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IN MEMORIAM

PROF. PhD. NICOLAE CALATA-SACALIŞ

The Faculty of Educational Sciences along with the *Teaching Staff Training Department* of "Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University from Bucharest regrets deeply the irreparable loss they have suffered on the passing away of one of the most valuable professors, educator and philosopher, exceptional scholar, Nicholas Calata- Sacalis PhD. in February 2015.

Prof. PhD. Nicolae Sacaliş represented for us the model of a real educator, of a genuine man. I do not think that there is a teacher, a student, a person who did not have something to learn from him, even if only from a conversation with this brilliant intellectual, with a fine sense of humor, even when he was overwhelmed by suffering

He faced physical and moral suffering with patience and discretion specific only to great wise men, and that is why he was above any life trial. Prof. Nicolae Sacaliş made everyone feel his kindness which seemed to be coming from another world, he loved philosophy that helped him to keep his soul unaltered until the last moment of its existence.

He wrote books on philosophy such as "*The Pedagogy of Culture*", "*Return of the Gods: Power, Democracy, Freedom*", for which he won the Romanian Academy Award "Constantin Rădulescu-Motru", reference works which will remain for ever in the Romanian culture.

The meeting with this professor was one of the most wonderful moments we lived in "Dimitrie Cantemir" Christian University. I had the chance to work along with him, I spent many moments of true intellectual delight discussing deep philosophical problems. In June 2012 I launched the book of his life "*Return of the Gods: Power, Democracy, Freedom*" in a high intellectual atmosphere, within the DCCU. It was a celebration of the spirit in the sense that Noica urged us to live our lives. I cannot forget how Prof. Nicolae Sacaliş, at a peak of his professional accomplishment, made proof of his modesty and beauty of soul.

The brilliant Professor, the exquisite educator, the passionate researcher was called to the world of gods he kept conjuring up and I believe he will continue to enlighten us with his kindness from heaven, illustrating the Socratic idea of a profound moral significance: "**no evil can happen for a good (just) man, either in life or after death**".

Prof. PhD. Gabriela Pohoață
Editor-in-Chief Euromentor Journal

EDUCATING FOR THE FUTURE: FINLAND AND MULTICULTURALISM

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Abstract: *Finland is known for its equitable education system, however in the area of education for immigrant students it is not achieving equity. With increasing immigration nationally, this is an issue that must be addressed. Certain key policies are recommended for the success of immigrant students such as lessening educational segregation, providing for highly qualified teachers, supporting linguistic and intercultural education, and promoting parental involvement. In this article, Finland's success or challenges in each of these areas is evaluated and suggestions made for improvements.*

Keywords: *multicultural education, language minorities, second language learning, best practice, educational policy, immigrants, academic achievement.*

Introduction

One of the cornerstones of the Finnish educational system is its equity (Sahlberg, 2012; Välijärvi et al., 2007). The Basic Education Act itself exemplifies this ideal, stating that "the aim of education shall further be to secure adequate equity in education throughout the country" (*Basic Education Act 628/1998*, 1998, sec. 2). Finns take great pride in their equitable education system, where students in schools across the nation experience similar outcomes and the achievement gap between high and low achievers and high and low SES students is lower than in most other OECD countries (Välijärvi et al., 2007). One area, however, where Finland is not achieving equity is in the education of its immigrant students. As immigration continues to increase in Finland, it is important that policy makers align Finnish multicultural education policy with best practices, ensuring a quality education for all students. This article looks at the

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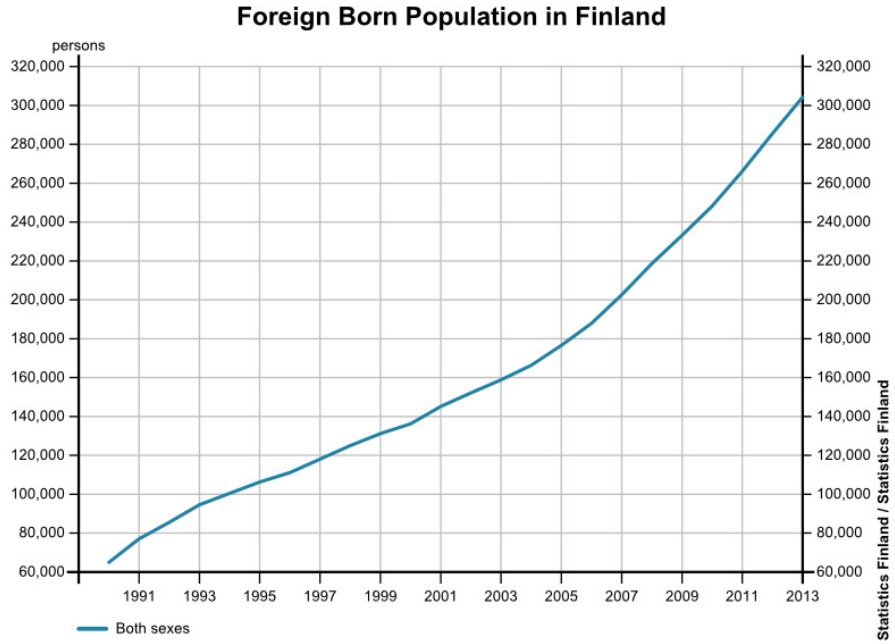
current policies on educating immigrant students in Finland, trends on immigration and achievement in Finland, and implications for the Finnish school system and the future.

Historically, Finland was a very homogenous country. It wasn't until the 1980s that immigration overtook emigration (Heikkilä & Peltonen, 2002). Since the 1990s, Finland has seen a demographics shift, with rising numbers of foreign-born residents. Over 300,000 foreign-born residents now live in Finland, almost 5 times the number from 1990 (Official Statistics of Finland (OSF), 2013). While initial immigrants to Finland came due to marriage with a Finn, or in order to relocate for a job, the nature of immigration in Finland has also changed over the past decades, with several waves of immigrants with refugee status; starting with those from Vietnam in the 70s and 80s and continuing with refugees from Bosnia-Herznogovina, Iraq, and Somalia in the 90s (Heikkilä & Peltonen, 2002). The changing nature of immigration in Finland has also lead to changing demographics in schools. In 1990 there were fewer than 2000 foreign-born children between the ages of 7 and 16 in the entire country, resulting in very few foreign born students enrolled in Finnish schools. In contrast, there are now almost 18,000 foreign-born children of school age, and an additional 15,0000school age children born in Finland to immigrant parents. In the next 7 years, almost 30,000 children of foreign background already living in Finland will reach compulsory school age and enter the Finnish school system. (Official Statistics of Finland (OSF), 2013).Foreign language speakers accounted for 90% of all population growth in Finland in 2013, which highlights that these numbers will continue to rise, and Finland will need to continue to review and revise policies to meet the needs of its growing population of multicultural students.

Figure 1 Foreign Born Population in Finland, 1990-2013



Policy Documents Regarding Multicultural Education in Finland

The education of multicultural students is covered under the Basic Education Act, just as is the education of all compulsory aged students in Finland. According to section 25, all children permanently residing in Finland must attend school beginning at age 7 and at minimum until they finish Basic Education or have completed 10 years of schooling (*Basic Education Act 628/1998*, 1998). Since 2008, with the addition of an amendment, the Basic Education Act provides for a year of preparatory education for immigrant students. In addition, in Section 12, the teaching of the mother tongue of immigrant students is allowed, but not mandated. When a minimum of 4 students speak the same mother tongue in one school, the government will fund mother tongue lessons (Eurydice Network, 2009).

Another key policy document relating to the education of immigrant children is the National Core Curriculum. Developed by the Finnish National Board of Education, the National Core Curriculum determines objectives and core content for all required subjects. An appendix to the National Core Curriculum, The National Core Curriculum for Instruction Preparing for Basic Education, relates directly to the first year of

instruction for children whose Finnish or Swedish skills are not proficient enough to participate in regular classes when beginning their education.

Section 6.4 of the National Core Curriculum deals specifically with the education of immigrant students. As defined there, immigrant education refers to education for students who have immigrated to Finland, or whose parents have immigrated to Finland, regardless of the child's country of birth. Immigrant children have the same general objectives as non-immigrant children and their instruction must comply with the national curriculum. A learning plan can be made to strategize how to facilitate a students' acquisition of skills equivalent to those of his or her non-immigrant classmates. However, there are additional objectives for immigrant students, which include their integration into Finnish society through language acquisition and growth in cultural competence. In order to achieve this goal, students are to receive Finnish or Swedish as a Second language classes instead of mother tongue and literature classes with their non-immigrant peers. The final assessment criteria are for students to have achieved between levels B1.1 and B1.2 on the language assessment scale (an adapted version suitable for younger learners of the Common European Framework of Reference for languages) by the end of Basic Comprehensive Education (9th grade).

Immigrant students' home backgrounds and cultures are also taken into account in the Core Curriculum. Students' identity with their own linguistic and cultural community should be supported through their schooling. Sensitive interactions with parents that take into consideration different cultural backgrounds, and the integration of children's prior knowledge and cultural understanding into instruction are both necessary according to the National Core Curriculum (Finnish National Board of Education, 2004, sec. 6.4). Teachers should be aware of students' developing language proficiency in their instruction and assessment. Oral assessments, other than for the final assessment, of immigrant students are allowed, and teachers are encouraged to use diverse and flexible assessment measures that are adapted to the situation and the student's language level (2004, sec. 8.1).

Specific guidelines for the teaching of native languages to immigrant students are given in Appendix 5 of the National Core Curriculum. It is recommended that immigrant students receive two lessons in their mother tongue per week each year. The goal is to create a foundation for bilingualism and multiculturalism, as well as to strengthen students' holistic skills and enable them to participate more fully in all subjects in

school. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills are all encouraged. In addition, cultural knowledge and identity are highlighted as areas of learning as well.

The National Core Curriculum for Instruction Preparing for Basic Education (Finnish National Board of Education, 2009) gives guidelines for the year of preparatory instruction that students receive prior to transitioning into Basic Education. The 900 hours of instruction for pupils ages 6-10 and 1,000 hours of instruction for older students have a three-fold purpose: to integrate students into Finnish society, to aid in language acquisition in one of the national languages (Finnish or Swedish), and to further content knowledge and age appropriate skill acquisition.

A great deal of emphasis is placed on the need for differentiation and instruction tailored to each student and their background skills, knowledge, and experiences during this year of preparatory education. Teaching methods should be diverse, experiential and activity based. Language instruction should allow students to achieve an A1.3 to A2.1 level prior to transition to basic education. Native language support during this time is also recommended, both to aid content learning in core subjects and for healthy development of children's cultural and linguistic identities. Since there are no nationally mandated hours for each subject during this year of preparatory study, and since each student's situation is unique, each child must have a personal study program. The study program should include an initial assessment of the child's language skills and content knowledge, the hours of instruction they will receive in each subject, allotted time for guidance and counseling, and an integration plan for transitioning to basic education.

Policies Promoting Best Practice

These policy documents, however, are only the first step in creating a successful multicultural education program. School level policies and teacher education guidelines also play key roles in creating an environment that is most conducive to learning for all students. The OECD has created a summary of what works in immigrant education, giving recommendations based on evidence to support education for immigrant students. On a policy level, they stress reducing educational segregation, allocating resources for migrant education, and recruiting and retaining effective teachers. On a school level, they advocate for the importance of language learning, intercultural education, and parental involvement (Nusche, 2009). This OECD document guides the following

critique and recommendations for the education of immigrant students in Finland.

School Choice

School choice should be managed to reduce segregation as far as possible. Often, due to residential segregation, the phenomena that people of similar background frequently live in the same neighborhood, immigrants are not distributed evenly across a city, instead clustering in specific neighborhoods. This leads to some schools having a high density of immigrant students. Studies have shown that schools with higher percentages of immigrant students have larger achievement gaps between native students and immigrant students than those with lower concentrations (Nusche, 2009). In addition, average test scores of native and immigrant students tend to be lower across the board in schools with high immigrant density. So, in the interest of equity, it is best if immigrant populations are not clustered in a few schools.

When school choice is an option, this can compound the problem of high-density immigrant populations in schools. Across Europe, studies show and administrators have reported "native flight", parental decisions to opt out of their local school, when immigrant percentages reach somewhere between 35% and 60% of the total school population (Nusche, 2009). This further disadvantages immigrant students, as they lose native peers who serve as language role models.

Finland has a relatively new school-choice model, and the majority of parents do not exercise their school choice option, instead sending their child to the nearest neighborhood school (Raty, 2013). However, one exception to this rule is in areas with high immigrant populations. Some parents are choosing to opt out of their nearest neighborhood school for one with a lower immigrant population in areas with high populations of immigrants (Dutton, 2011; Raty, 2013). Some suggestions to combat the problem of increasingly large percentages of immigrant students in the same schools include educating immigrant parents so they too know and can exercise their option for school choice, using a lottery system instead of testing to select students when more students apply for a school than available openings, and creating schools with a specialty focus (language or arts for example) in high immigrant areas in order to attract parents (Nusche, 2009).

Ability Grouping and Class Size

Ability grouping is another policy issue which negatively impacts immigrant children, as they tend to be overrepresented in the lowest tracks or schools (Nusche, 2009). Since its comprehensive school reform in the 1970s, Finland has educated all of its students in the same schools in basic education, and since 1985 ability grouping has been abolished (Sahlberg, 2012). This is one area of Finnish policy that is strongly in favor of immigrant students. However, there is one area of ability grouping that still exists and where immigrants are overrepresented in Finland, and that is in referral for special education services (Kivirauma, Klemela, & Rinne, 2006; Sinkkonen & Kyttälä, 2014). Immigrant students tend to be over-represented in special education internationally, due in part to language difficulties, behavior that differs due to cultural norms, less early childhood support, and the unfortunate reality that teachers often have negative stereotypes of immigrant children (Nusche, 2009). In Finland, a study of one city revealed that while immigrant students accounted for only 10% of the school population as a total, they made up 14% of students in classroom based special education and 25% of students in part-time special education (Kivirauma et al., 2006). In special education environments, students may not be exposed to as many robust examples of native language skills from their peers, and may have a less challenging curriculum with lower expectations, putting them at a continued disadvantage (Sinkkonen & Kyttälä, 2014). Teachers lack knowledge on how to assess language learning and the diagnostic skills necessary to know how and when students should be integrated (Tarnanen & Huhta, 2008). Better diagnostic practices and teacher training to prevent the mislabeling of an ongoing language acquisition process as a special need might help alleviate this over representation of immigrant children in special needs classes in Finland.

Another policy area where Finland performs strongly is in class size. The average class size at the lower secondary level is 20 students, even lower in primary education (OECD, 2012b). While studies regarding reduced class size and student achievement generally show mixed results, the positive impact for immigrant students is clear (Nusche, 2009). By continuing to support small class sizes, immigrant students in Finland will continue to benefit.

Teacher Education

The area of teachers and teacher education is a clear area that affects immigrant education. One suggestion to improve immigrant achievement is through the hiring of teachers with immigrant backgrounds (Nusche, 2009). Finnish policy supports this move, with a policy document released in 2007 calling for the hiring of more teachers of immigrant backgrounds (Holm & Londen, 2010). In addition to hiring teachers with immigrant backgrounds, all teachers can be trained to work more effectively with immigrant children. Although in some ways the Finnish government acknowledges the importance of this, for example, recommending that 1,500 teachers already working with immigrant students receive in-service training annually (Holm & Londen, 2010), in other ways it can still improve. For instance, while classes on multiculturalism are offered at many universities with teacher training programs, they are not required (Acquah & Commins, 2013). Many teacher education students are found to have inadequate or unclear views and knowledge on culture, intercultural competence, and multicultural education (Acquah & Commins, 2013; Dervin, Paatela-Nieminen, Kuoppala, & Riitaoja, 2012). In addition, although Finnish as a Second Language became a course of study in teacher training in 1994 (Holm & Londen, 2010), many teachers working with immigrant students have not studied it. For example, in an interview study of 9 teachers working with immigrant students at a school in Helsinki, six of whom were teaching preparatory classes for immigrant students, only one had teacher training in Finnish as a Second Language (Sinkkonen & Kyttälä, 2014). By providing and requiring more training of teachers working with immigrant students, Finland could improve outcomes.

