

## EDUCATION – WORD – COMMUNICATION

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**ABSTRACT.** The concept of education is amongst the few, if not the only one, which could stand as an own good of human essence. Education is action, abnegation, ceaseless zeal, care for each moment, it is a process in development and at the same time, in its essence bears a transfer of values from society to individual. The process in development, the educational approach, is an ensemble, a system of actions projected, organized, coordinated, assessed and maximized according to qualitative criteria. Education as a man's spiritualization process would be impoverished if it didn't have in view person's ability to integrate, and the connection between matter and spirit.

The word has its fundamental vocation of working to outline and mould disciple's personality. The fundamental mission of the divine and human word is to build the human person in spiritual beauty, in what is good, truth and justice. Word's normal function in education is the expression of the good's will, which means, of everything that is worthy, noble and superior. The word has the power of spiritual rebirth, of integral life, being a strong instrument for education.

People must be aware of the fact that an important aspect in educational activities' most propitious carrying out, represents the communicative ethos.

**Key-words:** education, society, word, communication, didactics.

Human society's evolution was achieved through "learning", which is one of the human species' defining particularities, being a continuous accumulation of social experience, materialized in deeds of civilization and culture, through the process of conveying the knowledge and the skills from a generation to another. The problematic of knowledge and accumulation's acquiring process, its communication and development, was present in specific forms throughout man's historical evolution. From the earliest civilizations to antiquity's thinkers, from Renaissance to modern times, the problematic of learning and education occupied a central place.

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Studying India's ancient texts, or the gnomic texts from the Egyptian literature, until the Homeric age, or the legends of the nations from Africa, Asia, Latin America, all the great nations' culture moments of synthesis have attributed special values to man's endeavor for knowledge.

Throughout centuries, the education has known different conceptualizations, has been promoted by different institutions, but all having as a purpose more or less declared, sharing to the young generation the experience that elder generations acquired.

Seen under this aspect, "education is a strictly social function, because it socializes, meaning that it transforms an individual biologically antisocial in a member of a collectivity, assuring behaviors' inner assimilation, fixed as normal behaviors."<sup>1</sup>

The great philosophers and pedagogues' works, starting with Plato's *Dialogues*, Hamurappi's Code, Confucius' Teachings, or the pedagogic writings of Comenius, Pestalozzi, Rousseau, or J. J. Loke, have answered to the great problems and questions of the time regarding the educational system. Especially in the late Middle Ages has been achieved a considerable evolution of Pedagogy, of educations' science, when philosophers fought against scholasticism and against the theories of "relevant education", bringing arguments for understanding the real learning process, starting from reality. An essential contribution in educational systems' evolution brought J. J. Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Herbert, Hegel etc.<sup>2</sup>

The period of the developed Middle Ages recorded unprecedented progresses in all the aspects of economical, political and cultural life. This age of cultural boom represents exactly the moment of a new educational system's birth. Education's traditional frameworks had been too narrow to include the new sciences, but a superior-level education developed only after humanity would benefit the effects of an "intellectual revolution."<sup>3</sup>

Because of the fact that societies are in a continuous movement, educational systems in their turn, are not final, the qualities of an educational system are reflected in its ability to adapt continuously, in a flexible manner, to the social dynamics, to society's demands. Society creates in man, the new – "this creative virtue being a special privilege of human education."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Elisabeta Stănciulescu, *Teorii sociologice ale educației*, (Iași: Polirom, 1996), 205.

<sup>2</sup> E. Stănciulescu, *Sociologia educației și învățământului*, (București: Didactică și Pedagogică, 1997), 12-20.

<sup>3</sup> Ovidiu Drâmba, *Istoria Culturii și civilizației*, vol. III, (București: Științifică, 1990), 118.

<sup>4</sup> Emile Durkheim, *Educație și sociologie*, translated by Iorgu Stoian, (București: Didactică și Pedagogică, 1980), 69.

The present-day meaning attributed to the word “education” leads us to the identification of a certain action of formation, development and influence of a human being’s personality in her deeds. Throughout human history’s evolution, the concept of “education” has been differently perceived, according to that specific time and aimed intention. The general and particular preoccupations to unravel education’s essence, its birth, implementation, assessment and improvement, have made possible numerous alternatives, which highlights the fact that it is one of the most complex and difficult human action.

