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MOTIVATION - THE FACILITATOR FACTOR OF THE INCULTURATION PHENOMENON IN SCHOOL

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Abstract

The present study proposes an analysis of motivation, in the context of its development within the fundamental institution that produces, manages and disseminates knowledge: namely, school.

Within the (de facto) present context we wanted to reflect on the importance of the motivation in implementing the socio-cultural factors of the reference background (school), these playing an essential role in shaping and structuring the individual in terms of psycho-behavioral and with ideological value, resulting in the process of enculturation. In the circumscribed area of pedagogy, there is a conceptual approach, as a reflection of shades of the terms: acculturation, enculturation, inculturation, highlighting commonalities or differences as opposing to the approached situations, offering useful coordinates for thorough analysis of the interaction processes.

A conclusion and also an objective, finally emerge by finding strategies, methods and pedagogical techniques, to reduce current problems, that lead to a higher demotivation, which are to be validated by the results obtained in schools,

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and they remain culturation factors insofar that the values they promote keep their high standards.

Keywords: motivation, inculturation, school, culture.

JEL Classification: A2

DEFINING AND CLARIFYING THE PROBLEM

The study starts by identifying the framework within which the human development occurs, seen as a reality that we all live, but of whose importance we are rarely aware. School is an environment that has a strong impact in the socio-cultural and psychological development of the individuals, through the interactions assembly that occurs between these and the members of the group they belong to. Seen from a significant point of view school represents, on one hand, an axiological space, par excellence, and on the other hand, it is a place of communication and communion (Cucoş, 2000, pp. 51-53).

In this sense, are alike important both the interactions between teachers and students and (those) within the group of students. School is a social institution with a special status, it itself constitutes an institutional value, in that it is especially preoccupied with the human being, the availability and the human value, being revealed within and through it. Therefore, the human being culturalization in school is an unmatched work, as one that is the finality of any educational act (Cucoş, 2000, p.18).

Previous investigations

The concept/notion of educational values was introduced in connection with (taking into account of) the finality or the purpose of education, the most important educational value – after Dewey – being culture "simply because it

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suggests in fact the entire growth process of life itself and not something isolated, specific" (Dewey, 2007, p. 27).

As the final purpose of education and also as target, culture has an important role in the educational process.

Here steps in the inculturation, which represents the process through which the socio-cultural factors of the reference environment, shape and structure the individual from the psycho-behavioral and ideological point of view (Glava, 2012, p. 27). In other words, the inculturation is the process through which the culture grounded in a given environment, is assimilated by the individual, so that he raises the accepted norms and values in the society he lives in. The individual may become an accepted member of the group and can accomplish the necessary functions and roles within it, the main aspect of the inculturation being that of knowledge and establishing a context of accepted behavioral limits, which dictate what is or isn't acceptable within the society (apud Kottak, 2001, p.199-217).

RELATIONS, CONTRADICTIONS AND GAPS IN THE LITERATURE

This one shouldn't be mistaken for the enculturation process – through which the human being internalizes the norms and values of the group where he is born and lives. Some authors (Alan R. Beals, George and Louise Spindler) prefer the expressions such as: "cultural transmission" or "culture acquisition". The sociologists use the "socialization" concept with the same meaning having high-ranking incidents, primarily with education and then with tradition and culture (Zamfir & Vlăsceanu, 1998, p. 214).

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Education is, therefore, the process through which the individuals learn to function in their social environment, by transmitting social norms and explicit or implicit rules of national culture.

In its turn, culture consists of implicit or explicit patterns, in order to gather and provide behaviors through symbols, being a distinctive acquisition of human groups (Cucoș, 2000, p. 57). It is a very large concept consisting of a great number of aspects: we may speak of general culture (materialized in a base of general knowledge), civic culture, culture understood as artistic values (orientation towards beautiful: art, music, theatre, movie, literature), as material or spiritual values (faith, aspirations, spirit of justice, virtues), expertise (skills, abilities). Therefore, without doubt, culture implies something valuable, material or spiritual. But, when two cultures or two types of cultures are in a mutual contact for a while, there is the interaction process of the two, called "acculturation", which manifests itself by changes either in both cultures, or in one of them, namely the less defined, less evolved and less spread (Zamfir & Vlăsceanu, 1998, p. 18). The professor Emil Păun (1982, p. 90) underlines the fact that, in some limits, the process of school education may be interpreted as an acculturation process as "within school there is an extended and systematic contact between school culture (socially penalized) and the culture of students (resulted from inculturation and from interfamilial or extra familial processes?)". The result of school education as acculturation is concretized in the transformation of individual culture and its gradual reconstruction (sometimes till its total annulment), (Rîșnoveanu, 2010, p. 35). An acculturation case is that of inserting a young man from the rural environment in the urban culture (to study, for example).

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STEPS IN SOLVING THE PROBLEM

Student's skills constitute a factor for promoting culture. Not all children with different talents, come into schools that cultivate these skills and therefore, their chance in a non-vocational school is in the intuition of their teachers and insofar as they help them to develop their aptitudes. In a personal opinion, this specific aspect can be considered an inculturation factor: the focus is not on competition, but on promoting competence, on skills development, that may lie at the foundation of the future painter or musician. Then, school becomes a cultural instance, within which the student motivation and the motivation of the teacher have an important part, facilitating the inculturation.