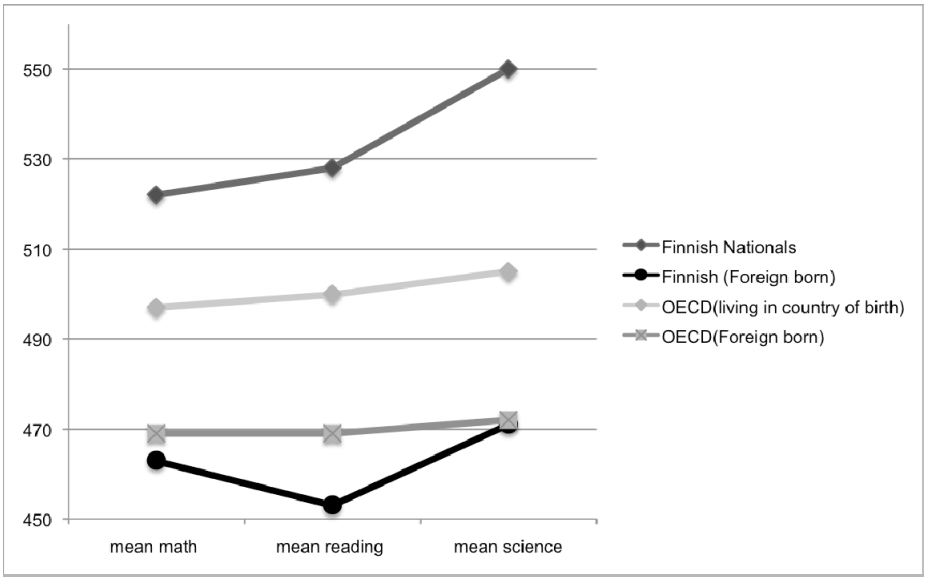
Language Policies

Language policies that schools put in place are also very important for supporting immigrant students. The manner in which children are taught their 2nd language, and supported in their content classes as they go through the process of language acquisition can greatly affect their learning. While basic preparatory classes, such as those offered in Finland, can be a good way for newcomers to transition into mainstream classes, they are only one part of the solution (Nusche, 2009). A good preparatory class will be short lived and transitory since integration is the goal, however, complete language proficiency can take up to seven years to develop (Nusche, 2009; Sinkkonen & Kyttälä, 2014), so students need

continued support when they transition to the mainstream classroom. The main way this support is provided for according to the policy documents examined earlier is through Finnish as a Second Language classes. One serious design flaw in this program, however, is the fact that children are removed from the Finnish as a Mother Tongue and Literature classes in order to participate in Finnish as a Second Language. There is very little evidence to support the effectiveness of pull-out programs such as this, and one of their main draw backs is that students miss classroom content while they are gone (Nusche, 2009).

Taking a look at PISA 2012 data reveals the possible consequences this may have. While the OECD average achievement gap in reading was 31 points, in Finland there were a full 75 points dividing average native student scores and average immigrant scores in reading (OECD, 2012a). Although overall Finland performs worse than average on the achievement gap of immigrant students, the reading gap is much larger than the math gap (59 points in Finland), pointing to the possibility that by being removed from mother-tongue and literature classes, students miss out on the rich curriculum that native students study, in order to study a less varied curriculum focusing more on basic skills. A comparison of the Finnish as mother tongue curriculum and the Finnish as a Second Language Curriculum reveals, among other things, reading for pleasure is not mentioned and even such basic content as concepts of character, plot, and setting are lacking in the Finnish as a Second Language curriculum(Finnish National Board of Education, 2004). Although there are challenges to incorporating students into mainstream classes in all subjects, it is unnecessary and counterproductive to educate immigrant students separately in a core subject such as mother-tongue and literature (Nusche, 2009). Careful cooperation between subject or classroom teachers and a Finnish as a Second Language specialist could be one way to support the learning of immigrant students while still exposing them to the richer curriculum native students receive.

Fig. 2 PISA 2012 OECD and Finnish average scores in Math, Reading, and Science



Encouraging continuing acquisition and literacy in the students' mother tongue is also seen as a good policy measure. While studies are inconclusive about how much this aids students' achievement, there are other positives, such as increased self-esteem and the ability to form a positive multicultural identity (Nusche, 2009). As Finland allows for mother tongue classes and provides funding for classes when there are 4 or more students, it is doing well in this area. As of 2010, mother tongue classes in 50 languages were provided in Finland and Helsinki, where approximately 50% of all immigrants in Finland live, offered mother tongue instruction in 40 languages. (Holm & Londen, 2010). This policy should continue to be encouraged.

Intercultural Education

Increasing intercultural education for all students is also a key policy concern at a school level. Diversity should be valued and evident in the choice of curriculum and teaching methods (Nusche, 2009). Multicultural Education should be seen as more than a process of simply integrating those who are different into the mainstream, but instead as a way of educating all students that encourages equity, justice, and mutual understanding of and appreciation for differences. However, reviews of multicultural education in Finland are almost unanimous in their

agreement that this is an area where Finnish schools fall short (Dervin et al., 2012; Holm & Londen, 2010; Sinkkonen & Kyttälä, 2014). According to Holm and Londen, "multicultural education in Finland means immigrant education" (2010, p. 116). There is little space for hybrid identities and integration into the social norm is seen as the primary goal of immigrant education (Holm & Londen, 2010; Sinkkonen & Kyttälä, 2014). Until all students, including native students, benefit from multicultural education, immigrant students will continue to be at a disadvantage as their home country and culture are undervalued in the curriculum.

Parental Involvement

A final area of school policy relates to parental involvement. There are clear connections between parental involvement and student achievement (Halgunseth, Peterson, Stark, & Moodie, 2009; Nusche, 2009). Nevertheless, there are many barriers to involving the families of immigrant students, including language barriers, time, and differing cultural conceptions to home-school relationships (Finders & Lewis, 1994). In Finland, parents receive written information in their home language, and refugees are eligible for interpreters in a variety of settings including school settings (Eurydice Network, 2009). These are beginning steps to integrate parents. Conducting home visits, particularly in families with children in Early Childhood Education has been found successful, as have programs that involve parents directly with their children in activities at school (Nusche, 2009). In-school parent-child activities that target a specific subject have been particularly successful. One example is family literacy programs (Morrow & Young, 1997; Nusche, 2009). This is one area that Finland could develop further. An initial search of literature available in English reveals no family literacy programs in Finland, and an email exchange with Sari Sulkunen, a literacy researcher at university of Jyväskylä, confirms that "there are very few examples of [family literacy programs] in Finland" (Sulkunen, 2014). Schools within Finland could begin more intentional parent outreach programs targeting immigrant parents in order to increase immigrant student achievement.

Conclusion

The Finnish Education system has provided an excellent education for many students and continues to be one of the world leaders in equity in education. However, as the number of immigrant students grows, educational policies must be revisited to ensure that equity is for

everyone. It has been asserted that the Finnish education system "seems to be most suitable for Finnish- and Swedish-speaking middle- and upper-class children, especially girls" (Kivirauma et al., 2006, p. 130). For the good of Finnish society, this cannot remain the case.

Certain policies, such as strong mother-tongue support, low classroom size, and no ability grouping, benefit immigrant students in Finland and should be continued. In other areas, Finland could make changes to increase support for immigrant students. Increased teacher education in Finnish as a Second Language and multicultural education would better prepare teachers for their tasks. A revision of the current Finnish as a Second Language policies to provide ongoing support to students during the language acquisition process without sacrificing content learning in literature could be crucial. A diversified focus on parental involvement that included elements such as family literacy programs or early intervention home visits could improve the involvement of immigrant families. With changes such as these, Finland can continue to lead the way in equitable education for all students.

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BUILDING A COMMON SPACE THROUGH INTERCULTURAL PEDAGOGY

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Abstract: *"In our new socio-cultural and educational context, which reflects constant preoccupation to improve relationships and exchange ideas, we are witnesses of increased openness to mobility of all types: academic, professional, vocational, leisure etc.*

If universities are interested in promoting their services abroad and view internationalization as a strategy to encourage cooperation, this requires a new pedagogy – the intercultural approach.

This approach is reflected in three directions: at institutional, teaching and community levels. In our article, we are focusing on the institutional and teaching strategies which support foreign students in their effort to overcome culture shock and better adapt to the host educational environment.

At the same time, we are interested in teacher's skills to help students' decode his/her expectations and relativise cultural values. Our article focuses on a central concept, that of „in-betweenness", defined as the imaginary common space created by the two educational actors, the teacher and the student and constantly adjusted and negotiated as the academic relationship evolves. Therefore, effective academic communication is defined based on this concept."

Keywords: *intercultural, pedagogy, foreign students, common space, adaptability, mobility.*

Europeanization, as a principle of a social system which promotes mobility, exchange, openness and networking is a new and pluridimensional concept. This is interrelated with the notions of interculturality and common space. Besides the recognition of academic qualifications and competences, the European Commission policies and priorities in education also refer to fostering international academic mobility, cooperation and initiatives.

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According to the National Institute of Statistics findings from 2012, the number of foreign students enrolled in Romanian universities has increased and, as member of the teaching staff from a famous technical university of Bucharest, I can support this tendency even today. The implications of this aspect do not refer only to financial matters or to the image of the Romanian academic environment, but also to socio-cultural and pedagogical factors.

Therefore, we are questioning whether the Romanian teachers are trained enough to teach in multicultural classrooms, whether the local students may relate effectively with foreigners, but, also, whether international students receive adequate support to better integrate and adapt to the host cultural, social and educational spaces.

Both the academic institutions and the teaching staff are encouraged to take into consideration specific educational strategies and methods which should lead to the creation of a common space, favourable to the exchange of ideas, to the acquisition of knowledge concerning different cultural values, to the expression of tolerance and positive attitudes regarding diversity.

The concern to support higher university internationalization is reflected in the implementation of various institutional strategies, which aim to offer the potential or actual international students opportunities of intercultural learning by different methods and activities, promoted by various universities in Europe and the US: offers of intensive language classes, cultural programs, campus orientation programs, academic language courses, offices for international students, informative brochures and leaflets in foreign languages, access to online platforms of teaching resources, workshops, libraries or cultural and linguistic resource centres, team-learning opportunities, cultural events etc.

The speciality literature identifies three types of intercultural educations programs, as teaching approaches[1]:

- content-oriented programs
- process-oriented programs
- learned-centred programs

Thus, the content-oriented programs aim to make learners aware of the specific cultural elements of a community. We believe that this approach, which values the elements of cultural diversity in the school curriculum, involves the teaching of cultural knowledge reading other

[1] Nedelcu Anca, *Fundamentals of Intercultural Education,* Iaşi, Polirom, 2008.

peoples and one's own. In this way, the learners are able to compare various cultures and, possibly, to reflect critically on cultural issues. The advantage of these programs is that they promote the recognition of cultural stereotypes from people's mentality, use of language or behaviour. But, they do not emphasise the social dimension of interaction, which is an essential part in creating and recreating one's own (inter)cultural identity.

The second category, the interaction processes-centred programs aim to increase academic performance of those learners who belong to different ethnic, cultural, social groups and, also, to minimise negative stereotypes or prejudice. Socio-cultural integration and adaptability are the main teaching objectives, which may lead to an increase of tolerance of ambiguous situations and the development of socialising and stress management techniques.

The modern intercultural pedagogy rests on these two objectives, fact which involves, on part of the teacher, awareness of cultural adaptability, knowledge of stages of the culture shock, but also, empathic attitudes.

The learner-centred programs focus on the acquisition of socialising skills, by matching the teaching methods to the specific needs of various groups of learners and/or minority.

The intercultural pedagogy involved in these types of educational programs encourage learners to develop positive attitudes regarding diversity, in general, and, regarding certain minority groups, as well as marginalised individuals, in particular.

The Romanian educational programs addressed to international students are mainly two types: the preparatory year and varoius types of mobility such as Erasmus programs. The preparatory year programs offer Romanian language and culture courses to foreign students who, upon completion of the respective course, will enroll in Bachelor, Master, Doctoral studies or specialisation and the class configuration consists of only foreign students. The Erasmus mobility programs invite foreign students to experience learning in cooperation with local students, and are exposed to another type interaction. Between these two types of programs there are also structural differences; the preparatory year is more content – centred, if we take into account the Threshold level recommended by the Council of Europe for Romanian language and culture lectures and, also, the textbooks available on the market. The outcome of the preparatory year is to acquire linguistic and cultural competence in order to continue the academic studies in our country. Within the framework of the Erasmus

mobility programs, the international students have to attend the university courses and interact with the local students. In this respect, we believe that these programs are more process-centred, since there is a focus on the process of integration. According to specialists, learner-centred intercultural education programs aim to facilitate school integration of migrant children, and to reduce violence in schools. In a higher education environment, which offers educational services to young adults and adults (if we take into account the preparatory year) most probably there are no such issues as violence, racism, inadaptability, so as to require a special attention to behaviour problems, but institutions and teachers alike may support the international students to overcome culture shock and better adapt to the host socio-cultural and educational environment.

The interviews we conducted with international students from the Polytechnic University of Bucharest, lead to the conclusion that they interact more with their co-nationals that with the local students. It is true that, in order to become aware of socio-cultural elements, specific to the host country, it is easier to interact with individuals from one's own culture, or with those who speak the same language, who have lived for a longer period of time in the host country, and these may play the role of guide for the newcomers. The local native people are usually less aware of these elements, because they are used to living with them unconsciously. Still, a foreigner observes the cultural values and norms more accurately, and may transmit them more effectively. Thus, this is a possible reason why the questioned international students argue that they relate more with co-nationals, with persons who speak the same language or with foreigners who share the same status as them.

Another reason for the little interaction between international students and local students or the host society, in general, are the communication problems (obstacles in learning Romanian or little knowledge of English, as an international language). In our multicultural classes from the Polytechnic University of Bucharest, there are differences regarding the degree of competence in international languages: students who have good knowledge of one-two international languages (most frequently, English and French), others have an understanding of English or French, and others, have elementary knowledge of English or do not speak any international language. In this last category we met students from various countries such as Turkey, Greece, Ukraine, Italy, Iraq, Turkmenistan, Thailand, Jordan etc, without over-generalising. What we

intend to highlight is the linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity of the international students from our University, hence, the necessity to implement teaching strategies and methods which should meet the needs of all these students.

The differences do not refer only to the degree of competence in an international language or to the degree of similitude between the learned language and the mother tongue, but also to the variables of age (to read, learning needs and degree of maturity) or motivation, prior academic training, degree of similitude between the educational systems and teaching methods, prior intercultural experience etc. In this context, the issue of schooling foreign students in the preparatory year is very complex and needs institutional attention as well as teacher's care. Thus, the implementation of intercultural pedagogy, which helps international students acquire the requested competences and overcome culture shock is done in three stages: at institutional level, at teaching level and at community level. Since, universities also offer courses to adults, enrolled in the preparatory year, there is less focus on the relation between the school and the community: students' families are no longer involved in educational matters. The preparatory year classes have a long-time tradition in Romania, but the academic research regarding teaching Romanian as a foreign language is recent.

From a teaching point of view, the intercultural pedagogy involved in teaching Romanian as a foreign language should refer to what Fennes and Hapgood[2] calls „triangulation didactics", which brings to discussion the idea of common space or "in-betweenness" between the two educational actors, the teacher and the student. In other words, the relationship between these educational actors is created by and during the teaching process as an act of negotiation, mutual understanding and respect. We believe that due to the enormous diversity of communication styles, cultural values, expectations, learning styles, perceptions, prior academic knowledge or intercultural experience etc, which characterise a multicultural group, only the creation of a common space or the acceptance of a teaching-learning contract between the teacher and the student, may lead to effective intercultural academic relations. This contract or the common space, involves responsibility, stress management, ability to explain and tolerate in order to convey adequate meanings, as well as cooperation and openness attitudes. In this respect, we

[2] Fennes, Helmut and Hapgood, Karen, *Intercultural Learning in the Classroom. Crossing Borders*, Great Britain, Reywood Books, 1997.

would like to offer, as an example a situation which appeared during a lecture with the preparatory year students. The students were asked to solve a task which had the objective to fill in a gapped text with the most adequate word. The gapped text offered enough contextual elements so that the choice of the adequate word was relatively easy, given that the students read the text. The teacher was surprised when several beginner students offered very accurate answers in a very short amount of time, which was not enough for reading the sentences completely. The students concentrated only on offering the solution and not on the process, which requires complete understanding of the context. Research has proven that the success of solving a task depends upon the degree of equivalence between the teacher's intention and the students' interpretation[3]. In intercultural learning teacher's intention may be misunderstood or may not meet student's expectations. In such cases, the most effective teaching approach is to (re)create the common space by negotiation and understanding. The aforementioned student, who belonged to the Arab cultures, based on their teaching and learning experience in the country of origin, or based on their learning styles decoded in a wrong way the teacher's intention, by considering that his/her expectations of their educational behaviour at that moment was to rapidly provide the solution without any consideration of the contextual use of the words. Moreover, when they were asked why they were offering the solutions so rapidly, the students mentioned that, in general, they solve the exercises at home, in advance, because this helps them feel proud of their progress, without being afraid of making mistakes. This answer involves both learning styles and strategies but, also, and cultural values and beliefs. Therefore, intercultural pedagogy focuses both on matching teacher's methods with students' learning styles and teaching learners how to relativise cultural values.

In the educational field, we may talk about intercultural teaching-learning if two different meaning universes coexist, and if there are at least two cultural frameworks of reference. Based on these, teachers and learners will develop new attitudes and will acquire new identities in interaction. That is why, we may conclude that, in a teaching context both the teacher and the learner will build together the teaching-learning relationship and will constantly adjust the imaginary in-between space of interaction, which will help them communicate more effectively.

[3] Kumaravadivelu, B., *Language Learning Tasks. Teacher Intention and Students Interpretation*, in ELT Journal vol. 45/2, 1991, pp 98-107.

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THE INFLUENCE OF THE HINDU RIGHT WING ON THE INDIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM AFTER THE ELECTION OF NARENDRA MODI

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Abstract: *The coming to power of Narendra Modi backed by BJP promises significant changes in public discourse and, more so, within the education system. For the Hindu nationalists that are increasingly populating government and different bureaucratic branches, education should be recast in order to reflect a magnified and narrow vision of India's past along with an intolerant attitude towards religious minorities, especially Muslims.*

From Innenpolitik towards geopolitics, this political philosophy put forward by Modi and his team may reflect an anti-hegemonic project correspondent to a multipolar world where Western values are no longer held as universal but are challenged by the rise of other cultures.