The problematic of education, as an identified study field, distinctly specified, amplified continuously, from empiric to scientific, comes to intense debates on this subject today, which confirms its complexity.

The etymology of the term “education” suggests two clear orientations of our approach:

1. From the Latin *educō, educere*, which designates the action of “getting out from”, of “rising”, “heighten”, coming to conceiving education as modification, transformation, passing from a certain state to another, newly formed, shaping a direction of action, from inside, the man having a bio-psychic nature;

2. From the Latin *educō, educare*, which includes the action of “growing”, “taking care”, “feeding” (plants, beings), understanding education as an activity in order to create the necessary conditions to physical growth, but at the same time, to spiritual care and spiritual feeding, under qualitative aspect.

According to these directions of education, we specify some principles and definitions outlined throughout the time:

- a) St. John Chrysostomos: to educate means to grow a child moral and in piety, to mould his intelligence, to form an athlete for Christ. Education is similar to an art, but there is no greater art than education, because if all the arts bring a use for this world, the art of education is achieved with a view to reaching the next world.

From the ideas presented by the St. John Chrysostomos in his definition, we see that he refers to clear objectives of being’s formation and mould, seeking as a finality, the next world.<sup>5</sup>

- b) Immanuel Kant: education is man’s disciplining, cultivating, civilizing and moralizing activity, and the purpose of education is to develop in man all the perfection he is capable of.<sup>6</sup>

Kant’s guiding principle in education is morality; if the children know the moral law, they will understand God, discovering through education the being’s

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<sup>5</sup> Cf. Dumitru Călugăr, *Educație și învățământ*, (Sibiu: 1946), 26.

<sup>6</sup> Ioan Gh. Stanciu, *O istorie a pedagogiei universale și românești până la 1900*, (București: Didactică și Pedagogică, 1977), 26.

potential, which through formation, it becomes personality. Kant examines three dimensions of personality: the cognitive dimension (in “Critique of the pure reason”), the moral dimension (in “Critique of the practical reason”) and the aesthetic dimension (in “Critique of the judgment power”). Moreover, there is an unbreakable connection between Kant’s metaphysics (especially the moral doctrine) and his outlook on education.<sup>7</sup> There are, however, in the modern period, exclusive preoccupations in the field of education, spirits who identify themselves with education’s destiny and practice, who contribute to outlining discipline’s theoretical articulations.

c) J. A. Comenius: The entire human being is made up by the three parts (culture, morality and religiosity), and education addresses to the man through each of them, alike, in their integrity. Educability, as society’s directed action, is possible and necessary for the human being, because it is obvious that any man, from his birth, is capable to acquire the knowledge of the things.<sup>8</sup>

J. A. Comenius: Education is the one which reveals and outlines in man’s life the perfection of the image of God’s powers in each of us.<sup>9</sup>

From Comenius’ thinking on education, one can ascertain a reflection towards interior, where it is achieved an insight in a vast valuable horizon, which set to work with the help of education, it is achieved the ideal, through man’s improvement, his, and society’s self-fulfillment.

The German Romanticism has some accents regarding the theories on education, which emphasize its individuality.

d) Goethe militates for a “harmonic education”, presented as an action on multiple plans in which, besides the education of intellect, of taste for beauty, besides the education in community’s moral values’ spirit, there must be taken into consideration physical development, too, the person being a beautiful creature, profoundly moral and pure, but without the physical force which forms the hero, falls defeated under the burden which she cannot bear, nor remove; all the duties are sacred for her, but this is too heavy.<sup>10</sup>

Either it has in view the personality as a whole, or there are emphasized certain aspects of it, defining the concept of education has always been situated in the continuity of influencing relation. It was noticed the fact that education’s purpose is to develop harmoniously child’s mental faculties and abilities. It can be

<sup>7</sup> G. G. Antonescu, *Filosofia și pedagogia lui Kant*, în *Istoria pedagogiei*, second edition, (București: Cultura Românească, S.A.R., 1939), 249-268.