Also, another aspect that lies in the teacher's competencies and which, on long term, can promote a certain type of value, therefore a sort of culture, is the way he teaches students/pupils to develop purposes: to focus on developing competence or on skills demonstration, which later on, may have a valuable shade. This motivation coming from teacher is a trigger – through the strategies that he proposes – of the motivational phenomenon, when the latter is necessary (Pânișoară & Pânișoară, 2005, p. 24). Thus, in relationship with goals, lies the student motivation for learning: is an extrinsic motivation that aims immediate external rewards, not showing a direct interest for what is taught, or, on the contrary, an intrinsic motivation that aims personal development, whether learning and gaining knowledge, directly interests the pupil.

The theory of the psychologist Deci (Deci & Ryan, 1985, p. 48) and of partners will help us understand the fact that we shouldn't see motivation in a dichotomous way, namely a student/pupil who is not intrinsically motivated, is necessarily extrinsically motivated. There are intermediate levels between the two poles. It is desirable that at least the level of identification should be

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achieved, being known the fact that we generally perceive school activities as being imposed and we don't engage in them with pleasure (Pink, 2011, p. 48).

The definition area of the motivation is very large in literature, the definitions proposed by some authors emphasizing one or another of the aspects considered essential:

1. Motivation is what energizes, directs and sustains a behavior (Steers & Porter, apud Saal, Knight, 1988, p. 256);

2. Motivation relates to the individual internal factors that stimulates, maintain and direct the behavior towards a purpose, (Huffman, Vernoy & Williams, 1991, p. 381);

3. Motivation refers to the behavior dynamics, to the process of initiating, supporting and directing the body activities, (Goldenson, apud Coon, 1983, p. 45).

The three definitions underline (Pânişoară & Pânişoară, 2005, p. 17):

❖ The dynamics:

The motivation:

1. Initiates/energizes/stimulates;

2. Directs/canalizes;

3. Supports/maintains a behavior, everything being a fluent dynamic process.

❖ Motivation „is molded" by some forces that exist inside us.

❖ Behavior generated by motivation is oriented towards satisfying some needs (generally called "purpose").

A more used framework for studying motivation and satisfaction is that given by the self-determination theory, (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000). This takes into account the increasing tendencies and the fundamental psychological needs to explain motivation, these being: of competency, bonding

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and autonomy, that seem essential for socio-cultural development that has its origin in inculturation, facilitating it. It is important though, that all three types of needs to be satisfied so that the wellbeing and adaptation to be fully manifested. The theory sustains that the mentioned needs are universal, but their way of manifestation may differ according to the environment or the type of culture they apply to (collectivist or individualistic).

Self-determination theory has advantages in the study of motivation, proposing a multidimensional conceptualization of this process, makes the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, providing a complex typological framework for examining the dynamics of different motivational orientations, each motivational form being able to be placed in a continuum of self-determination.

Opened issues regarding the strategies to stimulate the motivation of students/pupils:

- Any teacher who wishes to stimulate the students' motivation for learning should begin by self-analyzing and self-assessing his own motivation, as well as the way he carries on the teaching-learning-assessing activities;
- If you want to motivate someone you have to be motivated yourself;
- Rolland Viau considers that teacher should think the teaching strategies according to the knowledge he must transmit to the students, declarative and procedural knowledge (Viau, 1997, pp. 128-133)
- Viau considers that teachers should accustom their students to be aware of the steps that have to be made in problem solving, regardless the field. The teacher himself may serve as a model, by resorting to the protocol of thinking aloud, for the students to observe the ways within which the type of

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problem is identified, hypothesis about solving strategies are expressed, a certain strategy is chosen;

- The way the teacher realizes the assessment may also have effects on students' motivation. If we want the evaluation to be really motivating for students, is necessary that the evaluating act to focus more on students' progress, on recognizing the effort each of them made to improve their own performances and not only to observe the knowledge level.
- Assessing students' progress should be positively.
- Other research showed that students who had a better opinion about their competence in solving some learning tasks, were disappointed when they had been rewarded for activities they considered easy (Pink, 2011, p. 39).

At the present time, a global, innovative education is required, aiming not only to inform and transmit, but also to form and renew. "An education that allows students to become aware of the realities of their time and of their environment, that fosters the enrichment of their personality, that teaches them self-discipline, respect for others, the social and international solidarity [...], that incites to renewal and stimulates creativity" (The Declaration of Mexico, 1982, p. 7).

This declaration acknowledges the many facets of culture, defining it as: "the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a social group... not only the arts and letters but also modes of life, fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs".

It includes sections which consider cultural identity, the cultural dimension of development, culture and democracy, cultural heritage, artistic and intellectual creation and art education, the relationship of culture with

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education, science and communication, planning, administration and financing of cultural activities, and finally, international cultural co-operation.

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