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MENTORING FOR SUCCESSFUL TEACHING CAREER

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TABLE OF CONTENT

Profesionalizarea carierei didactice - PROF – ID 146587
Proiect cofinanțat din Fondul Social European prin Programul Operațional Capital Uman 2014-2020

5

INTRODUCTION

The volume Mentoring for Successful Teaching Career was prepared based on the work of the International Conference on Mentoring for Teaching Career, organized by the Romanian Ministry of Education, within the Strategic Project Professionalization of Teaching Career - PROF (Project ID: POCU / 904/6/25/146587), in partnership with the: *Lucian Blaga* University of Sibiu, *Transilvania* University of Brașov, *Dunărea de Jos* University of Galati, *George Emil Palade* University of Medicine, Pharmacy, Sciences and Technology of Târgu Mureș.

The conference brought together over 2000 teachers and specialists in education from the country and abroad, allowing the collection of experiences and ideas from different categories of expertize from diverse geographical and cultural areas. The discussions provided an outline of a comprehensive perspective on mentoring, the presentation of examples of good practice and the challenges and strategies from different countries.

This volume proposes a synthesis of the ideas and experiences analyzed during the conference, being a starting point in the development of the national strategy for rethinking the teaching career and career mentoring. It includes benchmarks on European and national policies to support the teaching career in all its stages: from initial teacher training, to the best possible organization of the insertion or professional internship to obtain the status of teacher, to support motivation for career development and mechanisms for retaining and stimulating the best teachers in the system. Most European countries approach mentoring as a central theme both as a component of the training program, during the professional internship, and as a component of continuous professional development and progress in the teaching career, in all its stages.

The volume includes perspectives on the main aspects of mentoring: dimensions of the mentoring process, mentor-mentee relationship, mentee' needs, innovative mentoring environments and mechanisms, profile, selection and training of mentors, recognition and evaluation of mentors, etc. These are organized into the following sections:
- The context and content of mentoring. Understanding the needs of teachers, the roles and responsibilities of mentors
- European experiences of mentoring and professional development of teachers
- Landmarks for the development of the teacher mentoring.

The volume is addressed to decision makers and professionals involved in teacher training – teaching professionals in teacher training institutions, education researchers, mentors, school principals, representatives of organizations active in education and training.

The authors are teaching professionals in higher education, teachers in pre-university education, researchers and experts in teacher training.

Section 1: The context and content of mentoring. Understanding the needs of teachers, the roles and responsibilities of mentors

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9

DIMENSIONS OF THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP IN EDUCATION

Daniel MARA[1]

Abstract: In this paper we present some essential ideas about the mentoring relationship in education. It can be analysed from the perspective of several dimensions: that of the educational agents involved, that of time, that of the field of intervention. Mentoring is a professional, working alliance in which individuals work together to support the personal and professional growth, development, and success of relational partners by providing career and psychosocial support. Mentoring in education is essential for effective teacher preparation. By investing in the personal and professional development of mentors, they can be important milestones for mentored teachers at the beginning of their careers and at other points in their professional development, shaping their careers and professional development. The key to ensuring a successful mentoring relationship at any career stage is setting expectations that both parties agree to and that are flexible enough to evolve over the course of the relationship. Approaching the mentoring relationship involves highlighting mentoring processes and experiences in the context of a developmental partnership. Thus, the collaborative, mutual, professional relationships that form between a mentor teacher and a mentee teacher are examined, as well as the forms that these relationships take.

Key words: mentoring relationship, psycho-pedagogical skills, initial training, in-service training.

1. Introduction

In recent times there has been increasing attention to the importance of initial teacher education in the early stages of a teaching career and in the subsequent professional development of teachers. Comparative approaches highlight similar concerns and practices in many education systems, which converge towards supporting and promoting the process of initial and induction training of beginning teachers through mentoring. Through their work, mentors have the opportunity to contribute to building an intelligent and collaborative ecosystem and to exercise their fundamental role in a

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cooperative and open way with other teachers. It is recommended that this ecosystem should include the following aspects: explicitly setting the design objectives of the mentoring activity; implementing and monitoring the mentoring and mentoring action; selecting and organizing the admission process for beginning teachers (Fiorucci, Moretti, 2019, p. 11).

The mentor is considered an important resource for the professional development of teachers, given the multiple dimensions that he/she can address in the mentoring activity: the design dimension, the didactic dimension (teaching-learning-assessment), the didactic communication dimension, the classroom management dimension, the relationship dimension, the extracurricular dimension, etc. All these dimensions are guided by several goals: setting up the theoretical framework of the community of practice, promoting and developing psycho-pedagogical skills, conducting classroom observation activities, peer-to-peer training, training self-evaluation skills, reflection on professional practices. Teaching requires a wide range of skills, skills that are considered indispensable for the design and implementation of teaching activities, but especially to motivate students to study, develop their curiosity for knowledge and critical thinking. In order to meet the challenges of global education, teachers must be actively involved in the process of continuous training. Educational contexts have become increasingly complex (large numbers of pupils relative to the number of teachers, social, cultural and economic heterogeneity of pupils). Mentoring activity is based on the collaborative dimension, which is generative of educational meanings and cultures and enriches the experience of developing common educational practices. Educational institutions are involved in the process of lifelong learning and in providing a personalised training process to ensure the necessary support for learning for both pupils and teachers. In-service training and professional development of teachers starts immediately after initial training. The transition process from initial training to initial classroom teaching is one of the most critical phases of a teacher's career, and is a cause of stress, burnout and even abandonment for teachers. It is very important to pay the utmost attention to mentor teacher preparation. In many education systems, mentoring is seen as part of the overall work of the teacher, which requires the direct involvement of a large number of mentor teachers. In reality, it is often the case that mentors are appointed by the head teacher or the governing board of the educational institution, applying the widespread criterion of teacher rotation in taking on additional workloads compared to classroom teaching. Lack of motivation to mentor and sometimes lack of preparation highlight the need for special attention to be paid to mentor teacher training. Recently, there has been a growing number of initiatives to train mentors to support the work of beginning teachers. The main forms of organisation of mentor training programmes are lectures, seminars and, less frequently, structured and systematic interventions. The e-mentoring programmes implemented in some education systems demonstrate that this strategy can lead to results by creating reflective, flexible and open training environments that can facilitate active participation, interaction between participants and mutual support between colleagues. However,

experts propose as an optimal solution the design and implementation of blended mentoring training programmes, i.e. both face-to-face and online platform activities.

2. Traditional and Modern Pillars of the Teaching Profession

The experience that a person acquires as a teacher can be analyzed and valued in terms of the basic elements that have contributed to its shaping, evolution and completion. The essential elements are the traditional pillars on which the teaching profession is built.

One of these pillars is the teacher's specialist training, i.e. a thorough knowledge of the subject being taught. The teacher's thorough preparation in the specialist field can ensure the quality of education.

Of course, thorough specialist training is not enough for a teacher to excel in education. In addition to acquiring specialist knowledge and continually updating this knowledge, the subject matter they teach pupils also requires psycho-pedagogical training, which is also evident in the process of transferring specialist knowledge to young people in training. In terms of specialist training, the content that teachers pass on to their pupils should be continually updated in response to the rapid development and evolution of all areas of knowledge.