<sup>8</sup> J. Amos Comenius, *Didactica Magna*, trad. de Iosif Antohi, (București: Didactică și Pedagogică, 1997), 1970, p. 26.

<sup>9</sup> J. A. Comenius, *Didactica Magna*, 69.

<sup>10</sup> G. G. Antonescu, V. P. Nicolau, *Antologie pedagogică*, vol. I, (București: Cultura Românească, S.A.R.), 65.

asserted, however, that not a few times, mental faculties and abilities developed through education are set to serve some mean interests, undesirable for society. The solution seems to be found at the ancient Greeks, then in Christianity, and the field in which it manifests is the one of morality. It is rightly considered that education is the ensemble of the measures taken by a generation in order to form the next generation in the spirit of virtue.<sup>11</sup>

e) Herbert: defines education as an action of person's formation for herself, this person developing a multitude of interests.

From this definition we can spotlight a special side of education, namely, self-education, and at the same time, the objectives outlined clearly, which bring a series of motivations. The classical conception in this direction belongs to Emile Durkheim, who considered that education's purpose is the formation of "social being", of the person who expresses not our personality, but the demands of the groups we belong to: religious beliefs, moral practices, national traditions, collective opinions.<sup>12</sup>

In Romanian Pedagogy's space, G. G. Antonescu, speaking about education's intended influences, shows that it benefits of more of the formative virtues, having a precise purpose, out of which, education loses its sense.<sup>13</sup>

Education's problem, as a whole and in its details is situated in the field of a permanent nowadays. Thus, it had been as new to the mankind from heathen antiquity as it was to those from early Christianity, and in the Middle Ages it was offered the same attention as it is clear to be nowadays. This thing has its own explanation: the generations of all times sought to build a road as lasting as it was possible, and a spiritual conduct as ideal as possible, for their descendants. People's faith in education's power relies on exactly this thing. Education has always been considered a power set to serve the achievement of the precise purposes. Education, we can say, is not almighty, but through it, and in it, can be obtained real treasures.

A more careful analysis would show a troubling fact: the concept of education is amongst the few, if not the only one, which could stand as an own good of human essence. Education is action, abnegation, ceaseless zeal, care for each moment, it is a process in development and at the same time, in its essence bears a transfer of values from society to individual.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Edouard Roehrich, *Philosophie de l'éducation, Essai de pédagogie générale*, (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1910), 23.

<sup>12</sup> E. Durkheim, *Educație și sociologie*, 69.

<sup>13</sup> G. G. Antonescu, *Pedagogie generală*, (Craiova: Scrisul Românesc, 1946).

<sup>14</sup> Ioan Nicola, *Tratat de pedagogie școlară*, (București: Didactică și Pedagogică, 1996), 16.

So, education is a fundamental social-human activity, for and through socialization, in a functional unity – human personality. The process in development, the educational approach, is an ensemble, a system of actions projected, organized, coordinated, assessed and maximized according to qualitative criteria. Education as a social, original and fundamental phenomenon of conveying adult generation's life experience to the young generations with a view to their preparation for social life integration, is a unique and unitary action, containing an ensemble of influences, measures, scientifically established and systematically applied techniques, which have in view human personality's formation in its integrity, in compliance with an ideal model, historically and socially determined.<sup>15</sup>

Through education as a formation-development process, we achieve human personality, often contradictory; but this process is based on transformations, changes, modifications, completions, corrections, moulds, influences, improvements of it, on dimensions, as a psycho-somatic unit along its existence.

Education has many components and is achieved at different levels and areas, according to desired particular objectives: political, moral, aesthetic, professional, intellectual education, the education of will, of abilities, of feelings, self education etc.<sup>16</sup>

Defined as culture's (knowledge's) integrated conveying, education represents one of the moments of institutionalizing process, a man's disciplining, cultivating, civilizing, moralizing activity, and the purpose in itself is to develop in man all the perfection he is capable of.<sup>17</sup>

Seen as a pedagogue-disciple relation, in a given situation it can be analyzed as a changing process, because it leads to sedimentation, accumulation, objectification in language, and also to naming some behaviors.<sup>18</sup>

There is, however, in contemporary Pedagogy, a stream of opinions which deal with interiority's cultivation, which certify once again the importance and necessity of a paideutics centred on being's spiritual dimension. Education as a man's spiritualization process would be impoverished if it didn't have in view person's ability to integrate, and the connection between matter and spirit. Hence, education's approaching ways: as an activity scientifically interpreted and conceived, and as technology and art in its practical achievement, too. The studies reveal a varied number of characteristics, according to approached conceptions and ways of interpretation.