Keywords: *hegemony, multipolar world, India, Narendra Modi, BJP, Hindutva, RSS.*

Introduction

The statement of the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan according to whom the first Europeans to set foot on the North American soil were the Ottoman Turks drew the attention of the Western media[1]. Two thousand miles away, the Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi

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[1] Mustafa Küçük, Erdoğan says America was discovered by Muslims, not Columbus, *Hurriyet Daily News*, 15 November 2014. 'Muslims pre-date Columbus in discovering America,' says Turkish president Erdogan, Independent, 16 November 2014. Ishaan Tharoor, Why Turkey's Erdogan still insists Muslims reached America before Columbus, *The Washington Post*, November 20, 2014.

spoke at the opening of a clinic in Mumbai about the outstanding achievements of ancient Hindu doctors, pioneers of genetic engineering or plastic surgery, as shown by the examples of god Rama or Ganesh, the god with the elephant head and human body, says the same official[2]. Without aiming to discuss the reality of such statements, the present study aims at reflecting their role for what we consider to be universal values. The claim of objectivity, a claim that has to be universal is specific to knowledge; otherwise we would not be able to talk about experiments or scientific discourses, but about subjective/personal views or ideological formulas. If such standards may be applied with relative ease in hard sciences (mathematics, chemistry, physics, etc.) the same does not stand for the humanities (literature, sociology, history, economics possibly) despite the statistical apparatus that the latter would often invoke. The critical / postmodern perspective of the social studies shatters our ambition of objectivity, trying to prove that any discourse (opinion or scientific) is more or less subjective and depends on the entity that pronounces it (individual, political party, lobby group), on the context or cultural background in which it is spoken[3][4].

As a matter of fact, historiography is no exception to the game of subjective perspectives. The specific polemics here are not necessarily important due to their practical, immediate applicability, but because of the political stakes behind the historical interpretations or collective symbolism. Going back to Erdogan's quoted statements, respectively, to Modi's, we can ask ourselves whether they embody, beyond simple

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[2] Maseeh Rahman, Indian prime minister claims genetic science existed in ancient times, *The Guardian*, 28 October 2014.

An excerpt from the speech of the Prime Minister is: "*We can feel proud of what our country has achieved in medical science in a certain period of history. We've all read about Karna in Mahabharata. If we think a little, we realize that Mahabharata tells us how Karna was born from his mother's womb. This means that genetic science already existed then. Therefore Karna could be born out of his mother's womb*". PM Modi takes leaf from Batra book: Mahabharat genetics, Lord Ganesha surgery, *Indian Express*, October 28, 2014.

[3] Robert W. Cox, Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An Essay in Method, *Millennium - Journal of International Studies*, June 1983 12: 162-175.

[4] For a discussion about Eurocentrism and the difficulty of writing a truly global historiography see: Patrick O'Brien, Historiographical traditions and modern imperatives for the restoration of global history, *Journal of Global History* (2006) 1, pp. 3–39. Georg G. Iggers and Q. Edward Wang catalogue the various attempts to write a universal history, see Georg G. Iggers, Q. Edward Wang, *A Global History of Modern Historiography*, Pearson Education Limited, Edinburgh, 2008.

electoral or rhetorical gestures, the process of transition towards a multipolar[5] world in which secular liberalism should be replaced by something else?

This article will analyze the issue of Hindutva's influence on education. The first part of the article describes in summary the reforms of the Indian education system in the late 80s and early 90s decade. The second part details the rise of Hindu nationalist right wing and the way in which it came to play such a pronounced public role. The last part provides some conclusive remarks.

Like any research, this study has several limitations. The first is methodological: the lack of knowing Hindi and Urdu languages does not allow their use as research tools, which means that the references used will be in English. The second is rather disciplinary: the interpretation privileges the political science perspective rather than the educational one. Therefore, we will treat the influence of the new political class in India without providing a systematic description of the Indian education system.

I. Indian educational system

The care for national building qua education was expressed through several special appointed commissions: University Education Commission (1948-49) and the Secondary Education Commission (1952-53). The pivotal moment came along with the final remarks of the Education Commission of 1964-1966 swiftly followed by the 1968 Policy on National Education. The philosophy of the latter expressed the conviction that: "*that a radical reconstruction of education on the broad lines recommended by the education commission is essential for economic and cultural development of the country, for national integration and for realising the ideal of a socialistic pattern of society. This will involve a transformation of the system to relate it more closely to life of the people; a continuous effort to expand educational opportunity; a sustained and intensive effort to raise the quality of education at all stages; an emphasis on the development of science and technology; and the cultivation of moral and social values. The educational system must produce young men and women of character and ability committed to national service and development. Only then will education be able to play its vital role in promoting national progress, creating a sense of common citizenship and culture, and strengthening the national integration. This is necessary*

[5] David Bell, *This is what happens when historians overuse the idea of the network, New Republic*, 25 October 2013.

if the country is to attain its rightful place in the comity of nations in conformity with its great cultural heritage and its unique potentialities."

Beyond the generous foreword, its text aimed to make compulsory education until 14 years, put the teacher in the center of the whole process, adopted the three languages formula (Hindi, English and local languages, in the non-Hindi speaking communities), reaffirmed the Constitution's efforts (article 86) towards equal opportunities to everyone with a special emphasis on girls education, but at the same time strove "*that talent in diverse fields should be identified at as early an age as possible, and every stimulus and opportunity given for its full development*."[6]

Most important from a bureaucratic perspective, 1968 Policy on National Education unified the nation educational curricula according to the 10+2+3 system, namely: 10 years of primary school education followed by 2 years higher secondary education and 3 more years college education.

Since 1976 education became a concurrent subject, meaning that both federal state and regional states could legislate.[7]

II. The 1990s and the Indian education system reforms

In the late 1980s India experienced a crisis similar to that of the communist bloc states. Without actually being part of the Warsaw Pact, the economic system of India after 1947 was largely inspired by the Soviet dirigisme. For Nehru dynasty and the Congress Party, the country's prosperity could only take place through a centralized system, even if kept still within the boundaries of democracy. The 9th clearly decade demonstrates the limits of this philosophy at all levels. The poor performance of social indicators led to timid liberalization reflexes during Indira's and Rajiv Gandhi's years. However, the paradigmatic change would happen only in 1991 along with the implosion of the Soviet Union and the adoption by New Delhi of a New Economic Policy, largely tailored by the International Monetary Fund[8]. In the same veneer,

[6] National Policy on Education (with modifications undetaken in 1992), http://www.ncert.nic.in/oth_anoun/npe86.pdf

[7] Rashmi Sharma, Vimala Ramachandran, Introduction, pp.1-33 in Rashmi Sharma, Vimala Ramachandran, *The Elementary Education System in India: Exploring Institutional Structures, Processes and Dynamics*, Star Compugrahics Limited/ Routledge, Milton Park, UK, 2009, p.5.

[8] Jagdish Prasad, *New Economic Policy: reforms and development*, K.M.Rai Mittal Publications for Mittal Publications, 1992.

Sandeep Ahuja, Jaime Allentuck, Jimin Chung, *Economic reform in India,* Task Force Report, University of Chicago, International Policy Practicum 2005.

education has not been shielded from the general cascade of changes.

Of particular importance was the National Policy of Education, NEC (1986) followed by the Programme of Action of 1992. The first recognized the lack of attractiveness of the educational environment, architecture and inadequate environment of schools, the lack of toilets and plumbing and so on. The result was Operation Blackboard who had to provide minimal materials for the teaching process. NEC 1986 decided for each class to have its own classroom and for the schools with 100 students to receive three teachers. Changes had to be made through co-financing, while the communities that were paying 20% (namely 10,000 rupees) of the costs were the privileged ones[9].

The two major initiatives considered three objectives:

1. Universal access to education for both boys and girls;
2. The elimination of dropout at primary and secondary levels (46-60% and 20-40% in 1990);
3. Achieving a minimal level of education for all children.

Between 1950-1996 the number of primary schools increased from 210.000 to 590.000 while the number of teachers from 5,38 million to over 17 million[10].

In 1996, the governing coalition, the United Front decided to turn free and compulsory education into a fundamental right. Consequently, the Conference of State Ministers of Education and the Conference of Secretaries of Education in August 1996 decided to create a committee under the Ministry of Human Resource Development (aka Ministry of Education) to study the problem, to find the optimal means of financing and then concrete initiatives[11].

The didactic staff is also affected. On August 17, 1995 the National Council for Educators Education (NCTE) is set up- with the mission of coordinating the training of teachers and of issuing certificates for the new schools[12].

Worthy of note is the eighth All India Education Survey (AISES) conducted by NCERT. The study covered school education with respect to

[9] S.P. Aggarwal, J.C. Aggarwal, *Development of Education in India*, Concept Publishing Company/Ashok Kumar Mittal, New Delhi, 1999, p.23.

[10] *Ibidem*, p.16.

[11] *Ibidem*, p.22.

[12] *Ibidem*, p.27

access, enrolment, retention and availability of basic facilities from 2002 to 2009. According to its findings, there was 26,77% increase in total number of schools in the country in the above stated period. The survey took to account more than 13 lakh♦ (meaning 1.306.992) recognised schools, out of which more the 84%are in rural areas. Early XXI century the student enrollment from Class I to XII witnessed a growth of 13,67% while the number of schools expanded by an overall 26,77 percent. The study also witnessed a 30 percent improvement in the number of teachers.[13]

All in all primary school net enrollment ration stood at 98,6% (2008-2011) while adult literaty hovers arpund 62%, according to UNICEF figures for the same interval.[14]

III. The rise of Hindu right-wing

In order to understand the evolution and current form of the right (radical) Hindu wing an intellectual history which cannot avoid the colonial / British influence on the modernization of India is required. Hinduism, as the dominant religion in terms of quantity in South Asia, has never had the organized nature of other faiths such as Orthodox Christianity, Catholicism or Islam. Deprived of a Pope or patriarch, without possessing a single Mecca- as summum symbolicum, Hinduism represented for millennia a plastic body dynamically gathered around a few sacred texts (Vedas, Upanishads, etc.). The existence of "*two million gods*" in the words of Mahatma Gandhi has led many scholars and commentators to question whether the suffix <ism> ever made sense, especially since the practitioners of religion in question did not define themselves as Hindus[15]. However, the suffix came from outside, being added by the British rulers who regarded the lush variety of traditions and religious practices as a religion in itself different from Christianity, Judaism or Islam. Under the influence of the Enlightenment, at the late

♦ In Hindi a lakh is equal to ten thousands while a crore is equal to 10 million. They are often used in English parlance and writings in India.

[13] Himanshi Dhawan, Enrolment in schools rises 14% to 23 crore, *The Times of India*, Jan 22, 2013.

Student enrollment up, dip in pupil-teacher ration: All India Education Survey by NCERT, *Express News Service*, Jan 23, 2013.

[14] UNICEF. Statistics. India,

http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/india_statistics.html

[15] Nicolae Achimescu, *India. Religion and Philosophy,* Tehnopress Publishing House, Iaşi, 1999, p.89.

eighteenth century and the beginning of the next one the Hindu intellectual elite organized a response movement against Western civilization with an Anglo-Saxon touch. One of the main lines of force embraced the idea of reforming Hinduism after a Christian pattern: a quasi-monotheistic rite, purged of certain practices considered old (ex.: ***sati***- burning of the widow along with the body of the deceased). The other line of force targeted the return to the orthodoxy and purity of the Vedas, considering that the local classical texts are dense enough not to need the European contribution

The first line of force is connected to the name and work of Rammohun Roy (1778-1833) the creator of God's Society- Brahmo Samaj in Calcutta in 1828. Roy rejected the authority of the Vedas, the concept of reincarnation and let himself influenced by Christian and Islamic topics. His successor, Dwarkanath Tagore gave the society in 1850 a rationalist character despite the fact that he supported the preservation of certain Hindu practices. Tagore Sr.'s follower, Khesab Chunder Sen (1838-1884) established Brahmo Samaj of India (1866) which militated against the caste system, and declared himself for the remarriage of widows, women's education and for the banning of marriages between children. The organization had been the most influential social reform[16].

The second line of force corresponds to Arya Samaj- the Arian society created in April 1875 by Swami Dayananda. Although it had a number of common features with Brahmo Samaj, the latter granted Vedas a central importance. The Arya Samaj blazon is linked to numerous nationalist elements that make up today the intellectual history of the Hindu right wing.

The direct root of Hindutva ideology and what is known as the Sangh Parivar (Hindu family) leads to **RSS**- Rhastriya Sawyamsevak Sangh (National Volunteers Organization), created under the protection of Keshan Baliros Hedgewar in September 1925 in the city of Nagpur. The founding hour was by no means random, coinciding with the festival of Dussehra, that celebrated the killing of demon Ravana by God Ram. Hedgwar's mentor, Balakrishna Shivram Moonje, had sent the former to Calcutta to finish his studies and to study the revolutionary art from the militants in Bengal- then a hotbed of anti-British nationalism. In 1915 the

[16] For more on Brahmo Samaj see Encyclopædia Britannica

For the extended biography of Rammohun Roy see The Brahmo Samaj net, *http://www.thebrahmosamaj.net/founders/rammohun.html*

two men would join the Congress but would quickly leave from there disappointed[17].

Hedgewar was followed in June 1940 by Madhav Sadashiv Gowalkar, one of the leading ideologues of the movement. His work in 1938, "Us" or "Our defined nation" became the Bible of the movement. According to Gowalkar's philosophy the essence of the nation lies in its religious spirit[18].

He further describes a paradise of homogeneity contaminated by the coming of Christians and Muslims: "*Ever since that evil day, when Moslems first landed in Hindustahan, right up to the present moment the Hindu Nation has been gallantly fighting on to shake off the despoilers..The Race Spirit has been awakening*."[19] [20]

In the same line, in contemporary times Subramaniam Swamy deplores the lack of unity of the Hindus. His cry: "*We, the Hindus are under siege and we do not even know it*"[21] was due to four reasons:

1. the defamation of Hindu insignia and practices;

2. the demographic changes that favour the Muslims and Christians;

3. terrorism which aims at the Hindus

4. and the erosion of the state authority by the symptom called corruption[22].

The solution is to become aware of the true Hindu identity in order that the nation becomes once again dynamic and vibrant[23].

IV. From culture to political practice

The departure of the British coincided with the collapse and the Partition of Raj, largely on religious lines - India remaining with the Hindu majority while the newly created state of Pakistan legitimized itself as a homeland for Muslims. In Indian politics, communalism or interfaith tension between Hindus and Muslims would heavily reverberate for ages to come. In 1948 Mahatma Gandhi himself would fall under the dagger of

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[17] Jean A. Curran, Jr., The RSS: Militant Hinduism, *Far Eastern Survey*, Vol. 19, No. 10 (May 17, 1950), pp. 93-98. R.Upadhyay, RSS-BJP Relationship- What is new and Why this war cry?, *South Asia Analysis*, Paper No.153, 24.10.2000. AG Noorani, *The RSS and the BJP. A division of Labour*, Leftwork Books, New Delhi, 2000, p.5.

[18] *Ibidem*, pp.18-19.

[19] *Idem.*

[20] *Ibidem*, p.20.

[21] Subramanian Swamy, *Hindus Under Siege: The Way Out*, Har Anand Publications, 2006, p.28.

[22] *Ibidem*, pp.29-42 and *passim.*

[23] *Ibidem*, p.23 and *passim.*

a radical Hindu, Nathuram Godse who reproached the politico-religious leader his tolerant attitude towards minorities. Thus in 1951, under the RSS's protection, Bharatiya Janata Singh would see daylight. This would enter the wider party of Janata Party in 1977 that already benefited from the joint electoral defeat of Indira Gandhi and her Congress. The new government, a conglomerate of political entities would not experience long term stability. Consequently, one of them, Jan Singh quickly left the government and on April 5, 1980 recasted as Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) - Hindu Nationalist Party.

At the 1980 elections the BJP won 7.4% of the electorate options, translated into only two seats in the legislature. In 1989 they obtained 11.4% - 85 seats; 1991 20.1% (120 seats); 1996 21.3% (161); 1998 25.6% (180 seats)[24].

At the same time RSS- the military parent organisation did not confined to a low profile and grew along with its political infant– the BJP. The number of its nests (shalkas) was increased from 6000 to 19,000 between 1977-1982. In 2000 the figure was 45,000 shalkas with hundreds of thousands of members[25].

The quantitative evolution resulted in a real division of labour, RSS addressing different facets of the society. Thus, the following unions existed: Bharatuya Mazdoor Sangh; a wing for women- Rashtriya Sevika Saima; an economic branch - Swadeshi Jagaran Manch; NGOs addressed to tribals - Vanyasi Kalyan Ashram; literature circles - Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad; culture- institutes Deendayal Research Institute; historical circles - Bharatiya Itihas Sankalan Yojana and, not least, publications - Bharat Prakash Suruchi Prakashan, Lokha Prakhashan[26]. Therefore, one may pause to notice a whole effort not only towards instillment of theoretical knowledge but a dire concern for shaping skills and behaviour altogether.[27]

Once we described the history breviary of the BJP, it must be said that the saffronization§ took on a new intensity after taking over the power in the 1998 elections. In October that year, the Minister of HRD and also

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[24] AG Noorani, *op.cit.*, p.5.

