause troubles in the relationship because this belief becomes an impediment to the awakening of *the sexual field* and to *the sexual performance* (Waplan, 1974; Walen, 1980; Zilbergeld, 1979 apud Eidelson & Epstein, 1982). By focusing on sex as on a requirement may determine the apparition of a series of negative emotions (for example: anxiety), sexual comprehension is inhibited and through it the pleasure derived from the relationship is reduced.
- *The perception of the gender differences*. The belief that men and women are strongly different as to their personalities and needs of the relationship is very likely to encourage the stereotypical perception of the partner and to diminish sensitivity to his/her idiosyncretic wishes. Moreover, by attributing the interpersonal conflict to such a stable factor may contribute to the growth of the blaming, to the expectancy of a low efficacy in solving problems in relationship and to other answers referring to help (encouragement) concerning relationships (Doherty, 1981 apud Eidelson & Epstein, 1982).

These five dysfunctional attitudes interfere with solving problems in couple. (Baucom & Epstein, 1990). Epstein *et al.* (1987) have discovered that high degrees of dysfunctional attitudes are correlated with the tendency to see his//her partner as a cause of the problems in couple (Bradbury & Fincham, 2000).

These *attitudes* may also be called *immature* (Noller, 2006). When it happens that partners do not agree in a certain situation – as it often happens – these dysfunctional attitudes seem to be important for those people who

have them. Any argument implies the fact that their love is imperfect and they do not behave constructively when there are problems to be solved, they just avoid them. They thus consider that people cannot change and that true love just happens, putting more energy into ending the relationship than into saving it. The outcome is that their relationship is more expensive and they are less dedicated to their partner than people with more adaptative beliefs (Fitzpatrick & Sollie, 1999 apud Brehm *et al.*, 2004).

The intimate relationship implies behavioral interdependency, the need for fulfillment, emotional attachment towards friends or romantic partners.

The couple relationship supposes erotic love, thirst for complete profoundness and union with another person. It is by its nature exclusive and not universal, excluding love for others only in the sense of erotic fusion that completely engages all the aspects of life, but not the love for other people. The couple relationship includes that will factor: to love does not presuppose only a strong feeling, but also the decision, judgement, promise (Brehm *et al.* 2004).

Marriage is an interpersonal process of our becoming and growing up as personalities, of constentizing, redirectioning and fructification of unconscious tendencies, pulsions and affinities, of self-knowledge though inter-knowledge (Mitrofan & Ciupercă, 2009).

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## INFLUENCE OF THE ECONOMIC CRISIS ON FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN AGED BETWEEN 3 AND 10

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**Abstract:** The study tries to show the behavioral changes that occur in families with children in kindergarten or school (primary) as a result of economic recovery measures taken in the year 2010, to overcome the economic crisis. The study attempted to highlight the positive and/ or negative influences caused by the economic crisis on families located in disadvantaged areas (Uricani, Hunedoara county), on families who have children with health problems (children with autism and other disabilities) and on families with children registered on extended time kindergartens (kindergarten no.56).

The starting hypothesis is that: long-term effects of the crisis causes irreversible damage on families with children aged 3 to 10 years old.

The factors we have been interested in were:

- The number of family members (family composition);
- The family income;
- The expenditure on personal needs required for the children's maintenance.

**Keywords:** family members, disadvantaged area, children with disabilities, educational process.

**Rezumat:** Studiul încearcă să surprindă eventualele modificări care apar în comportamentul familiilor care au copii la grădiniță sau școală (ciclul primar), ca urmare a măsurilor de redresare a economiei luate la nivelul anului 2010, în vederea contracarării efectelor crizei economice.

Prin studiu s-a încercat să se scoată în evidență influențele pozitive și/sau negative a crizei economice asupra familiilor situate în zone defavorizate (localitatea Uricani județul Hunedoara), familiilor care au copii cu probleme de sănătate (copii cu autism și alte dizabilități), precum și asupra familiilor dintr-o grădiniță cu orar prelungit (grădinița nr.56).

Ipoteza de la care s-a pornit este aceea că: efectele crizei pe termen lung determină deteriorări ireversibile ale situației familiilor cu copii cu vârste cuprinse între 3 și 10 ani.

Indicatorii urmăriți au fost:

- Componența familiei (număr de persoane);
- Veniturile familiei;
- Cheltuieli cu bunuri și servicii necesare întreținerii copiilor;

**Cuvinte cheie:** componența familiei, zonă defavorizată, copii cu dizabilități, proces educativ.

### Introduction

The economic crisis affects all the families with children in Romania, whether children in kindergarten, school, college or university. We draw special attention on those families who care about their children and on education for children aged between 3 and 10 years with special situations:

- Those from families with working parents abroad;
- Children with disabilities;
- Children from separated families;
- Children who suffer because of their parents' inability to withstand the crisis.

## Materials and methods

Our study highlights the impact of economic crisis on parents and children.

Often, children are aware of the tragedies experienced by their parents.

**The starting hypothesis is that:** Long-term effects of the economic crisis causes irreversible damage to families with children aged 3 to 10.

### The factors we were interested in were:

1. The number of family members (family composition);
2. The family income;
3. The expenditure on personal needs required for the children's maintenance.

Data have been collected between 10th to 14th January 2011, in three different locations, two schools and a kindergarten, from interviewed parents with children aged 3 to 10.

### The three locations have been chosen because of the following reasons:

- The school from Uricani, Hunedoara County, is located in a disadvantaged area declared since the early 2000s; it has also been recorded a drastic decline of the school population;
- The Special School no. 2 from Constanta has got children aged between 7 and 18, many of them with disabilities, mainly autism, the Down syndrome, ADHD and mental retardation;
- The extended time kindergarten no. 56, located inside Constanta Harbour.

### The method used was based on selective survey questionnaires.

The three locations accumulate 300 children, with three observation units (10 for each location). To check the representativeness of the survey on consumer's demand, two successive selections on population groups have been carried out. The size of the income

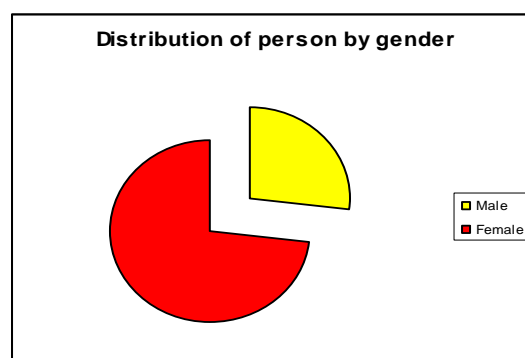
sampling was used as a feature. In order to achieve the planned structure, the coefficient was calculated (Kf): the first sample had a value of 14,66%, whereas the second sample had a value of 79,33%; the was first sample constituted approximately 10%;

It has also been calculated the error of representativeness for the two sample values: 1,23% for the first sample and 13,54% for the second. Because the first sample had a value of 1,23%, within +/-5% was considered representative in this case. For the selected sample (n1), the average, median (2166) and the module (2350) was calculated and also the coefficient of variation ( $v = 18,79\%$ ), which indicated that the series is homogeneous and average representative. The calculated parameters (degrees of homogeneity and representativeness) allowed the extrapolation to the entire survey on population.

The data has been collected on a questionnaire (which had 13 questions) that included closed questions of fact and opinion.