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<sup>15</sup> *Mic dicționar enciclopedic*, (București: Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1986), 585.

<sup>16</sup> *Mic dicționar enciclopedic*, 583.

<sup>17</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Tratat de pedagogie. Religia în limitele rațiunii*, (Iași: Agora, 1992), 189.

<sup>18</sup> E. Stănculescu, *Teorii sociologice ale educației*, 205.

Education answers to some of society's objective demands, assures the connection between generations, between experience and progress, preserves society and propels it, too, achieving a socializing progressive process.

We can notice that education appears as an essential activity, a process, a result, a social phenomenon, being achieved through varied contribution of some factors (formal, non-formal, informal) to prepare the passing from the past to the future of society's development.

Education does not represent a purpose in itself, but it serves achieving some finalities. The integral concept of education refers to a complex phenomenon which represents two inseparable dimensions:

- a) the instruction – referring to informative aspect; and
- b) the education, in term's strict sense – referring to formative aspect.<sup>19</sup>

Education represents a system of deliberate or non-deliberate actions and influences, explicit or implicit, which contributes to individuals personalities' formation, mould, development and transformation, no matter the age, with a view to achieving some finalities, established according to nowadays or future's demands of the society.<sup>20</sup>

Seen under these aspects, "education" is, and must be, a priority in society, generally, and especially, the religious education, we consider that is absolutely necessary to relate to God. In this meaning, "modern Pedagogy's father", J. A. Comenius (1592-1670), through his work, *Didactica magna*, published in 1632 in Czech, and in 1657 in Latin, says: "...teachers must learn more on students, in schools should exist less disorder, abhorrence and wasted work, but more freedom, pleasure and profound progress, in Christian community should be less obscurity, confusion and scission – but more light, order, peace and silence."<sup>21</sup>

Education being an activity which aims the whole, the harmony, it does not confine to just developing soul's functions, but it happily promotes man's physical side, intending a superior way of living. No matter the meaning given to the concept of education, we can ascertain that the institutionalized action, as well as the one from family, or Church, have in view human nature's information, formation and mould.

The human being was created by God in order to live in community, a being who can fulfill herself only through and in communion with the others, a truth expressed in the texts of Genesis, too, when God says: "It is not well for the man to be alone; let us make a suited help for him." (Genesis, 2, 18). The word is the main means through which people communicate what they want, it is the

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<sup>19</sup> Miron Ionescu, *Instrucție și educație. Paradigme educaționale moderne*, (Cluj-Napoca: Eikon, 2011), 46.

<sup>20</sup> M. Ionescu, *Instrucție și educație*, 46.

<sup>21</sup> J. A. Comenius, *Didactica Magna*, 6.

instrument of confession and reception of the fellow creatures. The human being finds authenticity and fullness only in communion.<sup>22</sup>

The word fulfills its superior meaning only when it serves the true reality, when it has a creative power. It has its fundamental vocation of working to outline and mould disciple's personality. The fundamental mission of the divine and human word is to build the human person in spiritual beauty, in what is good, truth and justice. Word's normal function in education is the expression of the good's will, which means, of everything that is worthy, noble and superior.

The word builds when it springs out from the conscience of responsibility to the fellow creatures, disciples, when the man understands the word as a dialogic reality. The word in its quality of life's spring, can purify, sanctify, or rest: "Now you are pure, because of the word I have told you" (John, 15, 3).