[25] *Ibidem*, p.13.

[26] *Ibidem*, p.14.

[27] For a dicussion between mere theoretical knowledge and practical skills see Tudor Marin, *Fundamentals of Pedagogy. Curriculum Theory and Methodology*, Pro Universitaria, Bucharest, 2012, pp.120-129.

§ Saffronization is linked to Hindutva ideology and extreme right nationalist parties. The word comes from the colour of the traditionl saffron associated with Hindu religion, a colour also present on the Indian flag.

Hindutva ideologue, Murli Manohar Joshi, convened a meeting of all education ministers of Federated States of India to discuss the ways to improve the curricula. The event comprised a presentation by P.D. Chitanglia coming from Vidhya Bharati- RSS wing- and the proposal that national anthem "Bande Mataram" should be replaced by a religious hymn addressed to Saraswati Vandana, the Hindu goddess of knowledge. The meeting favoured also the resumption of themes already set forth at a previous Hindutva meeting from August 1998 which had suggested a more "*indianized, nationalist and more advanced*" education. However, the representatives of the other parties protested and BJP did not have its day to the fullest of desires[28].

Things did not stop there, and the BJP replaced the key positions which hampered their work. One of them was Mrs. Romila Thapar, a renowned historian and critic of the thesis according to which the Aryans were natives of Southeast Asia. On November 13, 1999 Thapar's renewal of membership of the Indian Council of Historical Research was blocked. Later she was replaced from the Prasar Bharati Committee, a body that oversees the quality of mass-media programs[29].

Ultimately the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) from November 2000 was largely saffronized. Its premises included:

* appreciation for a balanced synthesis between preserving tradition and adoption of new technologies;

* understanding the positive and negative effects of globalization on you country;

* instilling a strong sense of patriotism;

* "*qualities focused on personal, social, national, moral and spiritual values that make a person spiritually and socially effective, giving meaning and direction in life*";

* developing those qualities for education, self-education specific to a knowledge society;

* developing a <learning centred> approach and adapted to the age of each child. It is inspired by the principles of Jean Piaget and Vîgotsky[30].

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[28] Sanjay Ruparelia, Rethinking Institutional Theories of Political Moderation: The Case of Hindu Nationalism in India, 1996-2004, *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 38, No. 3 (Apr., 2006), pp. 317-336.

[29] Mansingh Chouhan, History Curriculum Development in India Since 1947, *International Journal of Research in Humanities*, Arts and Literature, Vol. 2, Issue 3, March 2014, 53-58, esp. p.55.

[30] Arathi Sriprakash, *Pedagogies for Development: The Politics and Practice of Child-Centred Education in India*, Springer Science & Business Media, Sydney, 2006, p.39.

Some historians non-grata to the Hindu right wing, including abovementioned Romila Thapar, protested and warned against the danger of towing the curriculum by ideological imperative, as can be seen from the compilation of texts "Communalisation of Education. The History Textbooks controversy" signed by the Group of historians in New Delhi[31].

The curriculum will be changed in 2005 after the succession to power. In 2005 NCERT° will introduce in the curriculum events with moral value inspired from the recent history: the massacre of Sikhs in 1984, the demolition of the mosque from Ayodhya on December 6, 1990 and the massacres in Gujarat in 2002[32].

V. 2014-present: the header of a déjà-vu?

In May, 2014, India has gone through an extensive process of general elections, perhaps the largest in the entire democratic world if we take into account the mass of more than 800 million voters, mostly young people. Narendra Modi's election against his much younger rival, the Congress representative and Nehru blazon's descendant - Rahul Gandhi is also a vote of censure against the second party. While BJP lost in 2004 because its economic growth policy did not include the disadvantaged, May, 2014 punished the Congress for its inability to restart the economy, all against the backdrop of cascading corruption scandals.

The change of guard from Rashina Hill (residence of the Prime Minister) promises to increase the presence of Hindutva in education. Ever since June 2014, Smriti Irani, the Minister of Human Resources Development announced the desire to give education a Hindu

[31]http://www.friendsofsouthasia.org/textbook/NCERT_Delhi_Historians__Group.pdf

° NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training is a federal government agency created in 1961, based in New Delhi with a mission to contribute to the drafting of textbooks. NCERT provides advice and guides of good practice at both federal and local / state level on educational topics. More specifically, its goals are: the implementation of the National Framework Curriculum; universalisation of elementary education; vocational education; early education; education reform and IT education evaluation; education with a focus on competitiveness; girls' education; education based on experience; improving teaching methodology for elementary schools teachers. Among its departments we can include: the National Institute of Education; Regional Institutes of Education; Central Institute for Technological Education; Central Institute for Vocational Education. See site: http://www.ncert.nic.in/departments/nie.html

See also Rashmi Sharma, Vimala Ramachandran, Introduction, pp.1-33 in Rashmi Sharma, Vimala Ramachandran, *op.cit*., p.5.

[32] Devanik Saha, Saffronising education, *The Deccan Chronicle*, December 20, 2014.

perspective. Shortly, the press already talked about the plans on installing a commission to introduce Vedas and Upanishads fragments in the curriculum. The new texts should be introduced in 8th, 9th and 10th grades.

Institutions such as the NCERT and Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) are populated or about to be populated by people loyal to BJP and partisan background rather than technocratic[33].

The proof is the forced termination of Parvin Sinclair's mandate, Director of NCERT, two years before the formal termination. Mrs. Sinclair leaves office shortly before putting together the new national curriculum. This would have to replace the old 2005 Framework the author of which she was. The pretext given is that of financial irregularities, although the substrate would actually be the disobeying to the requirements of Minister Imran, says Praful Bidwai, journalist and expert on security issues[34].

The second controversial subject at the top of the academy was the appointment of Professor Y.Sudershan Rao as the head of ICHR. The expressed discontent, as the one of Romila Thapar, targets the academic status of Rao accused of not having notable publications in recognized journals and shows similar views to that of RSS, even if not a member of it[35].

In the same vein, in December 2014, Girish Chandra Tripathi was appointed head of the Banaras Hindu University (BHU). He used to blend an academic carrer as professor of economics at Allahabad with politics in RSS fold. According to the same Bidwai, Tripathi's academic merits are weak, bellow the standards set by the job where he was freshly appointed[36].

Behind the new reforms stays historian Dinanath Batra, president of the NGO Shiksha Sanskriti Utthan Nyasa (SSUN), affiliated to RSS and the gray eminence behind former minister Murli Manohar Joshi, named above[37].

His books were distributed in about 42.000 schools in Modi's native state, Gujarat. Some of the advice is found between pages and includes the

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33 Hasan Suroor, Return of 'Saffron' schoolbooks: Who's behind Irani's plans?, *Firstpost India*, Jun 6, 2014.

34 Praful Bidwai, How the Parivar is taking over institutions in education and culture (Parts I and II), Praful Bidwai.org, January 01 2015,

http://www.prafulbidwai.org/index.php?post/2015/01/01/How-the-Parivar-is-taking-over-institutions-in-education-and-culture-%28Parts-I-and-II%29

35 Romila Thapar, History repeats itself, *India Today*, July 11, 2014.

36 Praful Bidwai, *op.cit*.

37 Akshaya Mukul, Saffron outfit wants Modi govt to revamp education, *The Times of India*, May 23, 2014.

one according to which one should not blow in the candles on a birthday, a habit usually considered too Western[38].

Among Bathra's recent victories we can include the stopping of several editorial events: Wendy Doniger's book about Hinduism that had to be published at Penguin India Publishing House; Sekhar Bandopadhyay's work *Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*, considered slanderous for the RSS and *Communalism and Sexual Violence: Ahmedabad since 1969* by Megha Kumar, published at Orient Balckswan Publishing House.

Consequently, a climate that the same Romila Thapar called in the winter of 2001 of <de-intellectualization of education>[39] is outlined.

Instead of conclusion

Counter-hegemony and the dialectics of civilisations

This study started from a public affirmation of the new Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi to investigate the measures taken by the ruling party, BJP in the field of education. True to the faith professed and reflecting the period of 1998-2004, the Hindu nationalists who gradually colonize the central institutions proceed to the modification of the curricula, textbooks and historical productions. For many historians, journalists and intellectuals, the saffronization of the official discourse can only have fatal effects on the historical truth, inter-confessional tolerance, and eventually on the formation of younger generations. On the other hand, the advocates of Hindutva (registered or not in the BJP, RSS or their satellites) prepare their plea based on the idea that Hindus, the overwhelming majority of the country do not know their national past, a past forged by what they consider to be the Marxist predominance in universities.

Without issuing too many valuation judgments on the subject (although we are the followers of secularism and of a fair vision on historiography), we consider the current tribulations of the Indian education system not as a simple partisan struggle but as the expression of an infinitely deeper trend related to the hegemonic transition. Along with the transition to a multipolar world, it is expected that other points of view, so far considered marginal or unacceptable, would be accepted.

[38] Devanik Saha, Saffronising education, *Asia Age*, Dec 20, 2014.

[39] Romila Thapar, De-Intellectualisation Of Education, *Outlook India*, 13 Decembrie 2001.

Universal-held Western values are now rendered parochial at best and intrusive at worst. As such, powerful voices stemming from other cultural spaces boast the economic prowess of their nations and embark on what they consider to be a counter-hegemonic project.

We employ hegemony in the mould of Robert Cox: "*dominance of a particular kind where the dominant state creates an order based ideologically on a broad measure of consent functioning according to general principles that in fact ensure the continuing supremacy of the leading state or states and leading social classes but at the same time offer prospect of satisfaction to the less powerful*."[40]

Hegemony is made possible by production, understood as social context more than the mere existence of products: "*Production creates the material basis for all forms of social existence, and the ways in which human efforts are combined in production processes affect all other aspects of social life, including the polity*".[41] "*In the first place, the social context of production determines what kinds of things are produced and how they are produced. The <what> expresses the priorities of a society which turn reflects the social power relations of that society; the <how> expresses the prevailing manner in which established social power organizes production*."[42] Following the same logical thread, a civilisation represents a manners of spiritual and material production rendered possible through people interactions (Cox labels them inter-subjectivity): *"All of these 'civilizations' are contested spheres of inter-subjectivity. That is to say, civilizations exist in the mind rather than on the ground, consisting of shared assumptions about the natural order of things. It is possible to characterize such civilizational tendencies, in a short hand for a particular historical time and place, as types of inter-subjectivity coherent with the people's conditions of existence*."[43]

The grammar of civilisations[§] holds the promise of important changes in the XXI century. If it is true that power tailors its own language, it remains to be seen if a multipolar world can produce a unified alphabet, reach common sense or stumble in a cacophony of mutual exclusive philosophies. It also remains to be seen if the freshly elected Indian elites may interpret the ancient legacy of their civilisation as to connect to

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[40] Robert W.Cox, *Production, Power, and World Order. Social Forces in the Making of History*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1987, p.7.

[41] Robert W.Cox, Michael G. Schechter, *The Political Economy of a Plural World Critical Reflections on Power, Morals and Civilization*, Routledge, 2002, p.31.

[42] Robert W.Cox, *Production, Power, and World Order*, *cited work,* p.11.

[43] Robert W.Cox, Michael G. Schechter, *cited works,* p.39.

[§] To employ one of Fernand Braudel's famous formulas, also taken by Cox.

humanity as a whole or, instead, lapse in a narrow, self-sufficient and intolerable nationalism.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION IN KNOWING AND GUARANTEEING THE EXERCISE OF HUMAN RIGHTS[1]

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Abstract: *"The inadequate evolution of human relations and the decreased education level of certain categories of persons, often encourages the violation of human rights. Therefore, by proliferating negative energies, due to uncontrolled emotions and obscure reasoning or dominated by obsessions for wealth, social position in order to obtain high social positions or bringing about other interests, certain individuals contribute not only to the violation of rights and altering the life of others, but also to their failures, unable to live a useful life and contribute to the progress of mankind, because they do not have the necessary lucidity to understand that respecting their own rights depends on how they respect the rights of others, hence, creating a harmonious social environment beneficial to everyone. This challenge would be achievable only through education, because man, by nature, has good features, but also bad features, he has feelings and positive actions, but also impulses and acts harmful to others, meaning that between good and evil there is a constant battle, as well as between the factors influencing the respect or violation of peer rights. Education must thereby contribute more to the knowledge of everyone's rights in order to exercise them and to the respect of the rights of others".*

Keywords: *human rights, education, knowledge, guarantee, obligations, liability.*

Since ancient times the power, specific to any form of social organization, and religion have imposed certain moral commandments

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translated into rules of conduct, which people had to obey and comply with, in church relations with secular authorities and relationships between them[2], even if some of these rules violate their freedom, dignity, caused discrimination, etc.

The modern concept of *human rights* was formed in the XVII – XVIII centuries, on the theory of natural law, according to which man must enjoy in society rights and freedoms that were the very basis of *human nature*[3], the consecration of this concept being the result of a long *evolutionary process*, during which anachronistic, elitist and totalitarian conceptions were outdated which were opposed to the recognition of equality and respect for human rights[4].

Developing the modern notion of "human rights" is the result of a synthesis operation on humanistic philosophical principles emerging from the general aspirations of freedom[5], to which we added the ideas formulated over time by prestigious jurists[6].

Human rights are, therefore, primarily, a *philosophical concept*, a condensation of everything that humanistic philosophy essentially produced from antiquity until present, which considers man – a rational being born free - as representing the supreme value that should be the focus of everything that represents a politically organized society[7].

From a legal perspective, the concept of "human rights" refers to the *subjective rights*[8] *of a person*, regarding its position in relation to public

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[2] Irina Moroianu Zlatescu, Radu C. Demetrescu, *From the History of Human Rights*, the Romanian Institute for Human Rights, Printing press: Autonomous Official Gazette, Bucharest, 2003, p. 5.

[3] Jean Jaques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Scientific Publishing House, Bucharest, 1957, pp. 107-108.

[4] Nicolae Purda, Nicoleta Diaconu, *Legal Protection of Human Rights*, 2nd edition revised, Legal Universe Publishing House, Bucharest, 2011, p. 17.

[5] Adrian Nastase, *Human Rights - End of the Century Religion*, the Romanian Institute for Human Rights, Bucharest, 1992, p. 18.

[6] Victor Duculescu, *Legal Protection of Human Rights*, Lumina Lex Publishing House, Bucharest, 2008, p. 23.

[7] Stelian Scaunas, *International Law of Human Rights*, All Beck Publishing House, Bucharest, 2003, p. 3.

[8] Along with the extrajudicial, axiological foundation, human rights acquire, at the time of their recognition or their consecration by internal regulations of the states, a distinct *legal* nature - that of subjective rights, thereby adding an instrumental dimension and a positivist type determination, arising from their constitutional genesis (Adrian Nastase, the *Contemporary Destiny of International Law. Reflections from a European Perspective*, "Nicolae Titulescu" University Publishing House, Bucharest, 2004, p. 210).

power and other people, but they also constitute a real legal institution, formed by a set of national and international regulations that concern the promotion and guarantee of human rights and freedoms, defending it against the abuse of states and dangers of any kind[9].

Human rights are established globally and regionally, through conventions and other international documents, and nationally by the Constitution and laws - the rights guaranteeing the equality of all people being placed in the centre of preoccupation of the bodies who consecrate them, their unabated manifestation, with dignity and freedom, because man, by his nature, is a dignified and free being[10].

Our country is a party to most human rights conventions, participating in the smooth functioning of international mechanisms regarding their protection.

Romanian Constitution stipulates the fundamental human rights and freedoms, as fundamental principles, their exercise and defence being regulated in detail in numerous other regulatory acts.

Constitutionally, there are guaranteed, expressly: the prohibition of discrimination, the right to personal integrity, individual liberties, procedural rights, the right to respect private and family life, freedom of thought, of conscience and religion, freedoms of social and political actions, the right to a property and other rights thereunder, all being defended by civil law, criminal law, labour law and others.

Guaranteeing human rights and fundamental freedoms is not only the national problem of every state, but it becomes increasingly more one of *the priorities of the international community*[11]. Therefore, even if the protection of human rights is basically the national competence of each state, international organizations are increasingly involved in defending them, the individual possessing a certain *international status*, even if it is not a genuine issue of public international law.

For the *consecration* and *guarantee* of human rights, considerable progress was made, both *nationally* and *internationally,* but there are still some deficiencies regarding the regulation and implementation of the specific arrangements for their defence by specialized bodies, thereby a

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[9] Stelian Scaunas, *International Law of Human Rights*, *cited works,* pp. 3-4.

[10] Nicolae Popa, the *General Theory of Law*, All Beck Publishing House, Bucharest, 2002, p. 51; Nicolae Popa, *the General Theory of Law,* C.H. Beck Publishing House, Bucharest, 2012, pp. 44 and subsequent.

[11] Ramona-Gabriela Paraschiv, *International Mechanisms for the Protection of Human Rights,* Pro Universitaria Publishing House, Bucharest, 2014, pp. 221 and subsequent.

series of violations of rights occur, without being able to react promptly and efficiently in all cases, to restore legal order.

By searching the factors that determine human rights' violations, it is found that there are many circumstances that may have negative influences on their exercise in good conditions, amongst which we find: general level of civilization, the stage of economic development, character traits, *organization of education* and how society ensures the exercise of rights by disadvantaged categories, the social-political organization of the community, consecration and guaranteeing systems of rights, the structure of protection bodies, efficiency of control and judicial procedures and of the penalty system applicable in situations of violation of rights.