In order to achieve the best possible results in the learning process, it is important to know and apply the principles of psycho-pedagogy and the didactics of the specialist field that the teacher teaches.

In terms of psycho-pedagogical aspects, it is recommended that today's school should be equally involved in the three dimensions of the teaching process: teaching, learning and assessment. It is recommended that the paradigm of the modern model of an effective teaching process should be reflected at all levels: human resources, material resources, the physical structures of the school (classrooms, furnishing of classrooms, equipping the school with digital technology, etc.), teaching strategies (teaching methods, teaching aids, forms of organisation), the teacher-pupil relationship, in-service teacher training, with mentoring as the core of a permanent process of improving teaching.

The ideal situation is one in which the two dimensions of specialist training and psycho-pedagogical training are accompanied by other dimensions, which are very important in defining the profile of a model teacher.

On a more nuanced analysis, from the perspective of the hierarchy of the types of competences that a teacher must have, we can state that the psycho-pedagogical dimension prevails over the specialist dimension at kindergarten and primary school level and that specialist training is more important at higher levels. This idea has been put in the following formula: primary school teachers love their

children, secondary school teachers love the discipline they teach and university teachers love themselves (Midoro, 1999).

Alongside psycho-pedagogical skills, teachers' professionalism also involves a series of skills that are difficult to classify but no less important, such as the ability to manage conflicts, the ability to show empathy towards pupils, the ability to operate harmoniously within the specific school context.

In addition to the traditional pillars of the teaching profession, modern ones have been added, such as the management of information and communication technology (ICT). The development and widespread use of digital technology is producing profound changes in the way people learn and operate. Teachers cannot remain excluded from the path of new technologies. Their professionalism needs to include competence in the use of information and communication technologies (ICT), particularly adapted to the subject they teach.

This competence covers the ability to use computers and network tools to ensure the achievement of outcomes necessary in the teaching profession, such as: individual productivity, communication, sharing and collaboration, awareness and knowledge of the main changes brought about by new technologies in subject content, teaching methods, and the ability to use ICT skills to facilitate learning processes in students. As in any other intellectual activity, computers and the Internet have become common tools in the conduct of work. In the case of teachers too, new technologies are used for teaching-learning-assessment activities but also for classroom management activities (drafting project documents, organising pupils' portfolios or teaching materials, participating in working groups on various topics, accessing information available online, sharing information with colleagues in the same subject community, managing cooperative projects). The use of computers as a systematic working tool has and will bring about major changes in the teaching profession by enriching it with new elements. The ability to use new technologies in teaching will increasingly be a prerequisite for shaping the career path of every teacher and is becoming part of the professionalism of every teacher, whose fundamental role is to facilitate the learning, development and training processes of young people.

The use of digital technology has recently been increasing in all fields, including education. Teachers who are committed to finding the most effective ways of integrating digital technologies in the classroom will succeed in facilitating the teaching-learning-assessment process, motivating and activating students. In this regard, continuous training of teachers in digital education, digital literacy where needed, is required in order to design and carry out teaching activities using digital technology (Adam, 2021, p.47).

3. The Essence of Mentoring in Education

Mentoring in education aims to initiate and develop a training, support and learning relationship between a mentor teacher who shares his or her experience and knowledge with another teacher, who is the mentor teacher, in a position to receive support to improve his or her work, to develop his or her professional experience.

The mentor is a person with experience and expertise who supports the mentored teacher to develop through training and learning. Mentoring is a relationship based on trust between mentor and mentee in which there is a transfer of knowledge, skills, which fosters the transformation of the mentee's professional identity.

Starting from the different perspectives of explaining the concept of mentoring, we present some fundamental characteristics of mentoring activity (Stan, 2020, pp.18-19):

- Mentoring is a communicative, interpersonal relationship between two or more people, one with a higher degree of expertise than the other.

- The mentoring relationship develops over time, and according to these changes, the mentor must adapt the needs of the mentee, the degree and type of information, support and model offered.

- An effective mentoring program aims to achieve pre-determined goals formulated by the mentor together with the mentee.

- The effectiveness of the mentoring activity and relationship is influenced by the mentor's personality characteristics (empathy, ease of establishing interpersonal relationships, positive attitude, moral integrity), but also by the mentor's professional skills. From the mentee's perspective, the effectiveness of mentoring is conditioned by qualities such as: willingness to improve, confidence, openness to new things, willingness to learn.

The professionalization of the teaching career aims at a process of enrichment, improvement of the teaching activity of each teacher. This can be successfully achieved through mentoring, which can intensively reflect the change in the ways of communicating, sharing, collaborating, and analyzing the learning of the human being. Essential to this process are all the components that contribute to achieving the desired outcomes reflected in the rigorous and effective preparation of teachers.

Mentoring in a teaching career is a complex and multi-dimensional process of guiding, teaching, influencing, and supporting a teacher at a particular point in his/her professional development (at the beginning, in professional development and evolution, towards the end of his/her teaching career). It is generally accepted that a mentor teacher leads, guides and advises another teacher in a working situation characterized by mutual trust and conviction. The purpose of this relationship is to provide the mentored teacher with a support system that can help him or her develop professionally.

Research has shown that there is a link between the collaboration between the mentor teacher and the mentored teacher, in that the mentored teacher is more likely to stay in the teaching profession than those who are not supported, mentored. Effective mentors use the principles and strategies specific to adult learning in their mentoring.

The success of the mentoring relationship is based on their congruent approach to the curricular components, the learning process, etc. In the mentoring relationship the participants follow a path, a development, marked by growth in intellectual and practical terms, in which the common ideas act as a stimulus for this growth.

Mentoring is a process characterized by reciprocity, in which both (mentor and mentee) collaborate with the aim of developing partnership relationships, in which each becomes teacher and mentee in equal measure. Mentoring is a dynamic process because mentoring influences and changes the context and the context shapes the relationship. Mentoring is a reflective process as mentoring facilitates the reflection of the two teachers involved in the process (mentor teacher and mentee teacher) to support the development of professional identity. The mentor stimulates the professionally mentored teacher to develop his or her own conception and attitude towards instruction and education.

4. The Mentoring Relationship in Education

The mentor-mentee relationship evolves from a certain degree of dependence on the mentor towards an acquisition of autonomy and confidence in the mentee's own decisions and actions.

The data obtained from extensive research carried out in Italy, highlights the most frequently addressed topics, which are the subject of mentoring activity, as well as the desirable behaviors in the mutual teacher-mentor relationship, in the case of beginning teachers: didactics and teaching strategies (84.0%), classroom management (70.7%), mutual planning and observation (60.7%). The results of the collaboration between mentor and mentored teacher also have positive implications in terms of active participation in the life of the school, as the mentor is also a reference in terms of knowledge of the management and operational mechanisms of the school in which he/she works.

In the mentoring relationship it is very important to know and apply basic principles, which play a role in guiding and constructively involving those involved in this activity. William Hogue and Ernest Pringle have developed a set of guiding principles for mentors (https://www.educause.edu/-/media/files/wiki-import/2014infosecurityguide/mentoring-toolkit/siguccsmentorguidepdf):
     - The principle of mutual benefit. It is recommended that the mentor-mentee teacher relationship be conceived and defined as a mutually beneficial process. Each of the two actors in the

relationship engages in the relationship by choice. Thus, each openly shares their goals for the relationship and works collaboratively to help achieve them.