## Results and discussions

The processing of the questionnaires revealed the following structure by gender and age, as shown in Figure 1:



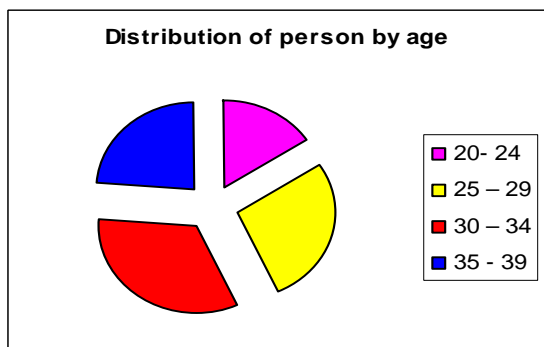


Figure 1 Distribution of persons by gender and age

Of those surveyed, 73% were women, remaining 27% men. Regarding the age categories, there is a certain uniformity in the distribution of people, the largest segment including people aged between 30-34 (33%), the next segment including people aged between 25-29 (27%) and the third one people between 35-39 (23%). The segment between 20-24 represents only (17%). In the study, we have observed that those contained in the segment aged 35-39, are parents whose children come from special schools, whereas those included in the segment 20 to 24 years are parents from Uricani, located in disadvantaged area.

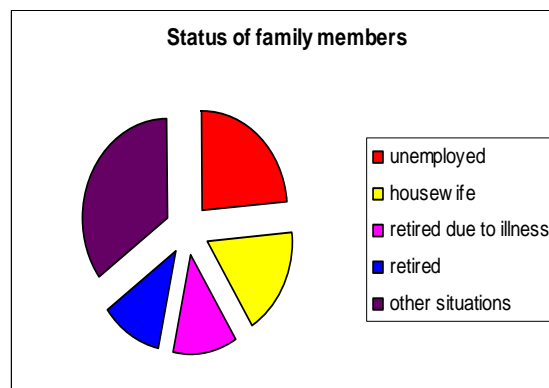
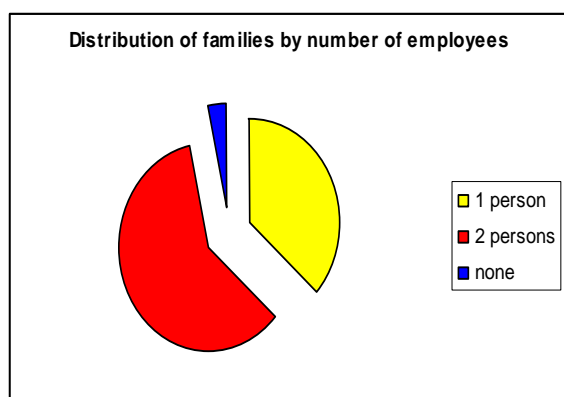


Figure 2 Distribution of persons by number of employees and their status

The study showed (Figure 2) that most families are made of four or more than four members (60%), and 40% are composed of three members. Regarding the status of the employees, in 37% of cases only one parent works and in 40% of cases both parents work. In an unemployed status there were 13% of respondents, 20% - represented by people with a different status than the one specified in the questionnaire, such as: foster parents, parents working abroad to work (the special school and the school from Uricani), and 10% - housewives. A special category, whose parents are retired due to illness (7%) or just retired (7%), is found in Uricani, where the parents suffered from mine accidents or because of retirements in accordance with the law.

The study also brought into light the fact that 40% of respondents working in the public sector (one parent family), are from Constanta kindergartens and schools.

Families whose children are disabled represent 37% of respondents, (Figure 3), most of them from the no. 2 Special School from Constanta; a case is even registered in Uricani too.

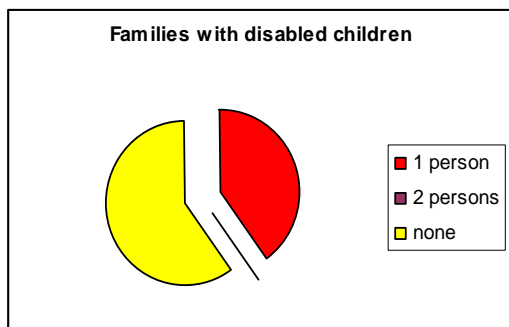


Figure 3 Distribution of families by the presence or not of children with disabilities

The statement of income and consumption expenditures (Figure 4) revealed that most of those with an income between 1700-1900 RON and 2100-2300 RON, represent 47%, 17% have below 1500 RON or over 2500 RON and 27% have an income between 1500-1700 RON and between 1900-2100 RON.

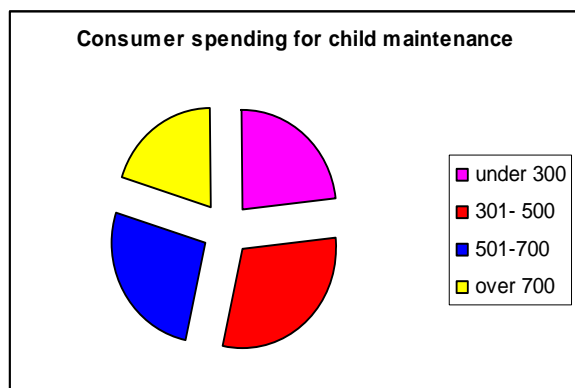
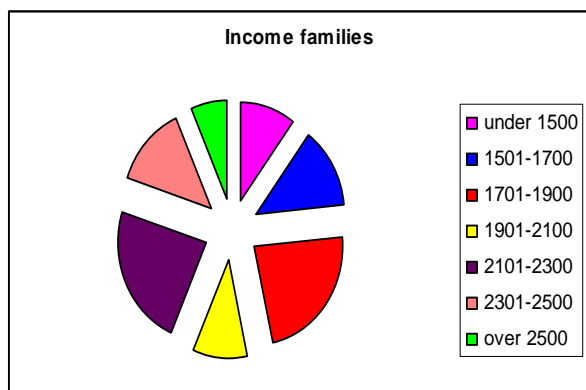


Figure 4 Situation income and consumer spending for child support

67% from respondents indicated a drastic reduction of income: for 23% that income remained unchanged and for 10% it increased.

Of those respondents, 30% spend between 300 și 500 RON/month, 47% spend between 500-700 RON and over 700 RON/month, whereas 23% spend under 300 RON/month. To note that these costs include: house maintenance, food, clothing, school articles, other things.

At question 10 under the table, most parents have opted for Physical Education (30%) and for other activities (33%). Parents who have opted for other activities are those whose children have disabilities and can no longer afford the hours of therapy. There are also parents who cannot pay for exercise classes or special speech. Many parents no longer afford to send children to camps (27%), tournaments (7%) or trips.

Table 1 Activities that will not benefit children because of economic circumstances

Sports	shows	trips	children camps	other activities
9	2	1	8	10
30				

Questions no. 11 and 12 have revealed that most parents (Figure 5) prefer to give up to the necessary school articles, (37%); however, few give up to Maths textbooks or books for reading (17%), many are the ones who choose to quit extracurricular activities (23%) and some articles of clothing.



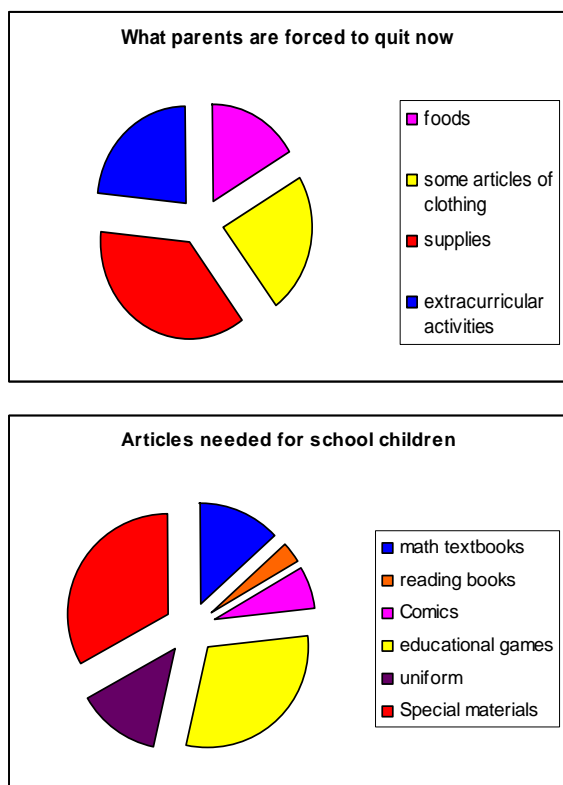


Figure 5 Distribution by type of articles or activity to which a family must stop now

Parents who opted to combine the special materials (used for autistic children to develop their motility), are those who have children with disabilities (33%). Educational games are also important; (30%) of the parents want to use them.

