School to Report or Education to Performance Test

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1. Context

Evaluation exists since ever, but it was never paid the attention that it is being paid nowdays. „The literature generous about evaluation characterizes all levels and contexts of educational and training systems: the scientific research is being evalued, the practices are being analyzed, audits and colloquiums are being carried out, also methodological guides of research and syntheses. This rich output is accompanied by frequent questions regarding evaluative approaches' meaning. There are some who criticize the validity, credibility, social value of the results accomplished as part of the evaluations". (Lucie Mottier Lopez & Gerard Figari, Modelisations de l'evaluation en education, De boeckUniversite, Bruxeles, 2012, Pg. 7).

The approach of education based on skills has amplified concerns regarding the school evaluation; moreover, this approach leads to the necessity of evaluating skills and thus changing the evaluation systems. In essence, change consists in the transition from accumulating knowledge to applying it to new situations, by training adequate skills. Shifting the educational paradigm means globally rethinking the entire educational process, as well as the relations between the participants to this process. The "Eurydice" study regarding the key-skills specifies: "The teaching process oriented towards transfer involves shifting the accent from models focused on teacher to models focused on the one learning .... acquiring skills supposes involvement of the one learning. Teacher's role is to facilitate learning by guiding pupils regarding their efforts in order to apply knowledge and skills in new situations, so they become competent persons" (Eurydice Study, Key Competencies, pg. 20). As part of the evaluation process we have to make a distinction/difference between "potential skills" and "ascertained skills". When evaluating, the teacher has to deduce based on the performance observed, the likelihood that the evaluated pupil will manifest a certain skill. N. Chomski's diagram regarding the skill-performance relation is relevant to this effect.

2. School to report

The more obvious tendency to ask the school to periodically give the society a "report", creates tension upon it. The "accountability" concept is getting more and more present as part of the speciality paperworks regarding this topic. It can be found in reference works as part of the French literature, formulated just like this, or as "reddition de comptes", which in Romanian means "account" or "to give a report", "to give an account". It seems that

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neither the French expression (“reddition de comptes) nor the Romanian translation succeeds in fully express the English significance of the concept, established to this effect as “accountability”.

What is all about? Where will this “accountability” movement lead? Vincent Dupriez&amp asks himself with good reason; Regis Malet (coord), L’Evaluation dans les systemes scolaires, pg. 49. “To start with, we identify two characteristics of this concept that seem to be defining.

- In essence, it is all about the fact that school "is held more and more responsible", it has "to give account" to society regarding its efficiency, value, extent to which performances of individuals and institutions meet expectations and investment/invested resources.
- Secondly, we are talking about the more and more obvious tendency to “pilot” educational systems in accordance with the results and performances of those evaluated (Vincent Dupriez& Regis Malet (coord), L’Evaluation dans les systemes scolaires, De Boeck Superior, 2013, pg 50).

National evaluations in Romania - 2nd, 4th and 6th grade, follow the same logic. Among the National Evaluation's purposes regarding the 4th grade, there is „Awareness, in a transparent and accessible way, doubled by accountability of different educational partners (responsibles for developing specific educational policies, school inspectors, teachers teaching as part of the primary education, educators, methodists, national staff of experts in educational management, mentors as part of the pre-University education, educational counselors, curriculum authors, authors of curricular handbooks and auxiliary materials, public opinion, parents, pupils etc.) regarding the 4th grade pupils' performances related to corresponding curricular standards, based on calculating the average performances of 2014” (National Evaluations at the end of 2nd, 4th and 6th grades, Administration Report, 2014, CNEE, National Report EN 2014, pg. 7).

3. Piloting the education process through evaluation

Planning the evaluation based on skills requires changing the conception of the educational process itself. ”Piloting through evaluation” has become a reality and manifests itself as far as the macrosystem, as well as the microsystem are regarded. The evaluation devices have a more important role in adjusting educational systems. “Applying evaluation is not a novelty as part of the educational systems. The State controls education (because this is what is all about in our country), in accordance with centralized or decentralized administrative traditions, fact which has always led/manifested an adjustment and evaluation service. In capacity of coordinator of the educational offer, the State has to provide the right to education for all its citizens. According to this mission, it will control the organization of that system. This is a first step for education's mondialisation, which is contemporary to international comparative

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evaluations" (Vincent Dupriez& Regis Malet (coord), L'Evaluation dans les systemes scolaires, De Boeck Superior, 2013, Introduction).