- The principle of confidentiality. Maintaining an environment of confidentiality is an essential component in building trust between mentor-mentee teacher. Ensuring the confidentiality of the content of the mentoring activity ensures that both partners participate confidently in the activity.

- Honesty principle. Participants are honest and their involvement in the partnership relationship involves sharing ideas, giving honest feedback, even if the feedback is critical.

- The principle of active listening and mutual learning. Mutual benefit and honesty can only be achieved when both members feel that their views are heard and respected. Mentor teachers will bear in mind that the mentoring activity is not about them but about the teachers being mentored.

- The principle of creating a working partnership. The mentoring relationship is a working partnership, which includes project consultation or active collaboration rooted in the common ground of shared professional goals. In this collaborative setting, insights can be generated about each participant's professional and personal life (preferred work style, daily obligations and professional aspirations). The power of example is also tested in this type of activity. The actions of each mentor create the most lasting motivation for the mentored teachers.

- Flexibility principle. It is all very well for the mentoring relationship to be defined by goals, but the process is just as important, perhaps even more so than the goals. Therefore, a flexible approach to the whole mentoring process is recommended, which implies a continuous and realistic adaptation to all conditions and training contexts encountered along the way.

4.1. The Mentoring Relationship from the Perspective of the Involvement of Educational Agents

The mentoring relationship in the educational field can generate evolution, progress and quality of the educational process if it strengthens through awareness and constructive approach the following important elements in its development:

One element concerns the capacity of self-awareness, self-analysis and self-reflection in relation to the teaching activity of the mentored teacher, in order to know the experiences of his/her professional life, from as many perspectives as possible, to know where he/she is professionally at the moment of involvement in the mentoring activity, to record the evolution, what he/she will build and obtain as new performances thanks to the mentoring activity;

Another element refers to the conscious, intentional involvement in the mentoring activity of the two teachers: the mentor teacher and the mentee teacher. The mentoring relationship becomes effective if it is based on empathy, kindness, safety, trust, mutual respect. In this way, the mentored teacher will benefit from professional development but above all will stand out through originality and autonomy, generated by creativity, problem solving, performance, achievement of standards, etc.

Another component on which the mentoring relationship depends concerns the management of the educational institution in which the mentoring activity is carried out, from the perspective of the existence of an organisational culture that includes in the institution's specific values also continuous training, professionalisation of the teaching career and the promotion of learning communities among teachers.

4.2. The Mentoring Relationship in Time Perspective

Mentoring is a phased activity. This is evidenced by the existence of models that explain the stages of the mentoring process.

One model is the linear model. According to this model, mentoring takes place in four stages: preparation, negotiation, facilitation and conclusion. The preparation stage includes documentation, getting to know the two actors - the mentor teacher and the mentee teacher - and the start of the mentoring process. The negotiation phase involves drawing up the development plan according to the needs and wishes of the mentor teacher. The facilitation phase includes the actual mentoring process. The concluding stage includes the conclusion and evaluation of the mentoring process (Stan, 2020).

The American Psychological Association has developed a guide for mentoring participants that specifies four phases of the mentor-mentee relationship, a model similar to the linear model: initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition. The initiation phase is the stage when people enter the mentoring relationship. It is a process of getting to know each other through professional interactions. The relationship is characterized by care, attention and understanding of the mentee's perspective. It is important that there is mutual agreement about entering into the mentoring relationship. The cultivation phase is the actual beginning and unfolding of the mentoring process. The mentee begins to learn from the mentor, to take on models, solutions, but also to find their own solutions to the problems they face. The mentor builds a partnership with the mentee, building on the mentee's qualities and potential. Avoid criticism, imposition, confrontation, and domination. The mentor's role is to help the mentee see options, consequences, and solutions. The separation phase refers to the end of the mentoring relationship, following the achievement of the proposed objectives, or following the identification of dysfunctions in the mentor-mentee relationship. The redefinition phase is the stage when the two participants in the mentoring relationship become aware of the possibility that their relationship may continue, in a different way from the mentoring relationship, becoming one of friendship, mutual support, not necessarily formal.

4.3. The Mentoring Relationship from the Perspective of the Field of Intervention

From the perspective of the field of intervention, the relationship between mentor teacher and mentee teacher unfolds in plan:

- personal - the relationship is based on mutual trust, positive attitude, motivation, and enthusiasm.
- intellectual - the relationship is based on similar professional interests and willingness to share knowledge and experience from the mentor's work, as well as the mentee's openness to new experiences and knowledge.
- organizational - the relationship is based on more or less formal contacts, noting the form and frequency of meetings and activities.

In 2018, a review of all articles, studies and books on mentoring was conducted at Stanford University. It was found that most mentors focus on how the profession is practiced, on job-specific issues, and on how programs are administered in organizations, institutions. There is little analysis or advice on how to do whole person mentoring, extending beyond the career to include discussions about behavior, values, relationships, parenting, financial issues and even spiritual life. Whole person mentoring, not limited to career issues, will have a greater impact, with results in the mentee's development.

5. Forms of Mentoring

Several types of mentoring are used in education. The diversity of these forms of mentoring can be explained by the multiple educational contexts, different training contexts, which can be adapted in order to achieve the proposed results. In terms of the types of mentoring and how they work for each party involved, educational institutions that adopt mentoring programs first determine which type is most appropriate for their ultimate purpose and especially for the teachers being mentored. Resources and time may also influence the choice and implementation of one form of mentoring or another. We will present some of these.

One-to-One mentoring

This is the most common form of mentoring. Through this form of mentoring the mentor and mentee develop a professional relationship that can last for a number of years or even a lifetime. These relationships are highly structured, with multiple outcomes, often for both the mentor and the mentored teacher.

Peer-to-peer Mentoring

This is a very effective form of implementing the mentoring process in teaching careers, which can involve teachers at various stages of their professional career development: beginners, trainees or with longer experience. One of the most appreciated aspects of this mentoring method by beginning teachers is the relational dimension established with the mentor. The mentored teachers appreciated the mentor's willingness to participate in frequent meetings on classroom management and relations with students, as well as the ability to be actively involved in didactic-methodological aspects, which are considered an important added value. By carrying out these activities together (mentor-mentor teacher), the mentor takes on the role of an empathic facilitator of the teaching-learning process, who manages to "steer the mentee on the right track".

Group Mentoring

This form of mentoring involves the activity of the mentor teacher being directed towards several mentored teachers, who usually have a common or similar objective. This method is particularly effective in situations where time and mentoring resources are of the essence. Once a level of trust and openness is achieved, this model is also effective for leveraging collective knowledge, where shared knowledge and ideas can trigger greater possibilities for professional development.

Team Mentoring

Specific to this form of mentoring is the fact that several mentor teachers' mentor one teacher. The relationship lasts for a limited period of time, until the goal is reached, or the project is completed. The focus of the mentoring relationship is the function of the group, rather than any psychosocial connection. Mentors are involved to act as guides and resources, providing feedback on the activity, but it is the responsibility of the mentor teacher to be actively involved in training and development.

E-Mentoring

A mentor works with one teacher at a time via the Internet. Some programs consider an initial meeting or regular face-to-face meetings if distance allows but most of the meetings will take place online. This type of mentoring is particularly useful for schools or organizations that have multiple branches around the world. It is also a great way for participants from different localities, areas, regions, countries. It is important that both parties are self-motivated to maintain regular communication and complete agreed tasks without the need to have all face-to-face meetings.