The answer to the last question (Table 2) refers to the respondents; 40% said that they are sometimes careful how they spend their money or what kind of products they buy, (37%) are always careful how they spend their money, and 23% are never careful on how they spend their money.

Table 2 How are careful with money and what kind of products they buy

Always	sometimes	never
11	12	7
30		

## Conclusions

The study conducted in 2011 highlighted the following issues:

1. Most families are composed of four and five members. This shows the economic pressure on these families. In these families, one parent is often working in the public sector, or is unemployed, housewife or from other categories.
2. There are also situations in which children with disabilities are in the care of foster parents which also have a family which they have to support. If the amounts allocated to foster parents will be reduced, who will give up looking after these children, especially since they require both special care and specific costs?
3. Many children from Uricani are in the care of grandparents or other relatives, because their parents are gone abroad to work. Also many families have got a single parent, or women are often housewives, or gone abroad.
4. Respondents replied that their incomes have dropped drastically (many of those working in the public sector can be found in Constanta); only few replied that their revenues remained stable or have increased; those from Uricani have already gone abroad to work with a firm contract or have just managed to go abroad to work because until now they were: unemployed, housewives or retired.
5. In order to make ends meet, many families give up extracurricular activities that develop creativity and motor skills, sports which strengthen the body and waive the educational games which develop the ability to think. The most affected are children with disabilities who are in need of special activities such as therapy and

special materials which develop motility.

6. Parents are no longer willing to contribute to buy various materials for school.
7. Crisis has a positive influence on the interviewed families; they care more for money and are more careful when buying products.

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## INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION – A COMPONENT OF THE NEW EDUCATION

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**Abstract:** *Intercultural education* represents all the systematic efforts aimed at developing within the members of a minority and majority group:

- a) a better understanding of the cultural situation in the modern society;
- b) a greater capacity of communication amongst people belonging to different cultures;
- c) attitudes better adapted to the diversity context of cultures and groups in a given society, mainly due to a better understanding of the mechanisms of psycho-social and socio-political factors likely to generate hetero-phobia and racism;
- d) a greater capacity to participate in social interaction, creating identities and human fellowship. (F. Ouellet, 1991, pp. 29 - 30).

**Keywords:** intercultural education, intercultural opening, interculturalism, problems of contemporary world.

**Rezumat:** *Educația interculturală* desemnează ansamblul eforturilor sistematice care urmăresc să dezvolte membrilor grupurilor majoritare, dar și minoritare:

- a) o mai bună cunoaștere a situației culturii în societatea modernă;
- b) o mai mare capacitate de comunicare între persoane aparținând diferitelor culturi;
- c) atitudini mai bine adaptate contextului diversității culturilor și grupurilor într-o societate dată, mulțumită mai ales unei mai bune înțelegeri a mecanismelor psiho - sociale și a factorilor socio - politici susceptibili să genereze etero - fobii și rasism;
- d) o mai bună capacitate de a participa la interacțiunea socială, creatoare de identități și de comuniune umană (F. Ouellet, 1991, pp. 29 - 30).

**Cuvinte cheie:** educație interculturală, deschidere interculturală, probleme ale lumii contemporane.

### Education and the contemporary world issue

At present, the education issue is approached in a deep connection with the contemporary world issue, world which is characterized by numerous turnings and changes in all the domains, determined by the science and technology progress, by the information spreading as well as by the evolution of the people's spiritual and material needs and last but not the least, by the cultural diversity which is an inevitable reality.

At the end of the last century, a UNESCO document, with the title „ World Issue in

School”, proposed the integration in the educational system certain topics such as:

- the human rights and the fundamental liberties;
- the poverty and the economical progress
- childhood and adolescence protection
- spreading conflicts among nations;
- shaping through and for cultural diversity etc.

A part of these realities determined Aurelio Peccei- the former president of Rome Club- to

insert the new concept of the contemporary world issue. This concept has several characteristics:

- a universal feature, all the regions and countries are placed in the middle of this issue, the solutions being cooperation and solidarity.

- a global feature- being present in all the social domains of life and representing a source of pending problems both in the material and spiritual aspect of life;

- a rapid and hard-to-predict evolution, meaning the fact that the modern man is often placed in a new situation and most of the times he does not cope with them;

- complexity, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary feature; when solving problems, one must basically take into consideration their connections with other problems, in the domain of education there are studies concerning the international approach of the interculturalism.

- priority or even pressing feature, the national and world communities require prompt answers, ingenuity and important financial answers.

In the domain of education, the analysis of the contemporary world and the clear shaping of the big issues of reflection have led to the constitution of specific answers through the potencing of the „new educations” (or the new types of contents). Having been used in the specific terminology beginning with the XXth century, the concept „ new educations”, means dimensions, parts of education, being in a continuous change, bearing an open flexible character.

In this respect, the school, as the main educational factor, has the role to inform the youth with a strong critical sense and with the capacity to understand and answer according to the varied challenges from the society, to become more and more their own shaping agents, who can organize and structure their knowledge on their own, to discover themselves, their future judgement and responsibility having already been formed.

The new educations, in the chronological order are as follows:

- Environmental education- Ecology Education
- Education on demography or Education about population
- Nutritional Education
- Education for high-tech and progress
- Mass-media education
- Education for peace and cooperation
- Education for democracy and human rights
- Modern sanitary education
- Modern home and economical education
- Leisure time education
- Education for a new international order
- International vocational education
- Education for life quality
- Intercultural education etc.

The list above will be left open, being possible that, any time, this list will be completed. The new educations assume inserting on a larger scale the international dimension in education. Even though some of the new types of education are quite well-formed, other types are still in discussion on categorizing and characterizing them.

### **Intercultural opening- exigency of the contemporary education**

Educational and cultural policies are required to be open not only to the national values but also to the international values, for the fact that the economical and political cooperation will be impossible unless it allies to the spirit of comprehension and cooperation in the domains of culture and education. We must put into value all the particularities, the

behaviouristic models which characterize the students or the educational groups in the intercultural situation. The comprehensive perspective means the implication of all-students, teachers, parents, community, decisional factors, politicians- in the restructure of all the educational acts, contents and processes.

An education which is able to take into consideration or- more than that- to fundament itself on difference and to be open to different values is extremely beneficial and is the only one capable of responding to the Europe's needs, both at present and in the future. In 1950, Louis Meylan announced the virtues of an intercultural education: „ a perfect loyalty, the respect for the human nature, tolerance, sympathy, sociability, generosity and the spirit of mutual help.” (1968, p. 171).

Intercultural education can be defined as a form of education for all in the spirit of recognition of differences in the community and respect for themselves, but also to others. The term has been replaced with „acceptance”, which points out to the involvement that the individual should show and the contribution that he is bound to bring regarding the intertwining of the cultures through shared values. ( V. Blandul, 2005, p.46).