The word has the power of spiritual rebirth, of integral life, being a strong instrument for education. St. Gregory from Sinai, writing about the word which is shared through learning, classifies it in four groups: "the word from learning, the one from reading, the one from deed and the word from grace."<sup>23</sup> The human word's fullness and power, is alive in virtue of our relational connection with God's eternal word: "God's word is alive and works" (Jews, 4, 12). Word's normal function is to construct spiritually, containing a living power. The religious hymn from the Thursday of Ordeals, certifies this meaning: "Give me word, oh Word, do not let me silent, thou, the One Who guarded me pure, for You are the Son of God". That is why the employment of the word in formative education imposes a soteriological responsibility: "Alas! For each word without covering in gold, for each word in whose core I entered to disturb its consuming fire, I will have to answer."<sup>24</sup>

The Saint Fathers of the Church didn't waste their words in vain, because the word must be sown in order to bring fruit. The work in the temple of the words is an act of liturgy of the general priesthood, a sacerdotal work of man as priest of the creation.

The word must touch the soul and strengthen the mind. Thus will be valorized the verbal, explanatory and logical instrument, which can function as an additional way of resuscitating the atrophied faith, of wakening the latent spiritual forces.

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<sup>22</sup> N. Wal, *Realitate și limbaj*, (București, 1968), 51.

<sup>23</sup> Sf. Grigorie Sinaitul, *Filocalia VII*, translated by Dumitru Stăniloae, (București: Institutul Biblic și de Misiune al Bisericii Ortodoxe Române, 1977), 123.

<sup>24</sup> N. Modoiu, *Cuvântul în Îndrumătorul misionar și bisericesc al Arhiepiscopiei Sibiului*, (Sibiu, 1987), 87.



The word which tries to educate is a “creative” word, meaning that through its mission itself, can convince, can sicken the others, or destroy. Of great importance is not only the transmitted content, but its form of appearance, too. A rapid and dead speech, without beauty and consistency will form a public of the same structure. The teacher, the pedagogue, first of all, must know to speak, to master the language, to rely on the most propitious addressability. It is not enough to spread a bunch of words, to offer quotes, to gesticulate, to holler, but it is necessary to arrange a well-balanced word, clear, articulated and to the point, without tiresome rhetorical makeshifts. It is necessary to plead for a new stylistics and a new rhetoric of the theological speech presented in school, in church or in community.

People must be aware of the fact that an important aspect in educational activities’ most propitious carrying out, represents the communicative ethos, respectively, the relational dimension sustained by the explicit and implicit language, used by the protagonists.<sup>25</sup>

Didactical communication, in general, represents a multi-channel complex transfer of the items of information between two entities who simultaneously or successively assume the roles of transmitter and receiver, creating desirable contents in the educational-instructive process.

Communication requires a circular personality who places herself in a certain time, of which she will allow for, and which in its turn, moulds the personality. Far from being a linear, homogenous, mechanical phenomenon, it presents like a dynamic process, during which, some strategies are replaced by other, leading the collocutors to a “movement” of one towards the other.

If in the normal form, the word used in communication must be bearer of creative energies, often, in human words there is weakness, or a negative influence, they lack in good thoughts, they are empty of spirit. Through using the word “worthless”, it produces pain and suffering, becomes the instrument of the sin, which crushes and buries. Such a situation was generated by the fracture that had been produced and perpetuated, between creation and God, eventually leading to an anti-language.

This mutation was produced through devil’s deception who first used the word in a negative way – the lie – speaking to Adam and Eve: “No, thou shall not die!” (Genesis, 3, 4). This fall from the communion with God meant a fall from real reasoning, after this ensuing a fall from the exercise of righteous, loving, creative speaking, lived and affirmed in “grace and truth”.

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<sup>25</sup> Constantin Cucos, *Educația religioasă. Repere teoretice și metodice*, (Iași: Polirom, 1999), 284.

Hence, the creation speaks two contrary languages so much, that the real language is forgotten, thus, there is, and persists a profound confusion.

Words must be given back their authenticity. The word, both in education as a didactic function and in society as a message must regain its vocation and role of means of communion, through communication: “the word must be taken seriously and turned from the level of information to the level of sharing, of living. This is the spiritual level of the word”.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Rafael Noica, *Despre cuvânt*, Essex, Anglia apud Constantin Coman, *Ortodoxia sub presiunea istoriei*, (București: Bizantină, 1995), 163.