Informal mentoring

Mentoring can also take place outside the formal setting. Thus, informal mentoring can continue, complementing formal mentoring. The trainee teacher can self-select the mentor. These relationships develop naturally, may not include any formal agreement and may not have   any

formalized structure to them. Having a mentor does not always mean that the process must have a structure or be in a formal setting. This type of relationship tends to evolve naturally, as a friendship would, and advice and guidance is sought freely, especially in the beginning.

Reverse mentoring

It can happen that a trainee teacher has more experience or knowledge in a particular area than the mentor teacher. In this case, we speak of reverse mentoring. This type of mentoring can be used when the mentor teacher needs to know about a particular type of new technology, or it can be used to encourage diversity and understanding between generations. For this type of mentoring to be successful, it is important to remove barriers of status and position and create a safe and open environment for collaboration.

6. Conclusions

Mentoring is a professional activity, based on a relationship of trust and commitment. Mentoring in education aims to increase the quality of the educational process, the ultimate beneficiaries of this process being pupils and students. Mentoring is a strong foundation for building an educational community whose members can react quickly to change and can develop, adapt, and reconfigure over time. Mentor teachers play an extremely important role in the professional development of teachers. Mentor teachers have a responsibility to support junior teachers and trainee teachers in their teaching, both intellectually and practically applied, by supporting them and providing sustained and critical feedback. When mentors work effectively, the mentored teachers are involved in an accelerated learning process, which facilitates the formation and development of psycho-pedagogical skills in them. Effective mentoring involves the creation of a mentoring relationship, based on quality communication, support and advocacy from mentor teachers to mentees in both formal and non-formal work.

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WHY MENTORING DOESN'T WORK WITHOUT TRUST

Alina Georgeta MAG[2]

Abstract: *This paper highlights the value and importance of the mentoring process in schools now, in the complicated and disturbed context in which we live. Recent studies and educational practice attest to the fact that we need, more than ever, a revitalization of the educational relations between teachers and students, through authentic and solid mentoring models built based on trust, as a vital, essential skill, at the basis of the vocational training system in education. The PROF project "Professionalization of the teaching career", currently coordinated by the Ministry of Education, brings to the fore the need to reform the mentoring system in Romania, by focusing on creating communities of teachers who learn together, in a relational environment based on trust and mutual support, with the focus of the mentoring activity on the whole person, not only on the career. Mentor teachers have a duty to provide trustworthy models of conduct through every relational contact with students or beginning teachers.*

Key words: *mentoring; professionalization of the teaching career; trust; competences; professional standards.*

1. Introduction

In a world full of uncertainty, uncertain and surprising, with multiple and relative landmarks, it seems that nothing can replace confidence in our psychological horizon, even more so in the educational environment (Albu, 2005). In the process of teacher training, mentoring plays a key role. *But what role does confidence play in this whole endeavor and how can it be built, especially in the world now?*

At the basis of the whole approach is the complex relationship of collaboration between the experienced teacher and the practicing student or novice teacher, new to the school. The purpose of mentoring between teachers is to integrate the novice student or teacher into a support system that will ensure his success in working with students.

One of the most pressing problems of any aspirant to the teaching profession is to find a mentor to trust. Although self-confidence is a vital factor for students' academic success, the school considers

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itself primarily responsible for learning, not for building a strong self-confidence. Confidence is left in a cone of shadow in many of our schools. Lots of the students have numerous emotional health problems, and teachers directly affect their self-esteem, through the way they relate to them (Robu, 2008). Inappropriate reactions and attitudes, lack of understanding and empathy of teachers have long-term impact and affect students' self-confidence.

The mentoring process in schools today, in the complicated and troubled context in which we live, needs, more than ever, a revitalization of the educational relations between teachers and students, through authentic and solid mentoring models built based on trust, as a vital, essential skill, at the basis of the professional training system in education. Future teachers need to feel comfortable to talk openly about their insecurities and challenges, when not all of them work according to plan, that's the only way they will get the guidance they need to grow professionally. If they can share with a mentor only the bright side of their effort, then the person guiding them is not their mentor (Woolworth, 2019).

2. Theoretical perspectives

The latest studies attest to the fact that the mentoring process works well if active listening and effective use of questions and reflections takes place, but *trust* is at the heart of the whole process (Botton, 2020). Self-confidence is a vital skill that those who have experienced confidence in relationships with their educators come to acquire. The development of systems for quality assurance and accreditation of teacher training is regarded as one of the most important ways to improve the quality and effectiveness of education. In the current context, educational services and vocational training are increasingly structured on anticipatory policies and strategies, so that the management of the educational process involves a prospective vision, oriented towards long-term goals and effects.

Such a vision implies the need to relaunch the reform of the vocational training system to ensure that gaps are recovered and the quality standards of education at European level are achieved. A true reform in education and teacher training should transform schools in *creative and trustful environments* for a healthy grow and development of students, and this these needs to be mentored properly for future teachers today (Robinson, 2015).

Modern paradigms require a different acceptance of professional roles and identities, the emphasis being placed on the pragmatic, personal, reflective, and creative side of the formation process. At the core of change and progress is a process of social change, of assimilation and practice of new behaviours, attitudes, and values. The current guidelines on the training of teaching staff are in line with the perspective of theories related to human resources management (Pânișoară, 2017). The transformation of classical education into a permanent education led to the change of the approach

optics of the teaching career and implicitly of the evolution of the person, starting with the initial training and continuing with the continuous training or the training throughout the entire life.

Training is seen today as a vital social action that ensures the progress of the education system. It is essential to train teachers who trust themselves and their students through a mentoring process focused on trust (Gordon&Burch, 2011). Self-confidence and the possibility of cultivating trusting relationships with students are primarily necessary. Mentor teachers have a duty to provide trustworthy models of conduct through every relational contact with students and practicing students or beginning teachers (Albu, 2005).

In the complex context of new requirements and norms for the education of children in the current world, the roles of teachers are nuanced and empowered, through improvement and adaptation activities. The competences needed by educators to respond to current challenges involve openness to accepting the new, to find varied and flexible solutions that correspond to the diverse needs of children, creativity, reflexivity, partnership with the family, empathy, flexibility, and constructive facility, giving students the chance to choose between several options. All these skills can only be valued in the context of educational relationships that are based on solid trust (Dr. Glenn R. Schiraldi, 2017).

3. Professionalization of the teaching career

The trends in the development of in-service teacher education systems at European and global level determine the prospects for the development of in-service training at national level. The specificity of the in-service training of teachers in pre-university education at national level is determined by the educational policies promoted by the government, by the socio-economic context of the country in general, and by the constantly changing educational needs of the current generations of students. Centring on the student dictates the paradigm shift, changes in the values system of teachers and requires the empowerment of teachers with qualities as a subject of the educational process and their own professional development.

Continuous professional training is meant to develop the skills necessary to achieve the multiple professional roles, functions, and organizational duties newly emerging. Thus, the essential principles in the continuous training of teachers are the principle of reflection and responsible professional decision, the principle of coherence and continuity, the principle of individualization, the principle of free choice or choice and the principle of trust, which is the basis for building functional educational relationships (Pânişoara, 2017).