Interculturalism should not override the identity of a community, but to assert it, emphasizing the values which approach them and promoting acceptance among people. Intercultural education (see Dasen, 1999, p 38-39) is aimed at all students, either native or immigrant, and seeks to raise awareness to respect diversity, tolerance, solidarity and prepares the future citizens with a view to harmonious life in intercultural societies.

Intercultural education (Banks, 2001) represents at least three perspectives: an idea or a concept, an educational reform movement and a process, because:

- includes the idea that all students, irrespective of sex, social, ethnic or cultural status, must have equal opportunities to learn;

- is a reform movement capable to produce major changes in school and other educational institutions, students gaining benefit from equalization of opportunities in training and education;

- is a constant ongoing process that includes ideas such as: fairness and constant concern to encourage educational achievement.

According to Nieto (1996, p. 308), intercultural education is characterized by the following principles:

- it is an anti-racial education;
- it is basic education;
- it is important for all students;
- it is comprehensive;
- it is education for social justice;
- it is a process;
- it is a critical pedagogy.

What is not an intercultural education? In the intercultural view, immigrant students are not the only ones who have problems, but the educational establishment mostly demonstrates difficulties coping with cultural diversity. The school must immediately help these students acquire the language of the host country and must meet and accept the local school regulations to be given a chance of school and professional success.

Intercultural education is not a new school subject, an extension of the curriculum by "teaching cultures" and not even a folklorization, a manifestation of exoticism in knowledge. Intercultural Pedagogy (re) values the students' culture of different backgrounds to raise awareness to cultural diversity, but it will avoid imposing some identification, will avoid to statically present cultures. At the institutional level, it involves choosing a model of outreach through integration and not through assimilation.

Intercultural education must not be taken for facilitating or encouraging the initiation for immigrant students, in the language and

culture of their origin . For Hannoun (1987) intercultural approach involves simultaneous affirmation of each culture with specific rules, but open to other cultures and to building a new civilization in common. "Not only must schools teach its students to live together in the same universe mobilized by different values, but more than that, it should allow them to discover that the universe is fed by thousands of threads converging, intersecting and they are completing at the same time, thus creating a new environment in which all people are called to live "(p. 112).

The principle of intercultural approach can be applied in at least two instances (C. Cucos, 2000, p. 174):

- on the synchronic view, for a proper understanding of individuals belonging to different cultures and living in the same historic present, is the current meaning of interculturalism and the richest reflection domain given so far;

On the diachronic view, as a lever or catalyst for meeting regulatory cultures that belong to different time periods, is an area less theoretical approached, but can reserve sufficient heuristic suggestions, even for the synchronous stance of the interculturalist hypothesis.

Intercultural education implies a new approach to horizon values. Learning at least two foreign languages simultaneously, the diffusion of the generally human symbols, emphasizing values which, unite people rather than divide them, youth participation in community school management, integration of twinning schools in Europe are other means to increase cultural valences of educational activities.

Intercultural education can be defined as a form of education for all in the spirit of recognition of differences in the community and respect for themselves, but also to others. The concept can be replaced with "acceptance", which points out to the involvement that the individual should show and the contribution that is bound to bring in

the close intertwining of cultures through shared values (V. Blandul,2005 , p. 46).

The Council of Europe has had an important contribution in disseminating the idea of interculturality and in raising awareness of the key policy makers. In this sense education and culture under the authority of the Cooperation Council aims to:

- provide all Member States with specific knowledge and techniques of cultural diffusion;
- establish relations of cooperation between educators, on a European scale
- to sensitize the populations of Europe on the common spiritual heritage, suggesting corresponding obligations of all to these elements;
- to establish a climate of active understanding and respect for cultural qualities of each group.

Education for international and intercultural understanding is detailed in the following areas: European civic education, social and civic education, the human rights learning, training and participation in society, mentors' training in the prospective cultural interaction, education and cultural development of immigrant education in a multicultural society, etc. The interculturalism should not override the identity of a community, but to assert, stressing the values and approaches and promoting acceptance among people.

Since 1983, as a result of the project launched by the Council of Europe, entitled "Training teachers for intercultural education", it was issued the Recommendation 184 of the 1984 Council of Ministers to Member States, which reads:

- societies with multicultural features represent an positively irreversible phenomenon, to the extent that these companies manage to create links between indigenous and immigrant populations;
- promoting spiritual exchanges is a way which favours a better understanding and cooperation between peoples;

- the presence of different ethnic students in schools constitutes a valuable and an important asset when educational policies that encourage spiritual opening and mutual understanding are promoted; teachers should receive training to promote intercultural values of diversity and originality.

### **Forms and methodologies to achieve intercultural education**

Practices at school will use several formulas:

- the need to resort to an active and participatory pedagogy;
- cooperative learning which trains mostly the materially poor children with less opportunities to promote equality of educational opportunities;
- democratic management of education in the classroom or school;
- education for communication .

The range of school activities will expand by combining different forms of organization with new means of education and borrowing practices or strategies specific to cultural events at community and global level.

The forms of realizing intercultural education are:

○ general - where all kinds of education are made:

- Normal lessons;
- Non-formal school activities;
- Informal influence exercised outside the school area.

Teaching Methodology: the already known activating processes, which will be combined in such ways to foster smarter and to form intercultural behavior. Active methods will require the students' interest and creativity to allow them to have the opportunity of expression and collaboration.

Here are some types of activities: projects, research, surveys through interviews, class journals, recitation of poems, stories, role-playing, rolle-acting with or without theatrical puppets, discussion of ideas based on case studies, discussions on some issues impacting on school life, the ability to negotiate and reach consensual decisions, critical reflection and constructive exercises, use of authentic documents (log sheets, photographs, slides, TV shows, videos, etc.).

○ media - media - plays a key role in growing sensitivity to otherness. The qualities of media electronics courts (especially the television and the Internet) are:

- Ubiquitous (present everywhere);
- instancy (presence of live events).

Mass-media has an organization of human cultural capital in an osmotic, intercultural manner. In this regard, Professor C. Cucos (2000, p. 178) highlights the role of specialized channels (in the news, scientific documentation) that "penetrates knowledge, providing a cognitive integration, which, beyond questionable uniforming functions, has the advantage of creating prerequisites of an understanding in savoir-site view to which everyone is reported. "

○ Sports, which is also a cultural practice, not just a physical one. It is recognized that each sport has its universality. The football in Europe or the U.S. baseball have alternatively intercultural functions. Sport can unite but also divide. Great athletes do not have a single citizenship, they have become global citizens. Sport models, sport stars, compete out of the geographic area of a country .

○ Music, which is an advantageous framework for achieving intercultural education. It provides opportunities for knowledge and communication between people of different origins, but can also be an opportunity to pitch and emphasis of personal, community or national vanity. The song is a means to participate in a culture of peace.

Next, we illustrate several possible types of activities:

- inviting at school several approved persons from external education environment who have different views, social backgrounds and cultural backgrounds; the intercultural school can become an area of interaction and mutually beneficial meetings for all those involved in its processes, a space for equalization of opportunities for access and success of all students;
- using audio - visual documentation centers and library to provide intercultural education materials;
- using new communication technologies (educational television, audio-books , tele-learning), which give access to lifelong learning, new technologies facilitate different forms of exchange;
- participation in cultural events and local festivals, visiting museums, exhibitions and various proposed activities;
- involvement in musical activities, choirs, sports etc.
- decorative arts and architecture, works of literature, science, etc..offer outstanding opportunities to illustrate the links between North and South, between East and West;
- establishing new friendships by organizing meetings between people of different cultures;
- school correspondence, performed by all children through the exchange of audio or video tapes, drawings;
- collaboration with local and international organizations, particularly with those non-governmental;
- participation in the activities proposed by some organizations;
- visits, courses, days or weeks of study focused on one aspect (environment, architecture, handicrafts etc.). Intercultural education can have a positive aspect on the experiences of most students, involving experiential learning, therefore a clear practical dimension, intercultural learning is

centered on the individual, taking into account the particularities of the parts involved;

- celebration of important dates: Children's Rights Day (20th November, the anniversary of the "Declaration of the Child's Rights - 1989 - adopted by the UN) Human Rights Day (December 10, the anniversary date of the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights - 1948 - proclaimed UN).