For example, due to the lack of adequate *material base* in different geographical areas, certain rights, such as the right to work or rights of *access to culture and education*, and so on, cannot be used by most people.

Moreover, children in disadvantaged areas have no access to education[12], and they must work young and in many cases they are sold as slaves to be subjected to forced labour.

The serious deficiencies of adults in terms of education have harmful effects even for respecting the rights of their children. Therefore, on them shall be exercised, in many cases, a true "dictatorship" of adults, manifested by imposing behaviours inconsistent with their aspirations and personality - sometimes even against the law or against the rights enshrined officially to protect children.

Many acts of psychological and physical violence are still committed against children, and some minors are required to follow, against their will, some paths in life, regarding school education, profession, marriage, etc., what is likely to hinder their personality, their right to choose their own path, according to their aptitudes and aspirations, leading - in many cases – to adopting a refractory, anarchic behaviour, which sometimes leads to delinquency[13].

Moreover, the right of children to build a dignified personal and social life based on value, work and fairness is affected largely by the examples given by adults, negative patterns illustrated by the media or,

[12] Moreover, in some cities there is no specialized teaching staff or a material base adequate for educational activities.

[13] Nicoleta-Elena Buzatu, *The Minor – The Active Subject of a Crime,* volume MEDIMOND International Proceedings Medimond – Monduzzi Editore International Proceedings Division, Editografica Publishing House, Bologna, 2012, pp. 260 and subsequent.

worse, by promoting, in high positions or in the government, abusive and worthless people, based on political criteria, through relationships or corruption.

Due to the wrong mentality of the majority population, but also due to their deficient education, *Romany people* now face manifestations of discrimination in many areas, such as: access to work, to social housing or *education* system, etc., there are frequent positions of disdain and brutality committed by the government, which has attracted numerous convictions by the European Court of Human Rights[14].

Based on the research conducted regarding the circumstances that may contribute to better respect for human rights, we consider, as an important component of the system of protection of those values, the *act of educating the population*, meaning for the knowledge of their rights and preventing violations, because the reduction of this harmful phenomenon is more beneficial to the community, without any necessary expenses and other efforts to achieve verification procedures and coercive measures in situations of non-compliance.

In order to have the expected results, in terms of educational activities, we must identify the *factors of personality, mentality, customs,* etc. that determine and promote human rights' violations, which can only be approached based on *elaborated interdisciplinary studies* (psychological, sociological, criminological, and others).

Based on the resulting data, international bodies with responsibilities in the area can determine the *general lines of action* for achieving the goal of educating individuals in the prevention of acts of violation against human rights and freedoms, and which state bodies must *adapt* to specific national traditions, culture level and problems that differ from country to country.

The educational process must attract *all social categories*, with no differentiation, including Romany people and other disadvantaged groups, the international community and each country must find the best ways to stimulate them, in the sense of changing harmful mentalities, eliminating retrograde impulses and concepts, such as tendencies to get basic needs through antisocial acts, therefore affecting the rights of others, etc.

In order to choose the appropriate educational measures and procedures for the respect of human rights, we should take into account both the general interests of the international community and the states,

[14] Daniel-Ştefan Paraschiv, *The system of Penalties in Public International Law*, C.H. Beck Publishing House, Bucharest, 2012, p. 149.

and also the interests of individuals, as holders of rights and obligations which, according to the "social contract"[15], gave up some of their freedom to live in the community, in order to ensure their protection, of course respecting their correlative duties.

By improving the education system and education, in general, we could set one of the baselines in achieving the goal of preventing human rights violations because, thanks to the training process, people will raise their overall level of civilization, by knowing their rights and obligations, the way to exercise them and the consequences of their violation.

The promotion of rights, obligations and responsibilities of citizens, through the media and other means of communication, would also help in understanding their content and limits, and accept them in order to establish a civilized and fair climate in every community.

The guidance of population towards *culture*, especially young people, can help, along with education, reshape the personality of those who have some gaps, promoting a normal behaviour, so as not to violate the rights of others - knowing that, in the plane of consciousness, and the moral rules to follow, there are still more to be done in order to maintain a healthy thinking, which can be positively influenced by scientific progress, especially in terms of information, avoiding, at the same time, the creation of "parallel lives" through the refuge in a virtual world, alienation and non-integration in real society.

In carrying out education on human rights and the duties incumbent upon each individual *religion* has an important role by correcting negative traits and acquiring moral qualities likely to contribute to the adoption of a balanced behaviour.

For certain categories of persons it is possible that the usual education and "humanizing" procedures might not have the expected efficiency, due to mental illnesses or the trauma they have undergone through abuse, especially in childhood.

Therefore, the international community and each country should, through the mechanisms of human rights' protection, prevent discriminatory attitudes towards these categories and help to improve the psycho-medical methods of treating illnesses, as well as the regulations on the obligations of protective institutions, in order to ensure the best

[15] Charles Louis De Secondat Montesquieu, *About the Spirit of the Laws,* volume I, Scientific Publishing House, Bucharest, 1964, p. 193.

conditions for these persons to also exercise, in addition to cultural rights, any rights and freedoms guaranteed to others.

In conclusion, it can be summarised that, in many cases, the violation of rights is based on the deficiencies in education of those who violate them, as representatives of states, officials or private individuals, and on the insufficient documentation of the population in terms of rights and freedoms that everyone benefits from, on their limits, and on the ways to achieve them, plus the ignorance of those guilty for their violation.

Therefore, we consider that it would be necessary, since the first years of *school*, to introduce the *study* of human rights and obligations, national and international protection mechanisms, so that their knowledge and compliance to enter, early, in the habit of everyone.

In the hypothesis of a general climate of disdain, a lack of appreciation of their peers, most people are trained in the "stream" of negative behaviour towards others, replying, in turn - due to a subconscious automatism - in the same way, to the acts that hurt them, attitude that turns into a *way of being*.

Without denying the need for international control and jurisdiction procedures on the observance of human rights - with all the imperfections and deficiencies of the bodies who "manage" them – we appreciate that educating citizens, treating illnesses or removing harmful mentality, along with ensuring a balanced economic development and the fair division of work benefits, in a democratic society, would contribute, to a greater extent, to the observance of human rights on initiative, this being, actually, the normal behaviour that should be adopted by as many people on the planet.

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CHILD POVERTY AND SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

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Abstract: *Poverty and social exclusion are very important issues that must be eradicated for the good of all, both the states and the citizens. Adult poverty is a drama, but child poverty and social exclusion is a tragedy, children are completely innocent and they are suffering for the mistakes of others, both the state and the parents. A child who grows up in poverty is so affected by this situation that will become an adult who will fight all his life with poverty and social exclusion.*

Keywords: *Children, Poverty, Social Exclusion, Europe, European Union.*

Child poverty and social exclusion

"Child poverty is a multi-dimensional problem, centered on inadequate income, but with exclusionary effects in terms of access to resources and participation in everyday activities" (End Child Poverty Coalition, 2005).[1]

Once children fall into poverty they are more likely to remain poor for longer periods of time than adults (Sweeney, 2002), also children are twice as likely as adults to be poor (End Child Poverty Coalition, 2005). Certain groups of children are particularly vulnerable to poverty and social exclusion, especially children from single-parent families (End Child Poverty Coalition, 2005).[2]

Poverty in childhood is important for social exclusion, not only because of the immediate effect that it has on the lives of children by constraining them, but also because it is a cause of social exclusion in later life.[3]

In seeking the causes of child poverty we must inevitably take into consideration the causes of the poverty of parents. Parents may be poor due

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[1.] Quinn Bernadette, Griffin Kevin A., Stacey Jane, *Poverty, Social Exclusion and Holidaying: Towards Developing Policy in Ireland,* Combat Poverty Agency, 2008, p. 7.

[2.] Ibidem., pp. 7-8.

[3.] Hills John, Le Grand Julian, Piachaud David, *Understanding Social Exclusion*, Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 141.

to unemployment, disability, low pay, or for other reasons. In addition, the situations that parents are facing are affected in many ways by children: for example, labour-market participation, especially of women, is influenced by the number and, in particular, the age of the children. Children involve not only financial costs for their families, but also time costs which either result in giving up income or the cost of alternative child care.[4]

In the book „Understanding Social Exclusion" poverty standard is placed around 60% of median disposable income before paying the costs of housing.

This definition of poverty is applied to each child, but it is based on the family's income. Within families resources may be unequally distributed. Some children in poor families may be protected from some of the effects of poverty by their parents, who take less than their share from the family income. The reverse may also be possible, some children face serious shortages in families that are not poor.[5]

When it comes to thinking about social exclusion, the response to combat this situation can not be easily detached from prevention. This interdependence has been recognized for child poverty: responding to the situation of families with children by providing sufficient income as salary or welfare, or a combination of both, is seen as a way of preventing the next generation to confront with serious shortcomings.[6]

Fighting against child poverty has become a priority for governments in recent decades in most Member States of the European Union. This has been reflected in social, economic and regeneration policies and programmes designed to help remove the main causes of child poverty, or at least try to alleviate some of the adverse consequences for these children.[7]

In the most recent reports on National Strategies for Social Protection and Social Inclusion, the majority of European countries have introduced strategies and systems designed to prevent and combat child poverty and social exclusion.[8]

2010 was declared the European Union Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion, this decision gave further impetus stressing the need for all States to make greater progress in reducing the number of disadvantaged children because of poverty and exclusion.[9]

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4. Ibidem.
5. Ibidem., p. 142.
6. Ibidem., p. 177.
7. *Poverty and Social Exclusion in Wales,* The Bevan Foundation 2010, p. 29.
8. Ibidem.
9. Ibidem.

This demarche reflects the continuing concern of the European Union that children face a higher risk of living in poverty than any other section of society (Frazer, Marlier and Nicaise, 2010).[10]

Modern definitions of poverty in developed countries have moved away from those based on lack of physical necessities (absolute poverty) heading towards a social and relative understanding. Poverty is not only about income but also about the effective exclusion of people from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities.[11]

Therefore, the measurements of poverty seek to reflect a standard of living, mainly driven by income level also including material deprivation and other aspects of well-being such as health, education, housing, participation activities, financial support and safety.[12]

The biggest risk factor for child poverty is to live in a family where only one parent is working or both parents are unemployed. It is very harmful to children when adults can not find a job for long periods of time and require welfare benefits.[13]

Children grow up not only in homes where no one goes to work, but also in communities where work is scarce and most households are relying on social benefits from the state. In these communities successive generations have not worked, and this may have a harmful impact on children in terms of motivation and aspirations for the future.[14]

One of the biggest challenges is trying to break the cycle of inter-generational poverty and to reorientate children and adults towards school, training and employment.[15]

To fight child poverty measures have been taken to improve the life chances and opportunities of parents and adults in the family. Although it is clear the need to break the cycle of inter-generational poverty and deprivation in families by helping parents, there are some risks when we try to apply this approach. In particular, there is the danger that we lose sight of the child.[16]

Getting parents into any job is not always the best thing for children. Parenting may suffer due to the challenges of maintaining a balance between

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[10] Ibidem.
[11] Ibidem., p. 30.
[12] Ibidem.
[13] Ibidem., pp. 32-33.
[14] Ibidem., p. 33.
[15] Ibidem.
[16] Ibidem., p. 38.

work and family life, leading to the emergence of stress and friction in the family, and the decrease of the time spent by the parent with the child.[17]

When considering an alternative solution for child care (nursery, kindergarten) we must be sure that this decision is taken in the child's interests and not in the interests of the labour market.[18]

The application of penalties and the cutting of social benefits for single parents who fail to comply with the rules necessary for receiving such aid is clearly a violation of children's rights, thus children are punished for actions that are beyond their control. The authorities must ensure that the elementary principles are respected: the best interests of the child, the child's wishes and feelings.[19]

The consequences for children living in poverty and social exclusion are serious for them, their families and the entire country. Children who grow up in poverty tend to:

- be socially excluded as adults and earn low income throughout their lives.
- have health problems throughout their lives, they will be born with low weight and respiratory problems, and subsequently they will suffer from obesity, heart disease and diabetes.
- have mental problems.
- experience educational disadvantage, the effect of poverty on education makes the gap between the excluded child and the other children to widen every year. (Hirsch 2008).[20]

Some of these effects are due to the stress of the parents which is created by poverty. Economic stress exerts an adverse effect on parents. When combined with changes in family structure and the physical concentration of people living in poverty, that poverty limits the number of options available to parents in raising their children.[21]

While single-parent families are often seen as vulnerable, as mentioned above, particularly with regard to poor supervision of their children, all evidence indicates that family structure is not decisive but income level is. Thus, Jonathon Bradshaw's study on child wellbeing in developed countries clearly shows that the number of single parents in

17. Ibidem.
18. Ibidem.
19. Ibidem.
20. Pierson John, *Tackling Social Exclusion,* 2nd Edition, Routledge, 2009, p. 73.
21. Ibidem.

Sweden is approximately equal to that in the UK, but the welfare of the child is higher in the Nordic country because of the quality of services offered by the state and the higher income that Swedish single-parent families receive.[22]

The financial costs of child poverty to society as a whole are enormous: the public expenditures required to remediate the consequences of child poverty go to social services, education, criminal justice, to which can be added the low earnings of adults who were excluded in childhood and the extra benefits and lower tax revenues to support them.[23]

Another reason why some children are experiencing poverty and social exclusion is because they belong to ethnic groups that are discriminated against. An example of this is the poverty and difficulties faced by Roma children. Because their parents have no school, or they have training but are not employed because they belong to an ethnic minority, children follow the same pattern: dropout, health problems caused by shortages, marriage between children who have children of their own too early, lack of jobs.

Below we present some statistics on poverty and social exclusion among children in European Union Member States.

Poverty and social exclusion in statistics

The statistics that we present below reflects the real situation in which some European children grow up and develop, but we must not forget that behind each number hides the pain and suffering of souls who have no fault that they were born on this earth.

27 million children in Europe, representing 28% of the total population under 18 years old are at risk of poverty or social exclusion. The current economic, financial and social crisis endangers them even more by stimulating an increase in relative and absolute poverty among children and social exclusion. Even in countries that have growth in recent years not everyone has benefited from a share of this prosperity, much less children. The gap between rich and poor is widening even in the Nordic welfare states, which are traditionally egalitarian.[24]

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[22] Ibidem.

[23] Ibidem.

[24] *Child Poverty and Social Exclusion in Europe: A matter of children's rights,* Save the Children 2014, p. 1.

People at risk of poverty or social exclusion aged under 18 in Europe - in percentage % (Source of data: Eurostat, Last update: 16.02.15)

Time	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Geo											
EU 27_HR	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:
European Union (27 countries)	:	28.0(e)	27.5(e)	26.4	26.6	26.5	27.4	27.2	27.9	27.7	:
European Union (15 countries)	:	23.6	23.8	23.4	24.4	24.3	25.5	25.3	26.0	26.0	:
New Member States (12 countries)	:	44.3	41.0	38.1	35.0	35.0	35.1	35.2	35.6	34.8	:
Euro area (17 countries)	:	22.7	22.9	22.9	23.8	24.1	25.2	25.4	25.4	25.1	:
Belgium	22.7	23.7	21.4	21.6	21.3	20.5	23.2	23.3	22.8	21.9	:
Bulgaria	:	:	61.0	60.8	44.2(b)	47.3	49.8	51.8	52.3	51.5	:
Czech Republic	:	25.6	22.7	21.5	18.6	17.2	18.9	20.0	18.8	16.4	:
Denmark	13.8	15.6	14.5	14.2	12.7	14.0	15.1	16.0	15.3	15.5	:
Germany	:	17.9	20.9	19.7	20.1	20.4	21.7	19.9	18.4	19.4	:
Estonia	28.1	28.4	24.1	20.1	19.4	24.5	24.0	24.8	22.4	22.3	:
Ireland	27.1	29.9	28.0	26.2	26.6	31.4	34.1	34.1	33.1	33.9	:
Greece	26.5	26.0	27.9	28.2	28.7	30.0	28.7	30.4	35.4	38.1	:
Spain	29.1	29.0	29.5	28.6	30.6	32.0(b)	33.3	32.2	32.4	32.6	:
France	19.9	19.4	18.1	19.6	21.2(b)	21.2	22.9	23.0	23.2	21.3	:
Italy	29.3	27.6	28.4	29.3	29.1	28.8	28.9	32.2	33.8	31.9	:
Cyprus	:	22.1	21.3	20.8	21.5(b)	20.2	21.8	23.4	27.5	27.7	:

Latvia	:	45.7	42.7	32.8	32.4(b)	38.4	42.2	44.1	40.0	38.4	:
Lithuania	:	42.5	37.2	29.9	29.4	30.8	35.8	34.6	31.9	35.4	:
Luxembourg	20.7	22.8	20.4	21.2	20.9	23.7	22.3	21.7	24.6	26.0	:
Hungary	:	38.4	37.7	34.1	33.4	37.2	38.7	39.6	40.9	43.0	:
Malta	:	23.3	22.2	23.9	25.0	26.5	26.7	27.8	31.0	32.0	:
Netherlands	:	19.6	17.5	17.2	15.5	17.5	16.9	18.0	16.9	17.0	:
Austria	19.7	19.1	19.3	18.5	22.9(b)	20.8	22.4	22.1	20.9	22.9	23.3(p)
Poland	:	48.0	42.0	37.1	32.9(b)	31.0	30.8	29.8	29.3	29.8	:
Portugal	30.0	28.8	25.5	26.9	29.5	28.7	28.7	28.6	27.8	31.7	:
Romania	:	:	:	50.5	51.2	52.0	48.7	49.1	52.2	48.5	:
Slovenia	:	15.3	14.3	14.7	15.3	15.1	15.2	17.3	16.4	17.5	:
Slovakia	:	35.0	30.4	25.8	24.3	23.7	25.3	26.0	26.6	25.5	:
Finland	16.0	15.0	13.8	15.1	15.1	14.0	14.2	16.1	14.9	13.0	:
Sweden	18.6	14.9	18.5	14.9	14.6	15.1	14.5	15.9	15.4	16.2	:
United Kingdom	:	31.2	30.1	27.6	29.6	27.4	29.7	26.9	31.2(b)	32.6	:
Iceland	15.8	14.7	14.9	15.7	13.2	11.2	16.9	16.6	16.0	16.6	:
Norway	13.1	14.8	14.1	16.0	13.0	14.3	14.6	12.9	12.0	13.4	:
Switzerland	:	:	:	20.8	21.4	20.4	19.8	18.9	18.9	17.2	:
Croatia	:	:	:	:	:	:	29.4	31.1	34.8	29.3	:
Turkey	:	:	77.0	:	:	:	:	:	:	:	:

Source of data: Eurostat

Available flags: Special value:
b break in time series: not available
e estimated
p provisional

In the Nordic countries (Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Iceland), we find the lowest percentage of children living at risk of poverty and social exclusion between 12% and 19%. In Greece, Hungary and Latvia figures are in the range of 26% - 45%. In Greece the situation is critical because there is a big percentage growth from year to year, so in 2011 it was 30.4%, 35.4% in 2012 and 38.1% in 2013.