The model of professionalization applied in the in-service training of teachers is compatible with educational policies and constitutes a relevant and appropriate model to the context of continuous

teacher training in our country at the present stage. The PROF project "Professionalization of the teaching career", currently coordinated by the Ministry of Education, brings to the fore the need to reform the mentoring system in Romania, by focusing on creating communities of teachers who learn together, in a relational environment of trust and mutual support, with the focus of the mentoring activity on the whole person, not only on the career (Woolworth, 2019). Through the systemic intervention carried out through the PROF project, the professional training system for the teaching career is rethought, with emphasis in both initial and continuous training, as professional development in the format of the learning community, within the pedagogical practice bases, offering flexible routes of access and career development (https://www.edu.ro/PROF).

Professionalization comes as a means of valorization and improvement of the social position of teachers, a symbol, and a guarantee of the quality of activity and trust in teachers, a way for the modernization of education, a way of pedagogical training, of providing the tools of scientific activity at the level of working with children. Professionalization recognizes the complexity of the profession, requires explanation and instrumentalization, recognizes the specificity of professional training, develops new competences, recognizes the scientific character of the practice, diversifies the roles of the teacher, and affirms the roles of pedagogical competences for professional identity. At the core of the whole approach is the chance of those directly involved to build collaborative relationships based on authentic trust, on attachment, between mentors and practitioners or beginners, and students in application classes (Cozolino, 2014).

We find that in the new educational practice, centered on the student, to change the roles of the educator and the student, it is acuity required to reconsider the status of the educator and the set of competences: priority is given to the reflexive competence, qualitative methods of interpretation, critical analysis of situations, causes, results, the role of the educator's involvement in research-actions. Professionalization aims at the autonomy and responsibility of the educator, mastery and respect for the science of educational action, self-confidence and in the students' potential (Pânişoară, 2017).

The profession of teachers in school education has an extremely strong human dimension, which involves not only knowledge and skills, but also attitudes, values, ethos, trust in people, in other words a professional conscience. The personal intervention of the teacher is of major importance. The professional standards developed for the teaching staff cannot cover the wide range of contexts and situations involved in the education of children and adolescents. In these conditions, the professionalization of the teaching activity is not limited to the systematic assimilation of some competences described by the professional standards but implies a heuristic and creative use of them in educational situations and contexts that require it.

Professionalization involves a radical redefinition of the nature of competences that are at the root of effective pedagogical practices, and trust is the basis of the teacher's entire effort. Professionalisation must include, in addition to professional knowledge and skills, schemes of thinking/reasoning, interpretation, hypothesis-making, anticipation, decision-making. Any essential approach or self-demanding analysis relating to human formation, seen as self-training or training in relation to others, motivation, willpower, or affective/emotional problems is directly related to self-confidence and others (Albu, 2005).

The most important competences required by the current century are *critical thinking, problem solving, creative thinking, trust, collaboration, use of technology, autonomy in learning, communication, interpersonal relationship skills, empathy, mastery of emotions and stress*. The concept of competence is closely related to that of performance. The competences available to the teacher at a given time, and in a certain degree of development, manifest themselves in different contexts. The manifestation of the specific characteristics of a teacher signifies the performance he has reached. At the level of the mentoring process, the competences can be measured on a gradual scale, the teacher being at a point on a continuous line from novice to expert: novice-advanced-competent-specialist-expert. The transition from one level to another is achieved only through a continuous practice, with perseverance and trust (Pânișoară, 2017).

4. Practical approaches in mentoring

The primary goal of mentoring is to prepare teachers to ensure the full and global development of the student and to respect all his rights. It is obvious that a quality education starts from the teachers' knowledge of how the student grows, develops, and learns. The better we know him, the more solid the attachment relationship, the more realistic we can be in the expectations we have for the student and the better we will know how to support him in his development to ensure the most appropriate conditions to fulfill his potential (Cozolino, 2014).

Just as every student is unique, each teacher is unique, but the result of his work must be in every context the same: a student to whom we can give a good start in life through quality education and solid confidence in his own potential. The common denominator of teacher diversity is precisely professional standards. Even if the personality, temperament, and pedagogical style differ from one teacher to another, the way in which he/she regards the student, his learning and development must be the same, as the assumption of the entire responsibility he/she bears on the student. By reference to these standards, all teachers will know what the expectations regarding the exercise of the profession of educator in education services are. In this way, a common benchmark of the mandatory skills required in the confident practice of this profession is ensured.

It is necessary to select as rigorously as possible the future teachers and to rethink the continuous training by organizing continuous training courses in areas such as: communication techniques, techniques for cultivating trust, social networking, solving conflict situations, interactive methods of teaching and education, collaboration with parents, solving social problems, emphasis on achieving a psychological preparation of   actuality, vital in working with students, promoting health and cultivating the well-being of students in the school environment (Robu, 2008).

Romanian education currently needs very good teachers, able to offer students a quality education. All these skills necessary for a teacher are likely to suggest that the teaching profession requires people who are carefully selected and who will need a long period of professional and personal training. Networking roles and competences are becoming essential in the context of the new student-centred educational paradigm in the mentoring process. Building a competent relationship, understanding, and using attitudes towards the new approach to education, towards the relational dimension in student and self-centred education involves establishing varied relationships with and between students and addressing relationship situations based on clear visions of their psychosocial needs, and on approaching the student as the subject of their own becoming. Prioritizing the training needs of teachers becomes a necessary and of utmost importance for ensuring a quality education (Pânișoară, 2017).

Mentors need to be mindful of the phenomena of childhood risks in our country, which is constantly growing and generates a very wide range of social pathologies. Now, in many schools, any deviation is sanctioned, the critical spirit is stifled, the student's own opinion is ignored. There is a negative aspect of education, which is practiced early on and that arises from the excesses it implies, by forming an almost total dependence on it. The problem arises when young people can no longer decide anything on their own because they have not been trained for it, have not been shown the way or have not been allowed to do what they wanted at some point. The difficulties arise from this, because they do not identify operatively a series of thought guides or in personal action, if they are not given attention, if their success is not recognized. Unfortunately, many students receive the same treatment in some families (Robu, 2008).

Poorly and excessively professed education cultivates the illusion that someone else can do something for them, that there is always someone who must come and value what they are doing, that someone from the outside must permanently give them a boost. In this situation, we find all those who have not been trained from a young age get to express their emotions and thoughts, to think independently, to make decisions, to be responsible for their actions, who have not learned that what they do themselves is the most important, because the teachers did not give them the necessary opportunities, but on the contrary, they restricted their freedom and did not give them the opportunity to express themselves and choose (Dr. Glenn R. Schiraldi, 2017). Teachers need to learn

during the mentoring process how to build trust, how to leave students the freedom to decide about themselves and choose for themselves between several variants, not to force anyone, not to wit, not to forcibly penetrate their soul, to be a much more discreet presence (Robu, 2008).

In our schools we encounter many positive examples, of good practices in building relationships, of programs in which parents and students really become partners in educational decisions and actions, which are encouraging. However, we are also faced with many shortcomings in the proper understanding of this process, hence the reduced practical efficiency of educational relationships in some schools. Communication between teachers is in many cases deficient, the quality of management and the problem of underestimating the value of teachers and the way they are treated, the frequent use of traditional models of students' discipline, based on sanction and punishment especially in the family, but also in school, the limited involvement of parents, are negative factors that we are currently facing.