Intercultural education is inseparable from the community life, from the economical, social and political situation, from the form of governance and continually meets the demands of national and international reality.

Intercultural education should not be regarded only as a source of renewal and reconstruction of content derived from the traditional dimensions of education. Intercultural education can be criticized or applauded frantically, but it can never be ignored. According to Anca Nedelcu (2002, p. 191), "the richness of critics, backed by the enthusiastic and laudatory opinions about intercultural education just show the truthfulness and the popularity of the concept, the fact that it responsibly assumes propositions."

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## THE FUTURE OF UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH IN TIME OF CRISIS

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### Motto

*“The University of the Future must be committed to address current challenges that impede fast economic growth and the eradication of poverty, ignorance and disease. It needs to face the challenges of human insecurity, especially food insecurity; a non-predictable global economic and political environment; and issues of inequity. The University of the Future would then be an agent of social and economic transformation as well as a development hub.” Juma Mwapachu, Development 2010”.*

**Abstract:** The future of higher education is a highly acknowledged concern in Europe and in the world. Naturally, the question is how changes in universities will keep pace with changes in the economy. The necessity of change is no longer questioned, already being acknowledged and internalized. The analyses and studies performed and the research currently in progress aims at identifying as accurately as possible the trends of change in the economic and social fields, as well as the factors and the changes they produce, configuring what called “the University of the Future”.

**Keywords:** education, policy, trend, performance, competence, prognosis, development.

**Rezumat:** Viitorul învățământului superior reprezintă o preocupare intens conștientizată la nivel european și internațional. Firesc, se pune problema modului în care schimbările din universități vor ține pasul cu schimbările din economie. Tema necesității schimbării nu mai este pusă în discuție, fiind deja conștientizată și internalizată.

Analizele și studiile efectuate, precum și cercetările în curs de desfășurare în prezent, își propun să identifice cât mai fidel care sunt tendințele schimbărilor în mediul economic și social, care sunt factorii schimbării și care sunt modificările pe care aceștia le produc, configurând ceea ce se numește “Universitatea Viitorului”.

**Cuvinte cheie:** educație, politică, tendință, performanță, competență, prognoze, dezvoltare.

### Introduction

Such studies are generally performed by universities (e.g., in Portugal), at the same time international organizations (OECD, EU etc.) or companies (for ex., Rand Corporation) publish extensive reports on changes that may affect higher education. The Club of Rome, for example, researches at an international level to base as accurately as possible a vision of the future of higher education.

All these efforts, human and material, aim at offering to the policy makers more elements that will be included in public policy documents referring to higher education.

A change of approach is identified by the name of the studies or by the scenarios developed. The names of studies and scenarios have been directly related to their content (e.g., Divided Europe, European Coordination, Global Competition - Central Bureau voor Planbureau Statistiek & Central). At present, the names given to specific studies are more

creative, inspiring the reader and the policy makers to be more open to rapid changes in society: Centralia, the City of Sun, Cutting Edge University (National Education Association 2005, etc.).

The main drivers of change identified in most studies<sup>1</sup> refer to:

- Economic globalization and integration;
- The impact of technological advances;
- Aggressive and coordinated development of ICT technologies;
- Increasingly pronounced statement of the need to ensure sustainable development;
- Demographic phenomena (aging of the population in developed countries, international migration, etc.);
- Dynamic requirements on the number and type of qualifications and the change of qualification during the individual's lifetime.

The main directions recommended by the OECD (2008) for inclusion in the public policies on higher education refer to:

- Coordination of funding strategies with national priorities;
- Ensuring and improving quality in higher education;
- Ensuring equitable access to education in higher education;
- Strengthening the role of universities in research and development;
- Adapting academic career at the changes occurring on European and international levels;
- Strengthening the connection between universities and the labour market;
- The drawing up of national strategies in the context of international change;
- Implementation of public policies in higher education.

In this context, the OECD report also identifies the **key challenges** which have to be met by the higher education, namely:

- Assessment (self-assessment) of the state of higher education;
- Financing the higher education;
- Ensure the quality of the educational process;
- Equity of access to education;
- The contribution of universities in research, development and innovation;
- Valuing the academic career;
- Strengthening the links with the labour market;
- The internationalization and globalization of higher education.

## Materials and Methods

According to current research studies, it is useful and necessary for each country to identify and express their choices on these issues. The purpose of the exercise proposed in this report is to identify and prioritize the actions to be included in the strategy of universities in Romania and to provide guidelines and concrete proposals for policy makers on the future of universities. These elements should be considered when drawing up the public policies on the future of higher education in Romania.

### The important factors of challenges and changes in education are:

- **Demographic decline (declining birth rates, emigration, etc.).** The reduction of the number of the population due to lower birth rates will reduce the number of students, regardless of level of education (Bachelors, Masters, PhD) participating in the process of education or

training. The phenomenon of emigration among the working population will continue into the next period as well and will result in the decrease of activity in our country (for ex., around 2-3 million Romanians representing the active population emigrated between 2000 and 2009).

- Access to education, including higher education, and its accessibility have become dependent on family wealth, respectively the income level per head of family. A major challenge for universities will be to ensure equity of access to university education.
- **Increasing interest in employment while studying.** Increasingly more students, regardless of the level of education (Bachelors, Masters, PhD) will be interested to work while studying, the completion of education can be done in parallel with the labour process. However, working while studying - especially at undergraduate level, is not always beneficial in terms of preparedness. Universities must respond to this challenge by providing inter- and transdisciplinary programs in accordance with the requirements of employers.
- **The emergence of alternatives to traditional educational system.** The increase of the number of universities that offer online education programs and distance learning (e.g., There are universities that offer only on-line educational programs), as well as the increased competition from foreign universities offering such education and training programs are other challenges that the higher education in Romania has to cope with.
- **Increasing the role of research - development - innovation.** Technological change will be possible only through the increased effort of research - development - innovation, both from universities and from companies (currently, universities contribute only 20% in the technological progress).
- **Lower importance given to certain branches of industry/economy.** The dramatic reduction in the importance given by the university educational system to basic industries such as metallurgy, chemistry, oil, gas, etc., threatens the survival of the respective university specializations related to these sectors of the economy, as well as the future survival of the sectors themselves.
- **Developing the services sector.** Developing the services sector, including the industry type, will increase the labour demand with interdisciplinary knowledge and skills (cross-sectorial), and this is already visible in the branches of economy, such as renewable energy, biochemistry, medicine – informatics, etc.
- **Local development.** The local or regional economy development, the arrival of modern technologies and the increased access to information will lead to rethinking the role

of universities in these areas, meaning a closer cooperation with the local community to address issues of particular interest.