Romania and Bulgaria are the European Union member states that have the highest percentage of children at risk of poverty and social exclusion. Between 2007 - 2013 the two countries have recorded values in the range of 47.3% - 60.8%. However, the maximum value was reached by Bulgaria in 2006, namely 61.0%, year in which the statistics were not available in Romania.

Only one country, but not an EU member state, has higher values. Turkey has reached the worrying figure of 77.0% in 2006, in all the other years the statistical data was not available.

Conclusions

We meet child poverty and social exclusion not only in very poor countries, this degrading state to the individual can be met even in Europe, and even more in the developed countries of the European Union.

The State and the citizens are the main culprits for child poverty and social exclusion. The State for not distribute income fairly in society, the priority should be wages, pensions, social benefits, allowances, all revenues that could raise the standard of living of the citizens and their children. Other fields that should be in the top priority list are health and education, because healthy citizens who were able to attend some form of education and specialization can support themselves and their family, if they are employed.

The poor citizens are to blame for having children, although they have no money to raise them, subjecting the children to a life of hardship, suffering and humiliation. The State should educate them to decrease the number of unwanted pregnancies among those who can not afford financially to have children.

But children who are already born are innocent and should be helped by providing a decent life, in which medical care, education and getting a well paid job will facilitate their transformation into useful members of society.

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ADDRESSING THE DIMENSIONS OF EDUCATION AND INTEGRATED CURRICULUM VIA GENERALIZED FUZZY LOGIC

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Abstract: *In terms of the criteria used, and also comprehensively, a classification of education, considered already classical in the light of its fundamental dimensions, is slightly ambiguous, even if it easy to state; education issues today demonstrate that the structural make-up of education as formal, non-formal and informal presents many aspects of interference, overlapping and transfer, inevitably leading to vague areas. Addressing the dimensions of education and integrated curriculum by applying the generalized fuzzy logic professed by the young Romanian Florentin Smarandache deciphers the intricacies and seems to solve the doubts.*

Keywords: *fuzzy logic, generalized fuzzy logic, formal education, non-formal education, informal education.*

Introduction

In an article entitled *Why mathematics in Social Sciences*, John Galtung identifies four ways to invoke mathematics: a) out of snobbery; b) because, like many drugs, it does not harm; c) because it is useful; d) because it is inevitable. We believe that *the same methods can be extended to the application of logic or statistics to the social domain*. If the methods under a) and b) present major doubtful signals as far as the constructive interference of mathematics in the social sciences, unprofessional application of logic, statistics and mathematics, or even the incorrect capitalization of various

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methodologies generate subsequent refusal of social application of a number of methods already established in other fields…

The present mini-study attempts to clarify (or rather codify?) a classification of education, considered already established, yet slightly ambiguous even if easy to state, i.e. a structural arrangement in terms of formal education, non-formal and informal learning, by applying Florentin Smarandache's generalized fuzzy logic.

Failure of total formalization by applying special types of mathematical logic and specific statistical-mathematical methods, starts from a correct premise and, above all, does not to slip into a false conclusion typical of today's world, i.e. completely challenging statistical and mathematical logic in the humanities.[1]

1. Generalized fuzzy logic

Before making an application of a new type of logic, it ought to be grounded and presented from a theoretical angle, as a process of thinking or understanding with implicit deductive connotations. In fuzzy logic and its specific approximative reasoning, the rule of the inference process is of the generalized *modus ponens* type. The issue of fuzzy logic was generalized by Romanian mathematician and logician Florentin Smarandache[2]. Generalized fuzzy theory, or *neutrosophy*, studies and reconsiders the origin, nature, and purpose of neutralities, as well as the specific interactions. Smarandache's fundamental thesis[3] is based on the fact that any idea <A> is T% true, I% indeterminate and F% false, where T, I, F are standard or non-standard subsets, included within the non-standard interval]$^{-}0, 1^{+}$[.Thus, according to neutrosophy, every <A> idea tends to be neutralized, diminished, balanced by <Non-A> ideas (not only by <Anti-A> ideas, as a steady state).

Each concept or definition, A for this article, together with its opposition or negation, Anti-A, and the spectrum of neutralities, Neut-A (for instance, the concepts or definitions lying between the two extremes and support neither the A idea, nor the Anti-A idea). The Neut-A and Anti-A ideas considered together are called Non-A. Each definition A tends to be neutralized and balanced by Anti-A

[1] Marcus, Solomon, *Mathematics` Cultural Chance,* in "The Challenge of Science", Political Publishing House, Bucharest, 1988, pp 451-457.

[2] Smarandache, F., A Unifying Field in Logics: neutrosophic logic, *Multiple Valued Logic / An International Journal*, vol. 8(3), 2002, pp. 385–438.

[3] Smarandache, F., Neutrosophy, A New Branch of Philosophy. *Multiple-Valued Logic / An International Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 2002, pp. 297-384.

and Non-A definitions to maintain the balance. Finally, neutrosophy is the grounding of neutrosophic logic or generalized fuzzy logic, which focuses on the main idea to characterize each logical sentence in a neutrosophic three-dimensional space, the dimensions of which represent the truth (A), false value (F) and indeterminacy (I) of the sentence considered, and where A, F and I are real standard or non-standard subsets of the non-standard interval]-0, 1+[.

In so far as the structural definition of education is cocnerned, the inference would be of the max-min type. Also, the variant of formal education is defined as a maximum interest area (so it is assigned a value of 1, which is specific to the binary or dichotomous variable), which causes non-formal education to automatically acquire the value 0, in the spirit of the same two opposing values, 1 and 0. A value of 0 is also a reflection of the lack of coercion in the educational process, as the the dominant factors are passion, and absence of evaluating at any price – and consequently a number of conditions of teaching opportunity are confirmed, such as: the principle of learning by doing, presented by J. Dewey, the motivational optimum principle (D. Baerlyne), the effect principle (E.L. Thorndike) and the principle of effort and time economy (E. Claparède), etc. The leap from the formal to the non-formal type is a subtle shift from the rigors of the laws to the flexibility of the principles in education…

In summary, the more education, defined deductively and based on the (non-generalized) logic of fuzzy inference, tends to become less coercive, the more its non-formal area is expanded, i.e. the compulsory, universalized character of training and standardization of cumulative-summative assessment decreases (as a percentage of the whole educational process). By concentrating the ideas above, the more generalization of compulsory school and chronological, stage-oriented graduation is minimized, as well as standardized assessment, the more education is diversified, therefore the role of coercion and punishment becomes, or tends to 0, being replaced by pleasure and even passion in learning.

In a slightly different approach, the obligation appears to make a connection with all educational spaces outside the standard range [0, 1], concretely belonging to the non-standard interval]-0, 1+[,which also facilitates, and conduces to, an informal/incidental education, which spans the entire period of human life…

According to this final generalized logic, the definition of the areas of the dimensions of education shifts from the classical type of education, coercive and characterized by maximum coverage, within the spectrum of

universalized and standardized assessment, towards the non-formal type of education, which, through passion and attraction, can no longer be superimposed, along the axis of assessment truth, to a false type of education, completing it, to the maximal degree, with a formal, incidental type of education. The relatively standardized classification of education as formal, non-formal and informal reveals a rather awkward understanding, and even a certain ambiguity of criteria, but this can be improved by resorting to generalized fuzzy logic.

Several structuring criteria can be presented, by capitalizing on the same logic:

A.Criteria expressed synthetically

The binding nature of assessment YES = 1 and NO = 0

The degree of full coverage and universalization YES = 1 and NO = 0

Validity and standardization of assessment YES = 1 and NO = 0

Teachers YES = 1 and NO = 0

Maximal generalization of the binding nature and assessment YES = 1 and NO = 0

Formal education YES=1 *Non-formal education* NO = 0

[0; **1**]

Informal education does not have a referential in [0; **1**], but in$]^{-}0, 1^{+}[$.

B. Slightly detailed criteria, or criteria with some specific emphasis

Criterion 1

Education trains specialists through expert trainers specializing in education

Then YES = 1 and NO = 0

Formal education NO = 0

Non-formal education YES = 1

[0; **1**]

Informal education does not have a referential in [0; **1**], but in$]^{-}0, 1^{+}[$.

Criterion 2

Presence of coercion and iys application

Then YES = 1 and NO = 0

Formal education YES = 1

Non-formal education NO = 0 (centres on passion)

[0; **1**]

Informal education does not have a referential in [0; **1**], but in$]^{-}0, 1^{+}[$.

Criterion 3

Standardization and inflexibility of the curriculum

Then YES = 1 and NO = 0

Formal education YES = 1

Non-formal education NO = 0 (it centres on the flexibility of the curriculum)

[0; **1**]

Informal education does not have a referential in [0; **1**], but in]$^{-}$0, 1^{+}[, being centred on the absence of the curriculum, or the presence of extremely flexible and malleable parts of the curriculum.

2. Addressing fuzzy logic in terms of curricular transfer and interference of the dimensions / forms of education

To understand the aspects of fuzzy logic in education one needs to produce clarifications regarding the interference of the dimensions / forms of education and the level of curriculum integration.

2.1. The three dimensions / forms of education (formal, non-formal, informal), seen from the angle adopted by Coombs, Prosser, Ahmed (1973),[4] have the following definitions:

- *formal education* – a system of education having a hierarchical structure and chronological stages, starting from primary school to graduating university, including, in addition to general academic studies, various specialized training programs.
- *non-formal education* – any educational activity organized outside the existing formal system, which is designed to meet the educational needs of a particular group, and pursues clear learning objectives.
- *informal education* – a real life-long learning process, in which each individual forms his/her own attitudes, internalizes or clarifies certain values, acquires skills and knowledge from everyday experience, drawing on the influences and educational resources of the the environment or milieu where he/she lives.

In Romania, the dimensions / forms of education have been studied by many educationalists and teachers,[5] who have revealed the complexity

[4] Coombs P.H., Prosser C, Ahmed M., *New Paths to Learning for Rural Children and Youth;* International Council for Educational Development, New York, 1973.

[5] Cergit I, G. Văideanu, 1988, in ,,Pedagogics Course", University of Bucharest; S. Cristea, 1998, in ,,Pedagogics Dictionary", EDP, Bucharest; M. Călin, 1996, in ,,*The Theory of Education. Epistemic and Methodological Fundamentals of Education*", All Publishing House, Bucharest C. Cucoș, 1996, in ,,*Pedagogics*", Polirom Publishing House, Iași; T. Cosma, 1988, in ,, *School and Facultative Education*", Al. Ioan Cuza University Publishing House, IașiVenera-Mihaela Cojocariu, 2008, in "*The Fundamentals of Pedagogics. Theory and Methodology of the Curricula. Texts and Motivations*, V&I Integral Publishing House,

of the paideutic act, and, within this context, they have emphasised the fact that the training and actual shaping of human personality "includes all kinds of influences that are, or may be considered formative**."**

It should be pointed out that a clear distinction between the three forms of education appears when referring to the area where the type of education in question occurs. The three "parallel forms" of education are not parallel in the geometric sense, since they are converging due to the impact of the principle of lifelong learning. In this context, there occur elements of both transfer and interference or overlapping, vague areas, as shown by the fuzzy logic approach, which we briefly present in the following allegations:

- there are no rigid boundaries between the forms / dimensions of education, but rather "penetration and interaction", and so overlapping and interference;
- the forms / dimensions of education can occur / act simultaneously or successively, sometimes in agreement with each other, and sometimes in a contradictory manner (Th. a Belle), and so formal education is not always in the centre;
- the increasing formative impact of socio-cultural institutions and, especially, of the natural and social environment, leads to overlapping, and reduce the force of integration of formal education;
- the sheer scale of non-formal education impacts the quality and integration of the formal and the informal, often leading to the appearance of the process of vulgarization of science, art and culture; non-formal education is not articulated with institutional education, and therefore overlaps formal education; the relationship between non-formal education and formal education should be one of complementarity, both in terms of content and in terms of methods and final achievements[6];
- the informal messages emitted by the media manipulate, and can even produce "brainwashing" when the power that formal education has to mitigate the negative influences decreases;
- the emergence of the new types of education (peace education, environmental education, education for participation and democracy,

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Bucharest T. Marin, 2012, în „*Fundamentals of Pedagogics. Theory and Methodology of the Curricula, Contemporary Education Issues*, V&I Pro Universitaria Publishing House, Bucharest.

[6] T. Cosma, "*School and Facultative Education*", Al. Ioan Cuza University Publishing House, Iaşi, 1988.

demography education, education for change and development, education for communication and media, nutrition education, economic education, leisure education, community education, education for the fundamental human rights, etc.) often leads to overlapping and interference between the formal and non-formal.

Beyond the weaknesses that occur due to the various interferences, we must see the strengths, the favorable points, substantiated by transfer, which appear when the three forms / dimensions of education are integrated. Here are some examples:

- it provides extensions and beneficial transfers / interpenetration with respect to making the educational approach more efficient, because the three forms are interdependent;
- it develops the capacity to respond to complex situations and needs;
- it ensures awareness of specific, entirely new situations;
- it provides superior awareness of individual and collective needs.

2.2. Curriculum integration, which is feasible through the following stages: disciplinarity / mono-disciplinarity, multidisciplinarity / pluridisciplinarity, interdisciplinarity, transdisciplinarity, has become a necessity, because contemporary world problems require rapid responses from education.

Ciolan (2008) stated the goals of curricular integration, namely bridging the gaps or breaks between disciplines, which generate "white spots", the synergy of the fields of the various educational disciplines (both in the scientific research, and in the curriculum), building, via education, a set of dynamic mental structures, solving problems.[7] These finalities of integration generate both transfer and elements of interference, so a brief overview of the characteristics of integration steps is in order.

Mono-disciplinarity emphasizes the predominant role of each discipline seen as a whole. From this perspective, the study subjects are seen separately, each with its independence, which leads to "white spots" or vague areas in the overall educational curriculum and system. Nevertheless, there are also elements of intra-disciplinary transfer (i.e. within the same discipline). For example, the chapters / training units within a learning subject or discipline.

[7] Ciolan L., *Integrated Learning. Fundamentals to a Transdisciplinary Curricula*; Polirom Publishing House, Iaşi, 2008.

Multidisciplinary / pluridisciplinarity is a form of interdisciplinarity which consists in a simple correlation of elements belonging to several disciplines, which are put to work together. For example, the topic of electrolysis, treated in terms of complementary integration (physics, chemistry, technology); the topic / theme of acid rain and water, seen in terms of parallel integration (chemistry, geography, ecology, etc.)…

Interdisciplinarity, whether centripetal or centrifugal, requires cooperation by intersection and interaction between related disciplines in dealing with a common theme, that is to say the "white spots" or overlapping spots can be treated…

Transdisciplinarity, as the highest form of curricular integration, can lead to the emergence of new border disciplines, but the subject is too vast to be dealt with as part of the present study.

A final remark

The contribution of the Romanian mathematician and logician Florentin Smarandache and his neutrosophic logic, or generalized fuzzy logic, redefine the matters in a simpler, clearer and more comprehensible manner, suggesting probabilistic scenarios or having recourse to neutrosophic probability. The function that models the neutrosophic probability of a specific activity or characteristic science of education consequently becomes a random variable and finally generates a neutrosophic distribution: PN (x) = [A(x), F(x), I(x)], where A(x) represents the probability that education or educational science x can appear as *formal*, F(x) is the probability that education and educational science x is not formal, i.e. is *non-formal*, and I(x) is the probability (definite or not) of education or a science of education x to be *informal*. The concrete resumption of the above reasoning by any of the criteria discussed in the article, from the *binding nature of the assessment*, to the *full extent of coverage and universalization*, from *evaluation validity and standardization* to the *presence of coercion and its application*, or the *standardization and inflexibility of the curriculum*, confirms the complexity and relevance of taxonomic approaches by neutrosophic logic, or fuzzy generalized logic.