The frequency of manifestation of disruptive behaviors may diminish if students are emotionally trained and supported to find appropriate solutions to various problems, take on responsibilities, act independently, be confident in their own forces, as early as possible. The more ways there are to stimulate these potentialities, the more valuable their existential experiences will be. Thus, the potential profit foreshadowed by the purpose of self-knowledge and the capabilities to establish harmonious relationships with others increases. Society needs active, courageous, confident people, able to decide on individual destiny and relationship with others (Gordon&Burch, 2011). It is forgotten too often that the individual is responsible for what he thinks or does, and that this fact must be the target of any educational endeavor.

The student needs to be taught to express his thoughts and emotions, to decide what to do, to understand, not to let himself be based on others for what he can do on his own, not to always wait for promptings, or for all this he needs well-developed social and emotional skills. Unfortunately, it is still in our schools that a culture of addiction and relating to what others believe or do is practiced, of trusting in others rather than in oneself. The contradiction between addiction and the tendency towards independence, within the relationship forms the very core of the development of the teacher-child interaction. Mentors have a duty to ensure a genuine model of balance between the two determining requirements in relation to the social and emotional needs of the child, with the need for support, autonomy, and empowerment (Albu, 2005).

What can mentors do to support practitioners or beginning teachers? First of all, to become authentic models of relationship, to be attentive to students in all interactions, as they need calm, quiet, empathetic people, who can relate appropriately to them, who will give up criticism, punishments and immediately reward the smallest successes, showing finesse in their relationships with others,

encouraging them to express their emotions openly, opinions, desires, to act independently, to learn to solve various personal problems on their own, to make decisions, without being imposed on them the solutions.

It is obvious that we need a change in the models of action and intervention in education in favor of the harmonious development of children and young people. The professional training systems of specialists in the field need of improvements and complex programs to promote students' rights, opportunities to exercise and perfect them. The implementation of the new trends would mean a total change of the Romanian education system in the pre-university education. The real need to change the attitudes and mindsets of teachers, parents and the entire community regarding building educational relationships based on trust is felt at national level (Woolworth, 2019; Cozolino, 2014).

5. Conclusion and recommendations

The mentoring process can only be successful if everyone involved understands how *trust* can be built. Mentors need authentic training, focused on knowing the personality of those guided, on building trust, on active listening, constant support, and constructive feedback. Availability, assertiveness, creativity, and an open mindset are necessary and indispensable to succeed in supporting future teachers (Robinson, 2015). There is no functional mentoring relationship outside of mutual trust. The good mentor is a good coach, a secure emotional base, a source of trust for the students in the classes and the future teachers guided, in equal measure. The coach never destabilizes but helps his partners in the learning community to overcome difficult situations and overcome themselves.

The evolution of things in the education system in our country in the coming years depends on the mentoring process, on the rethinking of the continuous training of teachers and on the intense involvement in the programs, on the involvement of specialists in carrying out the reform, on the involvement of the family in the smooth running of the school, on the establishment of efficient, reliable relationships, between all the partners, first of all with the student, whose opinion must be formed, encouraged and listened to, then depends on the adaptation of schools to the requirements of society, on the evolution of jobs for parents, on the evolution of educational policies.

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MAKING THE BEST OUT OF THE MENTORING PROCESS. USING "TEACH" CLASSROOM OBSERVATION TOOL TO REFLECT, IMPROVE AND COLLECT EVIDENCE ON TEACHING PRACTICES

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Abstract: The material describes the mutual beneficial relation between the mentoring process developed within the educational system and a specific classroom observation tool – "Teach", the World Bank instrument developed for properly exploring educational practices and interactions. "Teach" is considered a useful resource for strengthening collaborative enquiry and authentic mentoring dialogue. It is proposed as an articulate and professional support for challenging the perspectives and beliefs underpinning the mentoring practice, whether it refers to peer, reverse or other forms of mentorship experience.

Key words: mentorship, "Teach" instrument, classroom observation, mentoring relationship, evidence-based mentoring.

1. Introduction

Mentoring is a unique relationship between the mentor and mentee teacher that provides guidance and support in order to ease through difficult transitions and vulnerable professional situations. The process is about enabling, smoothing the way, boosting confidence, skills, and readiness to perform. It has a significant contribution to the development of reflective educational practice and maximizing the professional and personal potential of school staff.

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Certainly, such a process is comprehensive and complex, and, while this article does not aim to be exhaustive in approaching this relationship, it will present its key elements.

A wide range of studies related to mentorship state that its power cannot be denied when it is used properly. But how can we ensure this proper use? Which are its specific indicators that can be designed and further implemented? Are there instruments that can facilitate the process and provide evidence-based information that can help both the mentor and the mentee? And, in the end, how can we make the best out of the mentorship process? How can we build it for being more than a passive "tips and tricks" handover exercise, but a deep and systematic reflection, followed by significant shifts in conceptualizations, practices and professional development?

These are some interrogations to be further approached, aiming to demonstrate that classroom observation tools - like "Teach" - can improve the educational mentoring relationship and can dynamically extend its benefits in the classroom routine.

2. The „what" and „why" of mentoring process in education

2.1. What is mentoring?

The fact that different reforms carried out within the educational field integrated mentoring approach as a frequent option addressing teachers' development made the concept more accessible to the public, but, in the same time, it diluted its meaning and purpose. As Sundli, L. (2007) notices, mentoring seems to become a new mantra for education, playing an important part in teacher preparation; but, despite its popularity, "the concept remains confused. Problematic issues such as the elements of power and control, and the danger of dependence and intimacy are seldom heard when mentoring is considered and new plans for teaching and education are presented (p. 1). Additionally, Colley (2002), suggests that mentoring holds an ''overwhelmingly favourable, even celebratory, regard'', even if ''the meteoric rise of mentoring has not been matched by similar progress in its conceptualisation'' (Colley, 2002, p. 258).

Despite such challenges, some general characteristics associated with different perceptions of the mentoring process can be described. Mentoring holds the same meanings and characteristics as in any other field in the educational system. Therefore, the definitions have a common ground, the differences that might appear in practice being related to the dynamic of each process, and every relation between mentor-mentee being personalised to specific needs and goals.

The history of the term goes back to Greek mythology. Ragins and Kram (2007) bring into attention the name Mentor, the wise and honourable character from Homer's Odyssey, proving that the archetype existed for as long as social connections did.

Since then, a generous amount of definitions has been formulated. The majority of them describe the mentoring process as being a dyadic relationship in which a more advanced, skilled person provides guidance to a novice colleague. This is the perspective suggested by Kram (1985), Levinson (1978) or Starr (2014). "Mentoring is a distinct relationship where one person (the mentor) supports the learning, development and progress of another person (the mentee). A mentor provides support by offering information, advice and assistance in a way that empowers the mentee" (Starr, 2014, p.6). "Mentoring is a nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels, and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development" (Anderson & Shannon, 1988, p.40).

Other definitions describe mentoring through the relationship created inside the process: high degree of trust and mutual respect, helping the mentee realise his or her potential, the development of both the mentor and the mentee are frequently mentioned (Alfred & Garvey, 2019). In this respect, mentorship is an interrelationship of an experienced teacher and a beginning one wherein the expectations of the latter are that their "critical friend" will help to provide the challenges essential to their early development as teachers in the classroom and the wider school (Adey, 1997). The process is considered a developmental relationship that is embedded within the career context. Whereas learning, growth, and development may occur in many different types of work and close personal relationships, mentoring relationships are unique in that the primary focus of the relationship is on career development and growth (Ragins and Kram, 2007).