Skills are complex praxiological values that materialize themselves in specific products, complex as well (oral/written answers, different types of compositions, abstracts, portfolios, essays etc.). "Skills are nowdays paid the most attention all over Europe. World agrees to this effect, but there are a lot of teachers declining it off the record. And we are all agreed on the fact that not only knowledge is important, but also its application (Gerard De Vecchi, Evaluer sans devaluer, Hachette Education, 2014 Paris, CEDEX 15, Introduction, pg. 7). The evaluation type majorly influences the content and methods used in order to teach and learn. The traditional examination is excessively oriented towards storage and reproduction of the right answer, and not towards applying knowledge by means of critical and creative thinking skills.

Evaluation based on skills has a strong impact on rethinking the relation between education and training (between the sub-system of compulsory education and the sub-system of professional and technical training). Few decades ago, school's mission was for pupils to "have knowledge". Recently, given that public/central or local authorities are responsible for evaluating the school system, one can notice an increased number of evaluation guides and tools that are specific to the market economy, giving evidence of a transition from a logic that is specific to the traditional school/pupils must have knowledge, to a logic that states pupils have to socially and economically give proof of their knowledge. Thus, it was initiated an evaluation of the school system's efficacy and efficiency, characteristics that have become privileged reference points/referentials in order to adjust the educational system and its performances. The reference for "to give account/accountability" principle represents a norm in order to guide/assign/coordinate the evaluation tools (Vincent Dupriez& Regis Malet (coord), L'Evaluation dans les systemes scolaires, De Boeck Superior, 2013).

4. The mutual trust area between school and labor market

Nowdays, the school is more and more responsible for guiding pupils in naturally attend educational and training programs in order to optimally fit in the labor market, but also in society. This fact emphasizes the common nature of key-skills that have to develop on both directions to the same extent. „The mutual trust area" between education and training represents the base for acknowledging these skills beyond the frontiers of different educational sub-systems (transferable credits).

The documents and directives of European authorities ascertain the "European norm". Flexibly and creatively applying the "European norms" to the national specific is hereinafter important, so that there takes place a union

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between tradition and innovation, between the European specific and the national one (Adrian Stoica, op. Cit, pg. 193).
As far as evaluation is regarded, the evolution of western educational systems is as follows:

- From evaluating the individual to evaluating the entity/community;
- From an evaluation based on following norms and prescriptions to an evaluation based on results (Vincent Dupriez& Regis Malet (coord), L'Evaluation dans les systemes scolaires, De Boeck Superior, 2013, Pg. 151).

Ensuring the skills as part of the „mutual trust area" is compulsory having in consideration that school is more and more summoned by society to "give a report" regarding its efficiency. The „accountability" (as part of the English specialty literature) and "reddition de compte" (as part of the French literature) concepts are more and more mentioned as part of the documents of politics and educational strategy in Europe and worldwide. The Romanian translation for these concepts would be "account", „to hold responsible", „to give an account", „school to report" etc. So school has to account for its results in front of the society. „The school is more and more based on results and performances; the documents of educational politics and strategies use different expressions to name this reality: „accountability" as part of the Anglo-Saxon countries (considered by specialists to be a hard term), „piloting" (a softer term) based on continental Europe's extern evaluation, „management/based on results management" in Quebec. ...These terms are more and more emphasizing the diversity of institutional structures and tools that put into force, in the long run the obvious and accelerated to consider school a system of school production" (Christian Maroy, L"ecole a l"eprove de la performance, De Boek Superior, Bruxeles, 2013, as part of the study Politiques et outils de „l"ecole de la performance": accountability, regulation par les resultats et pilotage, pg. 13-14).

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