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A BRIEF HISTORY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING METHODS

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Abstract: *The aim of this paper is to present a brief overview of the main English language teaching methods as for more than a century it was thought that the successful acquisition of a foreign language depended on the teaching methodology. The beginning of English language teaching was marked by the traditional, classical method grammar/translation following into the steps of classical language teaching, Latin and Greek. However, from the very beginning it was opposed by the intuitive approach of learning a language through practice only, which is the forerunner of the direct/oral method. The development of technology and the improvement in communication led to more modern approaches such as the audiolingual and audiovisual methods and, later on, to the functional and communicative methods. Last but not least, some of the latest findings in psychology developed the so-called humanistic approaches which consider that feelings and emotions play an important part in acquiring a foreign language. Praised and criticized, in turn, all these methods have brought an important contribution to the development of English language teaching.*

Keywords: *English language teaching, methodology, grammar/translation method, direct/oral method, functional and communicative approaches, humanistic approaches, eclecticism.*

Introduction

In today's globalized world based on widespread and extremely rapid electronic means of communication, when everybody talks to everybody no matter in what corner of the world they are, English has gained ground as a common tool for people around the globe to understand each other. Along with the development of an international standard language of this new 'Lingua Franca' which has successfully and very speedily replaced French all over Europe, the English teaching profession has also known an unprecedented uptrend. In this context, it is normal for English language

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teachers, players on such a vast arena, to ask themselves which is the most suitable approach and which is best teaching method, if there is any.

Traditional/Classical Method versus Direct/Oral Method

The beginning of English language teaching dates back to the end of the 15th century when the first English textbooks appeared. Among these it is worth mentioning "*A Book of Short Dialogues*"[1] prepared by William Caxton, a prominent member of the community of merchants from Bruges, as well as "*A Lytell Treatyse to Learn English and Frensshe*"[2] printed by Wynken de Worden, Caxton's assistant. The texts with alternative lines in English and French already announce the **traditional grammar /translation method**. Due to economic reasons, the interest in learning English increased in the 16th century when the polyglot dictionaries and idiom books started to introduce English along with the other important languages such as Latin, French or Italian. Although at that time the main preoccupation of schools was teaching Latin and to a certain extent Greek and the teaching of English followed their pattern of learning a set of rules and grammar definitions, as early as the beginning of 17th century another trend emerged which pleaded for the complete exclusion of grammar rules in foreign language teaching. We find a summary of it in the work of the writer Joseph Webbe who wrote a real "didactic project'' on foreign language teaching published at the end of the 1620s.

A historical view on English language teaching reveals a polemic that existed from the very beginning between learning a language by strictly applying the grammar rules and learning it intuitively, through practice, without any rules. What is more, we can cite Comenius to support the idea that the actual practice of a language is important and the grammar rules are not necessary, theory which underlies the rise of the **direct** or **oral method** as opposed to the grammar/translation one. However, we shouldn't leave out the fact that this assertion, which clearly expresses a very modern point of view, is followed by another one which is not less quoted in the specialized literature and which argues that the rules support and strengthen the knowledge acquired through practice. This conflict between theory and practice pointed out by Comenius and by the

[1] Caxton, William, *Dialogues in French and English*. Henry Bradley P.H., Early English Text Society, Extra Series 79. Millwood, NY: Kraus Reprint, 1973.

[2] Wynken de Worde, *A Lytell Treatyse to Learn English and Frensshe, Westminster, 1497/ http://library.oxfordjournals.org/content/s5-IV/3/155.full.pdf*

less known English author we have already mentioned, Joseph Webbe, was defined by M. W. Rivers (1977) as a conflict between "formalism" and "activism" Throughout the time, one of these two principles was more pregnant. The history of foreign language teaching, as seen by the English researcher Titone (1968) was the witness of "activist" reformers (such as Montaigne, Comenius, Locke, Jacotot) and of the reformist trend (represented by Meidinger, Ahn, Ollendorf and Ploetz). Nevertheless, the problem of "method" in foreign languages teaching will be raised only in the 19th century along with their inclusion in the high school curriculum. Consequently, the methods depended on the aim for which the language was taught, the priority objectives and the available materials.

Modern approaches in English language teaching

Extrapolating, we can say that the foreign language teaching methods started from the oral use of Latin in Antiquity, being further learnt by means of grammar rules in the Middle Age; then there was a comeback to Comenius' practical learning and later on the grammar rules again gained priority, to finally admit that languages were learnt mainly for communicative purpose.

Starting with the 19th century, but especially along the 20th century, a number of theories and methodological approaches on foreign language teaching and learning have rapidly succeeded one another, considering that the latest one was always the best. The development of technology and the improvement in communication also played an important role in English language teaching. In the 50s new ideas appeared, leading to the emergence of a specific method, meant to turn a boring course into a motivating and dynamic experience. We refer to the **audiolingual method** which combined with the visual means became **the audiovisual method,** based on the idea that the best way to learn a foreign language is that of imitating the mother tongue acquisition. These methods, just like the Direct Method, aim at developing communication in the target language. They were based on a method called "Mimicry-Memorization'' which was successfully used in the US during World War II when the intensive learning of foreign languages was necessary for military purposes. As its name shows, learning was based on the rapid assimilation of "pattern sentences" by imitation and memorization. Different from the traditional and direct method (which lacked a scientific basis in approaching human behavior, including knowledge acquisition), these latter methods are based on the structuralist approach of the American linguists Bloomfield

and Fries from Michigan and Skinner's behaviourist theory on learning. The repetition of these "pattern sentences" is double by listening practice, also containing a productive structure.

The critics to these methods point out several aspects. On the one hand, ever since 1966, Noam Chomsky started casting doubt on the reference theories of the audiovisual method in foreign language teaching. On the other hand, at the beginning of the 60s, another psychological trend was revolutionizing the linguistic theories. We refer here to cognitivism, which opposes behaviorism, denying the existence of an autonomous function of learning or memorizing, considering that the whole learning process is guided logically and conscientiously by the subject. Related to this theory, the linguists Ch. Bailly, Em. Benveriste and I. Jakobson launched the typology of speech functions which underlies the new linguistic 'enunciation' theory. There are voices, among the methodologists, who have come forth with new ideas as to English language teaching. The most important one, in our opinion, is the need of a more integrated teaching of the four basic skills: reading, writing, speaking and listening. These are the **functional** and **communicative methods** which envisage the free use of the language.

Due to all this evolution, in English language teaching two major trends start shaping: relaxation towards the rigid restrictions of the audiovisual method and promotion of some techniques that require a more active training of the student's mental faculties in the learning process. We could summarize the differences between the two approaches as follows:

AUDIOVISUAL METHOD	LANGUAGE=COMMUNICATION TOOL
Understanding and producing an accurate sentence.	Being able to use these sentences in ampler unities (texts, dialogues) Being capable to use suitable enunciations for different communicative situations
Conveying information. Asking questions about the environment.	Mastering the language functions.
Mastering a pure, formal, homogenous language.	Understanding and, as much as possible, using the various language registers.

In the first period of the communicative approaches, the oral

interaction used to be considered the primordial manifestation of the communicative act, tending to neglect the communicative value of the written code. But, in time, the dichotomy oral/written started to regain its balance, admitting, especially at advanced level, the necessity of focusing on the writing skill and discourse analysis. The oral communication will continue being a priority of the elementary level. In practice, many teachers still have the tendency to attach greater attention the acts of speech than to written communication.

The psychological research and the changes occurred in pedagogical thinking have led to new methods in foreign language teaching called "**humanistic methods**" or "**fringe methods**" which focus on some aspects neglected by the traditional strategies: feelings, emotions, interpersonal relationships[3]. In the view of this methodology, the learner should get actively involved into the class activities and interact freely, without feeling constrained, with his group of students and with the teacher. These approaches take into account the mental barrier the learner encounters when he has to express himself in a foreign language. That is why the psychologist Carl Rogers (1969) speaks about the importance of 'full learning' and considers that the learner needs to get totally involved in the foreign language learning process. These approaches focus on two major directions: removing the student's feelings of embarrassment and frustration, on the one hand, and motivating them to learn, on the other hand. These are learner-centered approaches, focusing on the subject as a human being, striving to cultivate his lucidity and self-confidence which facilitate the learning process.

Probably the best known of these approaches is *Suggestopedia*, which was developed by the Bulgarian Bulgarian psychotherapist Lozanov and is based on the complete relaxation of the student before joining the actual learning activities. It is based on a positive attitude from the part of the subject who needs to remove all negative feelings before the learning process starts. Apart from it, the other humanistic methods were developed in the USA and closely linked with other disciplines such a s psychology and sociology. Thus, the *Silent Way* is based on cognitive exploitation and research of the main functioning criteria in the language structure. The *Total Physical Response* is specific for teaching a foreign language to small children. The child has to react to different instructions,

[3] Mocanu M., *Humanistic Methods in Foreign Language Teaching* in Euromentor Journal, Vol. III, No. 3, Pro Universitaria Publishing House, Bucharest, 2012.

to listen and carry out different instructions until he manages to acquire enough linguistic material to be able to act independently. Another approach which lays greater emphasis on people's interaction and group cohesion is the *Community Language Learning* developed by the psychotherapist and counsellor Charles Curran. It is also meant to increase the subject's self-confidence and the confidence in those around him/her. Similar to Suggestopedia, it envisages to help the student overcome his psychological barriers, remove his fear, inhibition and frustration which more powerful in the foreign language learning process. In order to be successful, the student needs his teacher's support but also the support of his peers. Cooperation and harmonious relationships are considered the key for the success of the learning process.

In the history of foreign language teaching, the **humanistic methods** have taught us two important lessons. Firstly, it is no longer thought that the success of teaching depends on a certain method. Human beings learn in various ways and different approaches satisfy differently the needs and expectations of the learners. Secondly, the unconventional approaches seem to be more successful as they point out aspects neglected by the other methods, namely the affective aspect which is linked with the right hemisphere of the brain and which does not play an important role in the traditional education which appeals to the left hemisphere, that is to the cognitive aspect. It's no longer a secret that some of the fringe methods techniques have long been used in the foreign language teaching. For example, procedures of the *Total Physical Response* are used when teaching children or teenagers in order to make them use their physical capacities in the learning process. Other techniques proper to this method, such as musical suggestion or role play have known an increasing importance in the course of time.

Conclusions

Starting from the basic methods of foreign language teaching, we can see that approaches and techniques stated long ago have been rediscovered or reinvented, being used and interpreted through the new findings in linguistics or pedagogy. The ideas can be the same, but the way in which they are applied change in time, as does the context. Within the communicative approaches currently used, we cannot speak about an encoded practice which rejects certain activities or type of exercises under the pretext that they belong to one methodological trend or another. We can use an approach guided by certain essential principles which needs to

take into account the reality of the pedagogical circumstances, the institution, the teachers, the pedagogical means and the learning environment resources. Last but not least, the teaching of a foreign language over more than a hundred years represents an accumulation of ideas, experiences and practices which need to be rediscovered as they can be the basis for improving and modernizing the methodology in the spirit of the traditions and culture of each people, for drawing up different teaching materials and even textbooks. We can therefore speak about *eclecticism* in English language teaching as the current communicative approach allows for it and teachers have the freedom to choose practices which best suit their learning environment.

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THE EDUCATIONAL ROLE OF PENALTIES APPLIED TO ACTS WHICH HARM THE ENVIRONMENT[1]

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Abstract: *"The permanent degradation of the natural environment generates highly complex problems, which are manifested by the lack of harmony between man-made environment and the requirements of a normal life, which leads not only to the destruction of the ecological balance, but also to a reverse reaction, the environment no longer being beneficial for the development of social activities and human health, which no longer has a discretionary behaviour towards nature.*

Practices in the field have shown that the best strategy for environmental protection lies in educating people in the prevention of pollution and environmental damages of any kind, than to try to remedy the effects of post-factum. Along with traditional means of popularizing environmental requirements and of educating the population in terms of defending these social values, an important role in the prevention of harmful acts is also represented by the penalties applied in cases of violation of regulations in the field, provided that the liability be prompt and proportional to the damages caused, which would confer a greater educational role the matter".

Keywords: *environmental protection, education, preventing damages, the role of penalties.*

The concept of environment has been used since the nineteenth century, in a biological sense, as *the natural ambience of living beings*.

Subsequently, in terms of geography, this notion has acquired the meaning of living space, influenced by humans, which integrates social data and natural elements in a hybrid context[2].

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The imperatives of economic development with more and more technologically advanced means, in most areas of the world, generate many environmental problems, especially by enhancing pollution, therefore deepening the disharmony between the man-made environment and the natural environment[3], leading to the destruction of the ecological balance, the environment becoming less favourable for achieving socio-economic activities and for human life[4].

Being aware of these facts, states must cooperate to establish, in an international and national level, the best measures aimed at protecting and improving the natural environment, involving not only the material and organizational efforts, but also educating people to adopt a new attitude towards the environment, based on the reconciliation of man with nature[5].

Educating people in the prevention of actions which affect the environment can be achieved through a variety of means, starting with the adoption of legal rules that provide certain duties or restrictions in this regard and ending with the establishment of *penalties* for those are guilty for damaging these highly important values for our lives and health.

Penalties, generally, do not have only a repressive and restorative role, but also a preventive and educational one for those concerned and for the general population, which, noting the measures taken, can suppress any tendency to commit harmful acts.

The breach of a legal rule in the environmental field disturbs the existing order of things, therefore triggering a legal relationship of liability, which finalises by punishing the guilty of committing illegal acts, which ensures the effectiveness of law, maintaining social order and redressing behaviour under the law[6].

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[2] Mircea Duțu, *Introduction to Environmental Criminal Law*, Hamangiu Publishing House, Bucharest, 2013, pp. 9 and subsequent

[3] Ioan Mihuț, *Self-management and Creativity*, Dacia Publishing House, Cluj-Napoca, 1989, p. 259.

[4] Dumitra Popescu, *The Common Heritage of Mankind - Spaces Reserved Exclusively for Peaceful Activities,* the Journal of the Romanian National Commission for UNESCO, no. 3/1984, pp. 227 and subsequent; Ion Avram, Dragoş Şerbănescu, *Earth's environment, whereto?,* in the Romanian Journal of International Studies, no. 1, January-February 1989, p. 32.

[5] N. N. Constantinescu, the *Protection of Natural Environment - Intrinsic Requirement of a Modern Economic Development*, in "The Economist", no. 180 of April 3-6 1992, p. 5; Ramona-Gabriela Paraschiv, *International Mechanisms for the Protection of Human Rights*, Pro Universitaria Publishing House, Bucharest, 2014, pp. 225, 243 and subsequent.

[6] Sofia Popescu, *General Theory of Law*, Lumina Lex Publishing House, Bucharest, 2000, p. 299.

Being provided by law as a punitive measure against the person who commits illegal acts[7], the legal liability for environmentally harmful activities is triggered for sanctioning and re-educating its author and for restoring the legal order violated[8], namely the ecological balance necessary for the development of people's lives and other living beings in adequate conditions.

The purpose of liability in the environmental field is not only to stop harmful activities and recover the damages caused, but it also has a preventive and educational effect, *especially* (on the offender), and *generally* (on other persons).

Initially, in the case of offenses affecting the environment, national law designed and admitted, as well as international law, only the obligation to repair the damage suffered by humans, this measure having no educational and preventive role in terms of environmental protection, because no specific repairs were sought for any damages brought to the ecological balance, regardless of whether any person got injured.

The legal recognition of an ecological *damage* has subsequently led to broadening the spectrum of application and adequacy of the liability regime for acts harmful to the environment, liability which must subsist; and when one cannot determine the damage caused to a specific person, the author being punished just simply because he/she damaged the environment, it will increase his/her awareness about the need to protect this value.

To prevent or combat the non-compliance of specific legal requirements in environmental law, we often use administrative liability (offenses), given the advantages such a form of liability presents - the procedure of finding and implementing contravention penalties being much faster and more supple in relation to other legal proceedings[9], which is favourable for the fast and operative repair requirements in terms of environmental damage. It also allows an emergency intervention for actions with particularly negative impact on the environment, for the adoption of security measures in terms of environmental safety or protection, all with a strong preventive and educational character.

The older directives and regulations of the European Union stipulate that Member States are required to take "appropriate and necessary"

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[7] Nicolae Popa, *General Theory of Law,* Bucharest University Printing House, 1992, p. 280.

[8] Sofia Popescu, *The Basis of Legal Liability. A Few Remarks*, in "Studies of Law", volume II, Universitas Timisienses Publishing House, Western University of Timisoara Printing House, 1998, pp. 74 and subsequent.

[9] Mircea Duțu, *Environmental Law,* 3rd edition, C.H. Beck Publishing House, Bucharest, 2010, pp. 266 and subsequent.

administrative and / or legislative measures to address or, where appropriate, organize the application of Union acts in relation to the environment and, lately, it shows that Member States must determine an *appropriate and proportionate penalties regime, which must be effective and dissuasive*, in order to have a genuine educational and preventive role.