In the same time, equally important, mentoring is perceived as a two-way beneficial relation: it "consists of complex social interactions that mentor teachers and protégé teachers construct and negotiate for a variety of professional purposes and in response to the contextual factors they encounter" (Fairbanks, Freedman, & Kahnm, 2000, p.103). Mentoring is, therefore, "more than an opportunity to give advice; it is a two-way exchange of listening and questioning" (Boreen & Niday, 2000, p. 153), or "an interdependent and generative developmental relationship that promotes mutual growth, learning, and development for both the mentor and the protégé within the career context" (Ragins, 2012, p.519).).

Therefore, mentoring has always been a key component in designing and delivering training and coaching solutions to the professional development of teachers. Importantly is to supplement formal training programs with a more personal mentoring approach in which an experienced mentor guides a mentee towards developing critical skills. Soft skills like communications, networking, and confidence lend themselves to more customized delivery models based on mentoring.

2.2. Why should someone participate in the mentoring process?

Numerous studies prove the benefits of mentoring relationship. Eby et al. (2008) states that mentored versus non-mentored individuals reported higher compensation, greater career growth and commitment, and higher job satisfaction. Even though a series of studies bring into attention that positive outcomes could be the result of mentees being initially, „rising stars" (Ragins & Cotton, 1999) or that mentors select their mentees based on their capacities and potential (Olian, Carroll & Giannantonio, 1993), that mentoring brings added value to both persons involved in the process.

While most of the studies put into perspective the advantages that are connected to the less experienced teacher, we intend to present the benefits that arise from both positions: mentor and mentee.

The mentees enter the process for two distinct reasons, as Kram (1985) mentioned: developing their careers and flourishing their skills. Most of the time, career guidance is what the mentee seeks the most: overcoming obstacles, sponsorship, setting learning objectives, challenging their status. Nevertheless, soft skills are also developed: responsibility, empathic communication, life-work balance, time management, creativity, problem-solving, and reflexivity.

The mentor's initial motivation is in many cases related to "paying forward" and helping fellow colleagues become better professionals. But even though their purpose is to enhance the career path of another individual, theirs will be influenced as well, the benefits of the process going far beyond the rewarding feeling of 'giving back'. Several studies articulate that the mentors present higher job satisfaction, organisational commitment, personal fulfilment and recognition from their colleagues. (Mullen & Noe, 1999; Ragins & Scandura, 1999; Kram, 1985). Stronger community engagement, boost of confidence and fulfilment, increased self-awareness and self-confidence, exposure to different perspectives, enlarged personal network, refined leadership skills, new viewpoints and perspectives can be added to the list of benefits.

Traditionally, mentoring has been done one-on-one, with in-person interaction, but institutions have started using more blended mentoring models, where a part of the mentoring program is conducted online. More recently, this trend towards hybrid models was further accelerated, especially during COVID, with the growth of more online mentoring platforms.

To sum up, mentoring is a career related activity that brings together two persons that are interested in becoming their better self, professionally and personally. Additionally, the process, if professionally and efficiently carried out, can have a consistent contribution in increasing retention, accelerating progress, building a better and more inclusive organisational culture, reducing isolation. Therefore, the benefits of this relationship go beyond the mentee's personal development positively developing the mentors themselves, both of them being able to grow together and support each other's process.

2.3. Mentoring instruments

While mentoring is an activity based on human connection and sharing experiences, it should not be done only by instinct. This relationship is about guidance, support, and opportunity in order to achieve professional development, but, at the same time, it is a relationship with a clear purpose.

For supporting this process, various instruments can be adopted: mentoring diary (a format allowing tracking activities undertaken and note observations), mentoring plans, reflective conversations, or free-flow conversations being some of them.

While all of these are valid options, we will focus on a particular instrument that can help educational mentoring by focusing on specific elements that the mentee has to improve. A thorough presentation of this tool can be found in the next chapter.

3. "Teach" as a mentoring instrument

3.1. What is "Teach"?

Classrooms are spaces of intensive interactions, interpersonal exchanges, questions, explanations, achievements, (mis)behaviours reprimanded or ignored. Capturing this very complex tangle of elements represents a certain challenge in the absence of the objective specialized tools. Thus, classroom observation instruments represent an efficient way to capture such complexity, by breaking up the continuous flow of teacher-student behaviours into readily observable units. For efficiently managing this process, various tools were developed - from Service Delivery Indicators, Stallings Observation System, Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), Teacher Instructional Practices and Processes System (TIPSS).

"Teach" is a classroom observation tool developed, piloted and validated by the World Bank in 2018 with the purpose of better understanding the teaching practices in the classroom. It is an open-access classroom observation tool that tackles the problem of different qualities of teachers' practices through a highly reliable strategy. "Teach" was designed to help countries track and improve teaching quality and, consequently, learning outcomes (World Bank, 2021). It is considered a valid and reliable instrument, able to properly observe, code and analyse the behaviours emitted by teachers and students engaged in instructional exchanges.

This innovative tool holistically measures what happens in the classroom, capturing aspects that are not usually the subject of classroom observation, such as: (i) the time teachers spend on learning and the extent to which students are on tasks, and (ii) the quality of teaching practises, organised into three primary areas: classroom culture, instruction, and socioemotional skills. Classroom culture refers to a supportive learning environment and positive behaviour, while instruction looks at lesson

facilitation, student understanding, feedback, and critical thinking, and Socio-emotional skills focus on autonomy, perseverance, and collaboration (Molina et al., 2018).

3.2. "Teach" in Romania

Since it was launched, "Teach" has been used by various countries to measure and improve their teaching practises. So far, the instrument has been implemented in more than 30 countries. In Romania, the World Bank team conducted a pilot analysis in the education sector, aiming at adapting the Teach tool to the local context and further substantiating the development of an innovative training program for trainers, school principals, pre-school and primary teachers. Even though the sample of this pilot research was limited, it ensured a new perspective and created valuable insight for further application (Table 1).