- **The poor, inaccurate, incomplete and constantly changing legislation in the field of education.** The shortcomings of current educational legislation have as direct consequence the relatively low adaptation of the educational offer to the real requirements of the labour market and the maintenance of a non-operational qualification system for labour market from Romania.
- **Low involvement and lack of professionalism of policy makers.** The correlation between the poor educational levels and the forms of education in terms of educational content and the skills and the qualifications offer will widen the gap that exists between the Romanian higher education and the European or international one, and will continuously support the non-performance.
- **Globalization of the existing value systems.** Local values merge with international values (European, global) in the context of the expansion and the diversification of mobility, both for students, teachers and researchers as an inherent stage of the education globalization.
- **Recognition of skills to all categories of people.** The recognition and enhancement of professional skills of highly qualified individuals will have to be doubled by the integration and the potential revaluation of disadvantaged groups (low income, coming from a disrupted family environment, persons with disabilities, isolated communities, etc.), as an engine for the economic development and the increased competitiveness of a nation.
- **Enhancing internationalization and globalization.** The intensification of globalization will determine the universities to focus on workforce training whose skills and abilities to meet the current and future problems of a global economy (the powers to think and work globally).
- **The emergence of networks of universities/university mergers.** The creation of networks of universities, including the development of partnerships with companies (as part of these networks), will facilitate the transfer of know-how, but also will enhance the mobility of teachers/students/researchers. The grouping (merger) will allow universities to create administrative, organizational and financial structures that will facilitate the development of educational programs between the partner universities, with appropriate recognition of graduated studies (for ex., such a merger of universities is already operating in the Nordic countries, UK).
- **Increasing the importance of entrepreneurship education.** The intensification of measures related to the realization of structural changes in higher

education regarding: the activity of practical courses, application and experiment integration, as well as conduct simulation within/from the business environment, providing extra-curricular courses highlights the need for recognition of the importance of entrepreneurship education at all levels of education and all areas of specialization.

- **Fiscal policy.** Fiscal policy will lead to funding universities according to different criteria, such as: the type of study programs, the results of research - development - innovation activities, the collaboration between universities and enterprises, etc.
- **Schooling policy.** Increasing university autonomy will lead to increased contributions from tuition fees, the reduction of the number of students, designing a system of student loans under certain conditions stipulated by the law, etc.
- **Decentralisation of education.** The policy of decentralization of the education system creates the need for regulation of new forms of education (distance, online) accessible to those who work. The new requirement to provide alternatives to those who want to learn appears in the educational system.
- **The widening imbalance between public and private higher education.** Expansion of private higher education at the expense of the public, with the emergence of new forms of university education (100% online universities), including the development of equivalent

training programs offered by companies or local (regional) organizations will lead to the increase of the competition on the educational services market and not necessarily to the increase of the quality of educational services.

In conclusion, although there has been an overall improvement in the performance of education and training in the EU, progress is too slow, which means that most of the reform objectives set for 2010 will be missed.

The economic recession highlights the urgent need for reforms and continuous investments in education and training systems to respond to economic and social challenges. These are the main conclusions of two reports on the progress of education reforms and European cooperation, presented by the European Commission.

Maroš Šefčovič, European Commissioner for education, training, culture and youth said: “Education Reforms in the EU have made significant progress, but today is important not to lose momentum. In particular, we need a quantitative and qualitative growth of investment in education and training to improve the professional training of Europeans, as well as our capacity for long term innovation.”

The interim report of the Commission on the achievement of the Lisbon objectives in education and training is very important, this annual report analyzing the progress of Member States concerning the implementation of five key criteria in education and professional training for 2010. Although progress has been made, the achievement of four of the five key criteria for 2010 in education and training is unlikely.

The only criterion met is the one referring to the increasing number of graduates in mathematics, science and technology.

Three criteria have not been met, despite the progress achieved: the adult participation in lifelong learning, the reduction

of the number of early school abandonment cases and the increase of the number of graduates of upper secondary education. The deterioration of one of the criteria has been noticed compared to 2000: the reading ability of adolescents aged 15.

We can include the increasing number of very young children engaged in education and the overall participation in the initial education, as well as the overall education levels of EU citizens in general among the positive aspects.

Since 2009, the number of adults who are part of the working population (aged between 25 and 64 years) with a low level of education has decreased by more than one million people per year. However, this category continues to include 77 million adults, or nearly 33% compared to the entire EU.

## Results and Discussions

Other areas where progress has been made include the learning of foreign languages in schools and student mobility in tertiary education, which has risen by over 50% since 2008.

**The following are included among the main conclusions of the report:** Many countries use the European Framework on core competencies as a benchmark for their school reforms. While there has been significant progress in adapting curricula, much remains to be done to help upgrade the skills of teachers and the methods and to introduce new ways of organizing learning.

The main challenge is to ensure that all learners, including the disadvantaged categories, the students within the vocational education and those who participate in training activities, benefit from innovative methodologies.

### Other challenges include:

- achievement of lifelong learning,
- improving mobility;

- increasing openness and relevance of education and training in relation to the needs of the labour market and society.

It is necessary to pay particular attention to establishing partnerships between the world of education and training and working life.

The amount of investment per student has increased at all levels of education since 2009. However, the increase of expenditure in relation to the number of students in tertiary education has been slower than for the other types of education.

Member States should invest on average an additional amount of over EUR 10,000 per year for each student within the higher education to reach the U.S. level (nearly 200 billion per year). This difference is explained mainly by the private investment within the U.S. higher education institutions.

What a difference between the U.S., EU and Romania, EU member!

Education is not the only cause of social exclusion, or its unique solution. It is unlikely that educational measures alone mitigate the impact of multiple disadvantages; the multisectoral approach is therefore needed to corroborate these measures with wider social and economic policies.

## Conclusions

Increasing international competitiveness requires high professional skills combined with the ability to create, innovate and work in multicultural and multilingual environments. Together with the demographic pressure, this makes it even more important that education and training systems increase the overall levels of education, while providing opportunity for all persons, young and adult - regardless of their socioeconomic or personal situation - to develop their full potential through lifelong learning.

For Europe to be competitive and prosper in a knowledge-based economy, according to high rates of employment and sustainable jobs and a strengthened social

cohesion - as provided for in *Europe 2020*, education and training in a perspective of lifelong learning plays a fundamental role.

Ensuring key skills for all through a lifelong learning will play a fundamental role in improving employability, social inclusion and personal fulfilment ... and maybe our inclusion, of Romania and the Romanian higher education, among the 500 elite universities in the world!

I do not think, with all the optimism, that the “new” and over-processed Law on education meets this desire, which is obvious for any person involved in the educational process.

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## SECURITY ENVIRONMENT EVOLUTIONS AND MILITARY POWER IN THE CONTEXT OF THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC CRISIS

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**Abstract:** Starting from present security environment evolution this thesis underlines some dangers on account of international security generated or multiplied by global economic crisis. In this concern it is presented the manner that military power, one of main power of humankind, is able to adjust itself to a crisis situation in order to be fit for state's security needs.

**Key words:** security environment, dangers, military power and economic crisis.

**Rezumat:** Pornind de la evoluția mediului de securitate actual, lucrarea subliniază câteva vulnerabilități la adresa securității internaționale generate sau multiplicare de apariția și amplificarea crizei economice mondiale. În acest context, se prezintă modul în care puterea militară, ca una din principalele forme de manifestare a puterii în istoria umanității, se poate adapta unei situații de criză astfel încât să răspundă nevoilor de securitate ale statelor.