In Romania, Government Emergency Ordinance no. 195/2005 establishes pecuniary offenses and penalties applicable to individuals or legal entities guilty for committing acts that damage the environment or not respecting administrative regulations in the field (fines applicable to individuals being 6-8 times higher than those applicable to legal entities - in order to increase their liability, with positive effects in terms of reviewing policies for the prevention and awareness of guilty employees).

Individuals and legal entities carrying out activities contrary to the regulations contained in the rules on environmental protection or that do not meet certain legal obligations arising out of legal environmental relationships are subject to contravention liability, whose scope is *proportional* to the degree of pollution caused, to social dangerousness and consequences of acts committed[10], only as such the penalties applied have a real educational character.

The relatively low efficiency of contravention penalties regarding the prevention of serious acts that affect the environment has resulted in the increased importance of *criminal law*, which allows the adaptation of serious penalties to the increased danger of destructive acts for natural heritage[11].

Environmental protection requirements are mainly assured, and, currently, by using administrative procedures and tools (approvals, agreements, permits etc.), known in Romanian legislation as "regulatory acts", therefore numerous provisions on the application of criminal penalties interfere when the legislature appreciates we need a more severe repression for breaching essentially administrative obligations, the offender being prosecuted and punished strictly depending on administrative regulation[12].

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[10] Maria Magdalena Neagu, *Legal Liability in the Environment,* in Annales Universitatis Apulensis Series Jurisprudentia, no. 10/2007, p. 268.

[11] Mircea Duțu, *Introduction to Environmental Criminal Law*, *op.cit.*, pp. 61 and subsequent.

[12] Nicoleta-Elena Buzatu, Andreea Uzlău, *Novelties in Security Measures – The Extended Seizure,* Agora IJJS Journal no. 3/2013, AGORA University Publishing House, Oradea, pp. 19-25.

In these cases, environmental interests are not directly protected through criminal liability, but as a consequence[13], pollution being criminally punishable, only when there is a violation of administrative obligations[14].

It is noted however that the failure to comply with such administrative requirements is provided with criminal penalties in order to educate people for the observance of the rules established for the prevention or limitation of pollution and environmental damage.

After examining the texts classified by the legislator as contraventions or crimes we find that they are dispersed in numerous laws and it is difficult to identify a correct legal classification of concrete facts that harm the environment, therefore some of them may remain unpunished or inadequately punished because its incorrect classification under the law, making the legislation in question inefficient, therefore not reaching the preventive and educational purpose.

In order to reduce acts which harm the environment and educate people in the spirit of defending these values, we consider that it is required to tighten contravention penalties, but also criminal ones, especially their application in all cases of violation of specific rules.

Regarding the contravention penalties we appreciate that our country should extend in their area, especially in the field of waste management, an area in which it is observed that there is still a low level of education.

Referring to the criminal penalties applicable to serious acts which harm the environment, we appreciate that setting punishment limits must be correlated with the seriousness of the acts, so that their preventive and educational role would be complete.

In conclusion, we emphasize that the right to a *healthy environment* has particular importance for the development of life in good conditions, so that international, European and national organizations, bodies and institutions with competences in the field should have a stronger role in terms of its protection, instituting preventive measures and penalties for acts with irreversible or long-term consequences that may seriously affect human health or even life.

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[13] Michael G. Faure, *Towards a New Model of Environmental Protection by Means of Criminal Law,* in the European Journal of Environmental Law, no. 4/2005, p. 191.

[14] Alain de Nauw, *Administrative Metamorphoses of Criminal Law in an Enterprise,* Gand Publishing House, Mys and Breesc, 1994, p. 84.

Of course traditional means of educating people in the sense of environmental protection have to prevail, so as to avoid, if possible, harmful acts, which are sometimes irreversible, causing damage that cannot be remedied in the short-term or not at all.

Moreover, a broad social movement has been conducted in recent decades towards environmental responsibility, which has trained civil society and public institutions nationally and internationally[15], therefore adopting, in this area, more general and special international legal instruments, that include provisions guaranteeing the right to a healthy environment.

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[15] Dumitra Popescu, Mircea Popescu, *Environmental Law - International Treaties and Documents,* Artprint Publishing House, Bucharest, 2002, pp. 16 and subsequent; Ramona-Gabriela Paraschiv, *International Mechanisms for the Protection of Human Rights, op.cit.*, p. 225.

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MENTAL STRESS - PRIORITY FRAMEWORK OF ACTION

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Abstract: ***Motivation of topic:*** *Mental stress is one of the main triggers for different psychiatric or physical illnesses. Which are the mechanisms played by the mental structure to develop or not the body response to stress.*

Objective: *The present paper aims to differentiate the mental structures which are mostly affected by psychological stress. To find the personality type more predisposed to react to stress and the most resilient features.*

Hypothesis: *The extrovert and flexible persons are likely to respond much better to all type of mental stress then the introvert and rigid type, by more complex defense mechanisms.*

Conclusions: *There are so many stress factors and there are so many combinations of personalities, which make almost impossible a mathematical theory to apply. Family, work, social skills, environment and more would influence the defense mechanisms and the response to the stressor. Only a person with very good adaptive skills could face a mental stress without permanent damage or alterations.*

Keywords: *mental stress, personality type, psychosomatic diseases, conflicts.*

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Mental stress can be defined as solicitation or pressure on the whole body, although the stressor agent may exercise more action on the psychic[1]. In the case of psychological stress, there is pressure on each organ, even if there seems to be a preference for a particular type of organ (glands, immune system, cardio equipment - vascular, respiratory, digestive). The body has a seemingly miraculous strength, with a delicate balance between pathological processes and defense forces.

Throughout time, two main types of psychological stress were analyzed: the major and minor (repetitive or not). There are also mental stresses which do have not immediate results, but delayed ones[2], such as psychopathological states, psychosomatic illnesses, diseases belonging to internal medicine and others. Patients with a family history of neurotic disorder will develop these coloring rather than psychosomatic diseases. Mental stress, as it has been defined, can cause problems ranging from psychogenic disorders, Basedow, amenorrhea, hypercorticism reactive to psychosomatic diseases (in which matters the type of personality), infectious diseases, TB or hepatitis type, diabetes, obesity, anorexia, neoplasia and even orthopedic problems.

Sometimes, throughout the stages of development of pathologies caused by stressors, there are latency periods, although the state of stress generates fatigue, attacks the immune system and, last but not least, it generates functional changes. Some of these changes are reversible (hypertension) or irreversible (stroke), naturally, if pathologically prone. It is known that mental stress accelerates the progression of pathological processes[3]. Also, after the output of a psychic stress, the subject is more receptive to other stressors, stimuli that previously did not produce significant reactions. The modifications of endocrine reactions may take up to 3-6 weeks.

Psychogenic etiology in multifactorial context of various diseases

Etiologic agents relate to genetic or acquired peculiarities, to the body or organ and, last but not least, to external, environmental, social, behavioral factors (such as physical inactivity, smoking in coronary heart disease)[4]. The syndrome is therefore multi etiological. However, it is

[1] Delay, J., Pichot, P., *Psychologie*. Ceddex: Masson, 1984.

[2] *Ibidem.*

[3] *Ibidem.*

[4] Dichter, E., *Motivations et comportement humain*. Paris: Punli-Union, 1972.

necessary to know the mechanisms by which the etiologic agent propagates and, in this sense, we can note two ways:

a. The situation in which there is a single etiologic agent, long lasting and with high intensity, being also helped by the internal conditions (for example the infectious diseases).

b. The variant where there are many etiologic agents, operated by algebraic adder.

Mental stress causes an imbalance between the organism and the environment[5], whose stages are: overloading (in which case there are no pathological disorders), dysfunction of the regulatory mechanisms (when there are psychosomatic disorders such neurodegenerative dystonia, Metabolic syndrome, hypertension) and somatization (when symptoms take the form of psychosomatic diseases). It is known that the organ predisposition count to a large extent, in terms of the mental disease debut and action caused by stress. It participates in the establishment of disease - for example, subjects predisposed to hypertension. This can occur suddenly or in a range of 6 to 12 months after a major stress. In fact, there is a complex of etiological factors on which this mental stress overlaps[6]. (Dichter, 1972).

Personality profile of patients with psychosomatic diseases[7]
(Ion Bradu Iamandescu)

The vulnerability to stress is constituted during the subject's biography, according to the psycho-emotional traumas and how he succeeded in dominating them. A particular concern is the network of social support. Currently, it is considered that we can rarely see personality charts specific to each and every psychosomatic disease, we rather encounter a general profile, certain features that are often associated in all patients with psychosomatic diseases. Certain psychosomatic diseases are frequently associated with each other (such as patients who have high blood pressure +ulcer + asthma) or a psychosomatic disorder is associated with a neurotic one, which reinforce this idea once more.

[5] Ibidem.

[6] Dichter, E., *Motivations et comportement humain*. Paris: Punli-Union, 1972.

[7] Iamandescu, I.B., *Mental Stress and Internal Diseases*. Buchaest, All Publishing House, 1993.

Among these examples, we could mention patients who confer harmful potential to certain external factors, that other people considered indifferent (this feature would approach a sort of basal anxiety)[8]. Also, these subjects have a primary intense emotional reactivity, which goes up to impulsivity. The aggressivity is re-directed to themselves and they have a tenacity which turns into stubbornness. They are rigid and conceited, with self-centered tendencies and needs of self-assertion, emphasizing the role of minor traumas and frequently stating that they are "hopeless cases". They tend to have interpretative tendencies on a background of increased susceptibility or they associate obsessive and phobic tendencies based on anxious psychological background[9].

Personality features that favor mental stress easy induction

According to Eyseneck' classification (extroversion / introversion), the extrovert is outgoing and can go so far that he no longer censors his impulsivity and aggressivity, which makes it harder to bear some stressful situations. The consequences of these mental stresses are known by those around them as they usually speak too much about their feelings. In contrast, the introvert acts in an organized, planned manner, with maximum scrupulosity. The severe control of the feelings externalization acts like a natural depressive tendency, making the concerned person vulnerable to stressors, being the type who does not exteriorize his feelings[10].

The second criterion is related to emotional stability and is called nevroticism. The vulnerability to mental stress is primarily a function that is more related to nevroticism than to the introversion / extroversion axis. Another classification with a touch of "division of personality" is Kahn's, which divides patients according to the flexibility / rigidity rapport[11]. The subjects with low flexibility, the rigid ones, do not adapt to new situations quickly and easily isolate themselves. Through all the this behavior of preserving the old, the rigid subject is less impacted by the mental stress, compared to the versatile one who appears indecisive, acting anxiogenically and transparently towards the stressor. For the flexible patient, mental stress occurs by favoring multiple influences.

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[8] Zlate, M., *Ego and Personality*. Bucharest: Trei Publishing House, 2008.

[9] Ibidem

[10] Zlate, M. cited work

[11] Kahn, Jack H., Wright, S.E., *Human Growth and the Development of Personality*. Oxford : Pergamon Press, 1980.

Another personality trait that is a true balance for vulnerability to mental stress is tolerance to frustration [12]. According to Lewin's theory, frustration arises from the mismatch between aspirations possibilities at the motivational level. Vogel differentiates two types of personalities with different intrinsic motivation: *those* for whom the *need* of *intellectual assertion prevails* and *those for whom the tendency to affiliate prevails*[13]. (Vogel, 1995).

Type A Personality

It is dominated by the "sense of urgency" and "hostility", in this case, the worst prognosis having those with a high degree of hostility. Their characteristics would fall into the following patterns: excessive competitiveness, irritability, aggressivity, time urgency, obsession, insecurity[14]. The entire life of such an individual is pursued by playing the score, which makes him attend another meeting, give another call. He also has an impulsive behavior, having more and more achievements, but enjoying less and less. It is characterized by a limitless desire for approval and recognition, continuously check his activities around the clock, and the completion of a paper gives him little comfort and satisfaction. Dominated by anxiety, depression, frustration, hostility, whims and lacking peace of mind, he can get to suffer from ischemic heart disease, weakened immune system, even cancer.

Such a subject gets engaged in several activities simultaneously (reads while eating, during conversation he also thinks of something else, getting to eat even faster). He walks hastily, arrives on time in all circumstances, uses numbers instead of words in conversation. He has been warned by others that he should slow down, but this makes him irritable, angry, especially if it seems to him that the other questions some of his comments or actions. He does not trust other people's beliefs and plays any game with the express intention of winning. Nevertheless, he cannot always express his aggressiveness, and then we deal with a restrained anger, which can give rise to an even greater psychic tension. This aspect can frequently be seen in patients with high blood pressure, when their mental strain cannot be exteriorized, reason why such a patient can be compared to "a boiling volcano, before eruption". There is a contrast between his

[12] Ibidem

[13] Vogel, D.J., *The Relationship Between Personality Type and Family Environment*. University of South Dakota, 1995.

[14] Ibidem

calm exterior appearance and his inner attitude, full of hostility, aggressivity and continuously tending to express his own authority[15]. (Vogel, 1995).

For these patients, a brief psychotherapy would be successful, centered on purpose, which should amend their conviction related to the fact that this type of behavior, even if it has allowed them to have important achievements at social and material level, it has impoverished and degraded their personality spiritually. This type of patient must learn to listen rather than to speak and to substitute consciously hostile reactions with affection and tolerance[16]. The medical advice should be firm, the patient should be informed and offered different alternatives, his initiatives should be encouraged and the steps of his set objectives sequenced, his entire program needs to be systematically tracked[17].

Conflicting situations generating persistent mental stress

Family conflict (such as those between child and parental authority). This may cause frustration when there is an excess of authority or depression when there are disinterested adults. Other times conflicts arise between brothers, or there are marital type conflicts related to the exercise of authority[18]. Also educating the children, disagreements on preferences, temperamental, sexual mismatches, temporary separations, para-marital conflicts (in-laws, parents), diseases, deaths of beloved ones, divorces, all these fall into the category of family conflict, related to the husband - wife relationship [19].

Professional conflicts. Starting from the saying "Profession *kills you or accomplishes you*", professional conflicts can have various causes, from excessive activity, multiplying objectives along with decreasing staff, inadequate recovery, lack of physical and mental relaxation, insufficient sleep, going as far as reaching a negative emotional climate - faulty relationships with colleagues, with chiefs ("Tomorrow *I go to work again*!"). There is the so-called "manager disease", in which the bosses can be inhibitors or have character traits of various types and increased intensity,

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[15] Vogel, D. J., *cited work,* 1995.

[16] Holdevici, I., *Psychotherapy, drug-free treatment,* Bucharest: University Publishing House, 2010.

[17] Holdevici, I. Ibidem.

[18] Adler, A., Brett, C., *Understanding Human Nature: The Psychology of Personality.* London: One World Publication, 1998.

[19] Adler, A., Brett, C. Ibidem.

affecting the relationship with their subordinates. Also, obsessive deadlines, workloads exceeding the possibilities of solving them, the level of aspiration far above the one of possibilities, failures, competition, lack of hope for advancement and increased level of competence are other conflicting situations, at least as stressful as the above mentioned ones, generating persistent mental stress[20].

Social conflicts. As Toffler said in "Future Shock", we are constantly assaulted at three levels: sensory, information and decisional one[21]. Thus, the social conflicts could be caused by material problems, of "time crunch", terrorism, unemployment, horror movies, drugs, demographic stress, migration, alienating traffic and, last but not least, retirement[22].

Conflicts within private life. Inferiority complexes may arise, especially when there is a less pleasant appearance, a disease, a disorder of sexual dynamic. Other conflicts in the privacy sphere could be social insertion or family loss, failure to satisfy certain needs, the spleen, defined as the monotony of private life[23].

Iatrogenic conflicts. These are phobias to certain diseases and / or pursuit of drugs.

Inevitable conflicts are those due to natural disasters, weather changes.

Lifestyle changes conflicts occur at the time of marriage, divorce, death or disease. Professional changes, moving house, temporary business trips, changing habits (even quitting smoking), all these are considered conflicts causing mental stress[24].

Exam stress can occur in situations of fear of exam results under the aspirations and, correlated, from the evaluation of the echo/impact on the family, the microgroup and even on internal personal plan. The state of motivational optimum is important, maybe not accidentally some nosografic textbooks have raised the problem of shaping a *Self defeat personality disorder*.

Mental stress adjacent to surgery. Surgery carries vital risks, frustration (immobilization, separation from the family and the professional environment), but also pain and discomfort (ringing of monitors, of suction machine, phone sound, other patients' groans, their lamentation to the visitors, the rustle of the medical staff).

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[20] *Ibidem*

[21] Toffler, A., *Future Shock*. Bucharest: Political Publishing House, 1973.

[22] Ibidem

[23] Ibidem

[24] Toffler, A. Ibidem

Minor mental stress is the so-called "daily friction" such as loss of personal objects, physical appearance, "too many things waiting to be made".

Overload mental stress. This is manifested not only in intellectual activities, but also in the complex, cognitive, emotional and volitional solicitation. When motivation is intrinsic, the mental stress is more difficult to settle. Regarding the volitional features, the internal conflicts between two opposite trends have negative consequences.

Disadaptation steps are: overworking (characterized by decreased alertness, interest and yield), fatigue (as psycho-biological image on strain, joining together ailments and frequent mistakes), nervous exhaustion (which evolves with psychological symptoms of anxiety, irritability, fatigue, headache, dizziness), and can reach "overloading **neurosis**", a form of *classic neurasthenia*.

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