**Cuvinte cheie:** mediul de securitate, vulnerabilități, puterea militară și criza economică.

### 1. The Evolutions of the Present Security Environment

We are now witnessing a global economic trauma which will probably re-set fundamentally the geo-political configuration of our planet. The collapse of Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. revealed the fragility of our world and now the mankind is living an economic crisis which is described by most economists as the second Great Depression. This crisis forces old power factors to diminish their weight or to disappear from the international stage, and other state-type factors, political-economic and military integrated systems, corporations and cross-border NGO's, local, continental and global organizations to compete in order to achieve global supremacy. A new World Order is anticipated, even if the frontiers of the old societies are still marked. As a consequence of the deep economic-financial crisis, the traditional industrial societies and particularly the national and local economies, the

conceptions and social behaviors are being re-shaped, the civilizations make efforts with a view to passing as quickly and smoothly as possible through this difficult period.

The present security environment is marked by deep changes in the main fields of the social existence and it cannot remain unaffected by these mutations. The Cold War ended by 1990-1991, Soviet Union and Yugoslavia tore apart, NATO and EU extended towards East to the direction of Black Sea Basin, Caucasus and Near East region, EU tends to become a world actor, competing in this respect with US, the Russian Federation diminished its political and military influence, China and India aim at the status of "political and economic superpowers", US remain the sole "Hyper power", the globalization is in steady progress, the revolutions registered in informatics, biology, exact sciences, technology in "exploiting the outer space", the weapons become more and more powerful and "intelligent" etc.

The evolution of the political-military phenomenon is mainly influenced by the military activities which are still carried on in the theaters of operations in Afghanistan, West Balkans and Iraq, by the nuclear dossier and internal crisis of Iran, by the global economic recession, by the intensifying competition between the states in order to control the energetic resources areas and the strategic routes of their transportation, by the increase of the risks and cross-border conventional and asymmetric threats (terrorism, organized crime, WMD proliferation, invigoration of separatist movements, extending of the Islamic fundamentalism, global climatic changes).

From the political-military point of view, the security environment can be characterized as follows:

- the trend of increasing the strains between the various power centers carries on, due to the different points of view concerning the manner to solve the conflicts and to manage the crises, the so-called “crisis of the perceptions asymmetry”;

- the competition in promoting the own interests is extending, particularly as concerns the free access to the sources of hydrocarbons, raw materials and water;

- the importance of the negotiations and talks increases, by bilateral summits and also by meetings of international structures;

- the process of NATO consolidation and reorganization within NATO carries on, and the redefining the inter-relations within EU, as well.

- the increase of the pressure put by some states with a view to reforming NATO and the architecture of the present security system.

The adhesion of Romania to NATO and European Union, its major projects after 1989, made possible that our country to become a part of the process of global integration; this process is more and more coagulated, accelerated by the technologic progress, by the expansion of the consumer markets and the labor migration, etc. In the

framework of this general trend, Romania could not avoid the serious effects of the economic crisis, this financial “tsunami”, which stroke initially the economies of the main industrialized countries and then affected all the economies all over the world.

## **2. Vulnerabilities in the context of the economic crisis**

The dangers which are threatening the world, worsened by the world economic crisis, are related to the existent material resources, environmental conditions, with multiple natural aspects and with the behavior of statal and non-statal actors.

The resources of energy and raw material are generally limited and irregularly spread on our planet. The industrial expansion and the economic globalization act as factors which “swallow” raw materials and energetic products. The energetic industry relies upon fossil and nuclear fuel and not on resources which can be regenerated.

The biggest consumers are US, China and EU. In the Gulf region there are 70% of the oil reserves of the planet, while Saudi Arabia possess 25% of the world reserves, Iraq 10%, Caspian area and Central Asia 7%, Russian Federation about 5%. As concerns the resources of natural gases, Russian Federation is the leader, followed by Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Algeria.

The development rate of the new-type energies (atomic, aeolian, solar, based on hydrogen, etc.) is lower than production necessities. The competition for hydrocarbons seems to dominate in the early third millennium, focusing the attention on Gulf States, Caspian area, Eastern and Western Siberia, Western Africa, South-Eastern Asia, the north of South America, Canada. One can easily notice that the competitions and the international conflicts are concentrated in these areas.

The chaotic industrialization and the irrational exploitation of the energetic resources, based exclusively on the necessities of the consumption market led to the permanent degradation of the environment,

which affects seriously the natural balance of Terra. The global warming, caused by the dangerous accumulation in the atmosphere of some gases (carbon dioxide, methane gas, nitrogen and sulphur dioxide, chlorofluorocarbons) led gradually to a “greenhouse effect”, to the catastrophic thawing of the polar ice caps, to the sea level rise, to the ruination of soil fertility. The thinning of the ozone layer makes possible that the ultraviolet rays cause effects similar to the global warming.

The lack of food is a particular problem of the overpopulated countries or of those poor in natural resources from Africa and South Asia. Together with the lack of school education and qualified medical assistance, the starvation endangers the life of more than one billion people.

The poor resources of water are a danger which affects especially the states of Saharan Africa, Near and Middle East or Central Asia. The most important water resources are in Canada (2.850 cubic km), Papua New Guinea (810 cubic km), Norway, New Zealand, Democratic Republic of Congo etc. Minimal or poor water resources are to be found in Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Mauritania, Libya, Jordan.

Population growth. The population growth trend is significant in China, India, Southeastern Asia, Near and Middle East. Towards 2050, the present population of six billion people will be doubled. This demographic expansion (having as consequence economic effects, political and military shocks) takes place in the same time with the ageing and decrease of population in Russian Federation and even in U.S. or E.U.

The overpopulation of some countries and regions, corroborated with the worsening of the poverty in the same areas stimulate the waves of emigrants who threaten to “flood” E.U. and U.S.

The lack of balance between the rich countries and the majority of the poor countries affects not only the world economy but also the social stability in vast areas in Latin America, Africa, Asia etc.

Diseases, poverty, education degradation, amplified by the economic crisis, are dangers which menace the present times; by combination with the present systems of wealth redistribution, they will stimulate further on the local and regional stabilities. Similarly, the depopulation of some vast territories, rich in natural resources, situated near states under demographic expansion, generates also instability. West-European population registers a trend of decreasing and ageing, which stimulates the emigration afflux from the developing countries and, giving rise to a lot of risks, including the impossibility of ensuring the pensions payment.

Some authors promote the thesis according to which there are three levels of crisis expression:

- a systemic level, when the stability of the international system is endangered;
- a confrontation level, when two or more actors are involved in creating and extending the crisis.
- a decision level.

According to the geographic criteria, there are local and national crises (internal ones), but also continental and global crises (external ones) .

C.F. Herman defines the crisis as a situation when objectives of fundamental interest are endangered, and the subjects are taken by surprise; Jean Luis Dufour defines it as a breach moment within a well organized system. In all cases, crisis creates risks for the national and international security and requires adequate decisions to be taken.

An economic crisis can lead to a political crisis and, even more seriously, to a social internal crisis, presenting extremely dangerous ways of expression:

- violent demonstrations and meetings;
- aggressive internal activities prepared in time, launched and directed against the independence and integrity of the country;
- attempts against the country;
- interethnic tensions ;

- terrorists activities;
- armed internal conflict etc.

The ways to surpass the crisis are different and depend, first of all, on the ability of political factors to manage this kind of situation.

In order to analyze the international crises, which could be generated by an economic crisis, the same reasons can be taken into consideration, except the fact that the referencing system is different, mainly as concerns the framework, the aim, the extent, the participants and their consequences. In this context, one can identify the elements of the international crisis concept, relevant for the economic, geopolitical and geostrategic tackling of the elements which refer to the political-military field, elements whose expression would affect seriously the values of the international right, peace and the regional, continental or global security.

### **3. Military power adapting to the challenges of the security environment**

The military and political planners all over the world are divided between two requirements which are apparently contradictory: to decrease the military expenses with a view to restraining the financial decline or to increase the military expenses with a view to slowing down the increase of the global instability and the modification of the military power balance.

The British army passes through a difficult period: very extensive and poorly budgeted, political and military planners are struggling in trying to balance the perceived needs of the very real budget reductions. Meanwhile, the British army is steadily decreased, while the commitments in Iraq and Afghanistan are increasing the constraints on equipment represent reasons of tension and, with an economy in a state of emergency, both voters and politicians do not want to hear about the need to spend billions on what many view as a misguided help for America's imperial ambitions. As a result, the British defense budget as a percentage of GDP is the

highest in the EU, far away from that of many neighboring countries.

Russian economy is falling into the midst of what began to seem like an unbridled race for expansion and completion of the military machine that was in a coma for several decades after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Funds from oil, which are supposed to finance a Russian army new equipped, fell, leaving big plans at the intentional level due to the lack of funds. And as a shame, Russian arms exports, a major source of foreign exchange is declining fast, while the global financial crisis is strangling the credit sources of potential customers.

Without being a race, China's military budget has all the hallmarks of a hundredfold increase in the long term. It is difficult to give exact figures, but experts estimate China's military budget for 2010 at between 100 and 180 billion dollars (officially being about \$ 60 billion). Countries, such as India, find links on their own and have plans for military expansion, approaching a catastrophic decline in economic activity, a combination that could lead to internal destabilization and an increase in external vulnerabilities.

Over the last decade, military funders around the world spent as much as could be: the base budget of the U.S. Defense Department, except funds for nuclear weapons and about \$ 12 billion per month for the "Global War on Terrorism " has increased by almost 70% between 2001 and 2009. Trends in economic climate, globalization, global war against terrorism and the rapid rise of India and China have provided all the reasons and resources both to policy and military experts.

But like any good thing it has come to an end. The global economic crisis, coupled with falling oil prices, has forced both policy and military planners to take a tough line against future military spending. They must make some hard decisions and as all important decisions in life, the arguments are far from being concluded.

Of the approximately 200 existing nations in the world, seven of them have over

50% of GDP (only California is stronger economically than 193 of them) U.S. own 50% of the military potential of the planet.

American superiority has always relied on its military infrastructure and its ability to project military power to thousands of miles from its shores, causing fear to any entity. That military industrial complex required a massive productive and successful economy to be maintained. In the past eight years, while replacing its ability to create goods that people needed with complex financial instruments and secured the mortgages as prime export product, America has relied on foreign lenders to supplement the American military establishment and the cost of its foreign wars. However, America can not act outside the established institutional environment, and lately has been observed that the transatlantic relationship was significantly influenced by the following developments:

- lower strategic relevance of Europe as central area of competition for power at global level and as main concern for security and defense policy of the U.S.;

- the strengthening of European Union and the increase of its economic and political role;

- increased globalization and its influence on perceptions of political and military decision-makers regarding international security features and the use of tools of power and influence in relations between states and NGOs;

- U.S. imposition as hegemonic power in the international system and the increasing imbalance of power at transatlantic level.

These developments have led to a change in the structure of relations between the U.S. and their European allies, as evidenced by the fact that foreign and security policies of the U.S. and European members are much less focused on NATO (the transatlantic relationship) compared with the period The Cold War. Moreover, former Secretary of U.S. Department of State M. Albright, emphasized that the psychology of partnership that characterized the transatlantic relations in

recent decades has been replaced in recent years, with a psychology of U.S. ignoring the European allies, on the one hand, and a competition with the United States by the main EU countries, on the other side. From a different perspective, Stanley Hoffman considers that the main cause of this crisis, in fact, of transatlantic relations is driven by the dramatic change of the American concept regarding international relations and foreign policy.

However, in this context, highly influenced by global economic crisis, achieving security in its many instances is an essential condition of survival and further development of social systems. In high centers of decision, security is addressed in terms of national interest and international cooperation/competition, defense of territorial integrity, welfare, reducing vulnerabilities, risks, dangers, and threats to local, regional or global level. Great traditional consumers of military equipment, such as the Gulf States, feel the effects of lower oil prices and reconsider their major military projects. Their decisions strike the British, American, French and other traditional exporters of arms. If the crisis continues, reconsiderations will turn into cancellations, affecting both the income of the providers of defense systems, and also the income of workers in defense industries throughout the western hemisphere.

As long as economic crisis continues, countries around the world have become accustomed to the idea that its impact will affect economies and it is reasonable to believe that defense budgets will stagnate if not decline for the next few years in the hope that economic downturn will not turn into a military crisis.

#### **4. Conclusions**

It is increasingly obvious that the economy is one of the main sources of military power because it produces means to materialize it. Information-technological power will dominate the armed conflict of the future and become a real military power multiplier, and the physiognomy of the new

threats and new conflicts, influenced by the financial power, will lead to remodeling of the military power of the armies of the world, both in terms of organization and force structure as well as changes in the *modus operandi*, technique and means of warfare.

The modernization of NATO continues in the direction of transforming it in an alliance with global calling, even if it is still burdened by the gap in capabilities, while the EU continues to develop its military component.

U.S., as the main pole of world power, have lately shown to be more willing to dialogue, cooperation and compromise with other major actors on the international scene, especially in regard to the interests identified as common. As a result, it appears that the U.S. administration intends to build a relationship "on equal footing" with RUSSIAN FEDERATION, which remains a state with a significant potential to maintain global stability, and political leaders in Washington have confirmed, through statements and high-level meetings, that the United States consider Russian Federation a great power. Bilateral relations include negotiations on the new START-2 treaty, which will replace the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty START-1, the Iranian and North Korean nuclear dossiers consultations, security situation in Afghanistan and the peace process in the Middle East. In this respect, the dynamics of politico-military phenomenon might be influenced by: the implementation of the new directions for U.S. foreign policy in the Obama Administration's approach, the new NATO Strategic Concept, the adoption of the EU Constitutional Treaty, the developments in the Iranian and North Korean dossiers of nuclear armament, the depth of the global economic downturn and the management by the G8, G20 of its impact on the political, social and military level, the evolution of the security situation in theaters of operations, foreign policy, energy, climate, and military steps/actions promoted by some major international players in relations with NATO, EU, AU, ASEAN as well as within UN, OSCE, CIS, CSTO, SCO, etc.

Even if the economic crisis make large holes in the budgets and great efforts are made to strengthen peace, security and the cooperation between security organizations, the number of conflicts did not change, stressing again the need for a credible military power, able to cope with the multitude of risks, dangers and threats to overall security. Russia, though it no longer has the economic potency to support a major military power, yet has significant military capabilities. China did not actually shown its military power, but its economic development effort can any time support a major armed confrontation. India and Japan are trying to develop modern military capabilities to deal with regional problems. United Kingdom, Germany, and France continue the process of reconfiguring their own army, both within NATO and the EU.

\* \* \*

According to some sources, today we witness one of those rare epoch-making events that occur perhaps once in a millennium, the disintegration of an empire. It is said that this economic crisis, by its consequences and its global valences will proclaim as the last victim the hegemony of the American Empire.

For over a year, while the U.S. economy was buried into recession and was exporting its economic disasters around the globe, the main political and business leaders of U.S. institutions were declaring that the fundamentals of the economy were strong, while throwing money on corporations and financial institutions "too big to fail" in a desperate attempt to make the flow of financial failure to not invade the whole economy. Since nobody can predict exactly what will be the final result, the likely outcome of this economic and financial apocalypse can be practically the end of American power as ruler of the planet.

In a world where U.S. dominance is still a condition of stability and security, the armies of the contemporary world are striving to adapt to the new conditions of the security environment, depending on the financial capacity of states and are still not sufficiently

prepared to prevent and counteract all new types of threats.

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