	Primary level	Pre-primary level
Number of school units	14	13
Number of Teachers observed	30	30
Number of Students/Children	680	519
Number of Observations	60	60
Percentage of observations in urban school units	47%	43%
Percentage of observation in rural school units	53%	57%

Table 1. *Overview of participants in the Teach pilot analysis – Romania, 2021*

After collecting and analysing of the data, the general conclusions regarding both primary and pre-primary results were that they maintain the same general tendencies from other countries around the world that used the same instrument (Molina et al., 2018). Thus, "Socioemotional Skills" area has the lowest scores, proving that the Romanian educational system is not focused enough on cooperative and interpersonal skills but rather on cognitive development. These results can be a consequence of the teacher training programs in Romania focusing on what to teach instead of how to teach, highlighting knowledge more than inter/intrapersonal skills. The distribution of scores (with higher scores for "Instruction" and "Classroom Culture" dimensions) is valid both in case of primary education classrooms (Figure 1) and early childhood (Figure 2) groups.
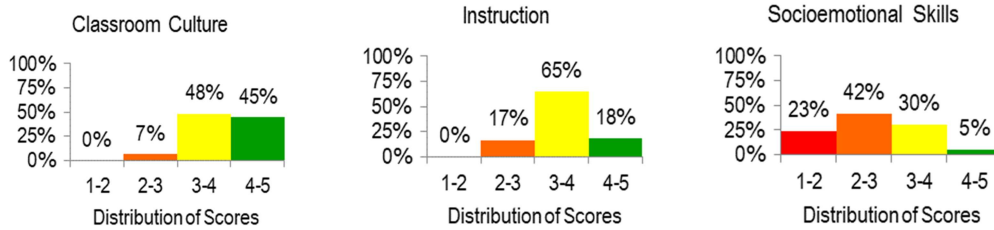
Figure 1 Distribution of Average Teach Scores by Area in Primary Education
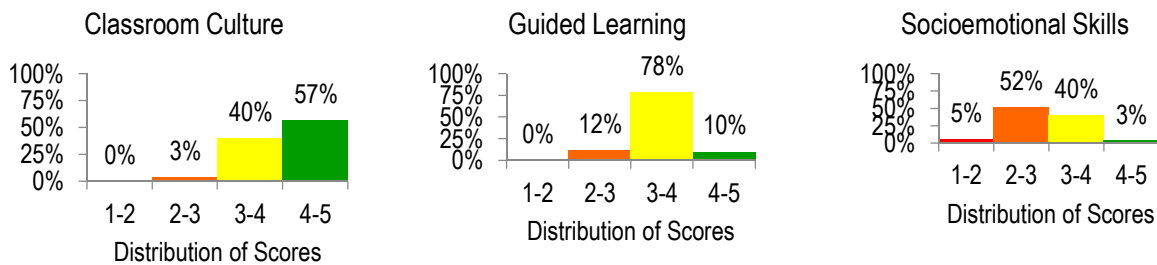
Figure 2 Distribution of Average Teach Scores by Area in Pre-primary Education

A more in-depth analysis that takes into consideration all the elements that compose the three areas considered above shows that the dimensions that have the highest average scores are:

for primary education: "Supportive Learning Environment" (3,7) and "Lesson Facilitation" (3,7), immediately followed by "Checks for Understanding" (3,6). "Perseverance" is registering the lowest score, followed by "Social and Collaborative Skills" (Figure 3).
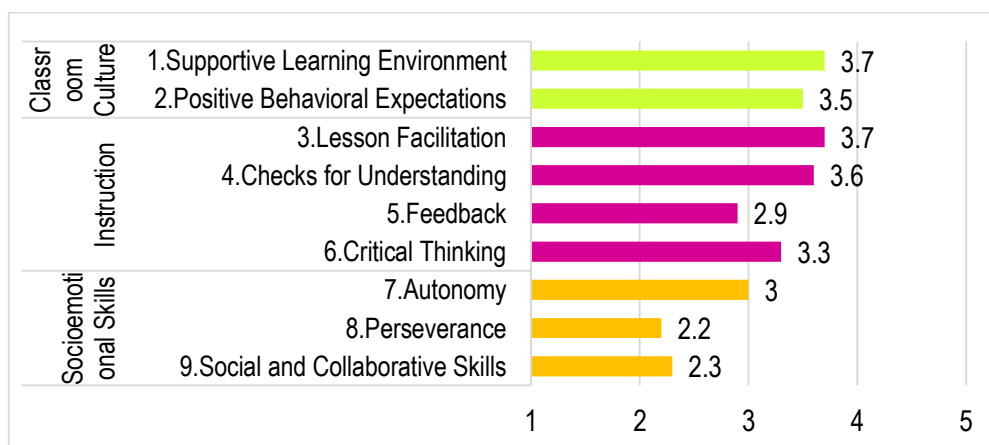
Figure 3 Average Teach Scores by Element in Primary Education

for pre-primary education: the element that has the highest average score is "Checks for Understanding" (4), immediately followed by "Supportive Learning Environment" (3,9) and "Facilitation of Learning" (3,9), "Perseverance" and "Feedback" score the lowest (Figure 4).

These scores may reveal that Romanian teachers do not emphasize perseverance and collaboration in the classroom due to a charged curriculum, previous experience, or less practice. Even though they monitor the students' cognitive development, they do not offer feedback about their regress or progress and often do not reinforce positive feedback.
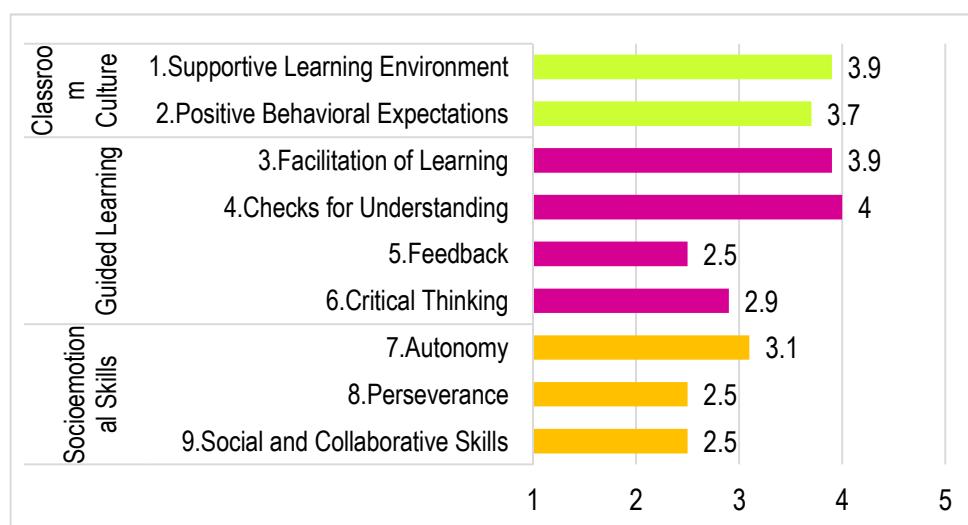
Figure 4 Average Teach Scores by Element in Pre-primary Education

Also, a challenging conclusion refers to the fact that the results regarding teaching practices from the rural and urban classrooms in Romania are quasi-similar, despite the general perception about different overlapped sources causing lower students' performances in the rural area. This homogeneity of the results (to be further verified using a larger target group) points to the power of the context, learning environment and surrounding community when discussing learning outcomes.

Such findings, as those selectively presented above, are important sources for encouraging the reflective approach that should be hosted by the mentoring process; it is not the goal of the present article to deeply analyse them, but it is obvious that such findings can be a consistent starting point to ground reflection and mentoring in evidence. Analysing such classroom observations, as a part of the mentoring activity, has the potential to challenge everyday practices and assumptions and put a different light on taken for granted suppositions. Therefore, a focused classroom observation session accompanying the mentoring activity can serve as a serious stimulus for reflection, exposing new and revelatory ways of thinking, stimulating the awareness regarding teaching practices and reflective scepticism.

4.3. Using Teach classroom observation tool for supporting mentoring process

Several guides and studies link the mentoring process with classroom observation, which is frequently perceived as a powerful option for exploring teaching and learning in action and ongoing professional learning. "When observing teachers, pedagogical leaders (coaches, mentors, trained master teachers etc) should use an observation tool, which may vary in form depending on the structure of the program (Wilichowski, Popova, 2022, pg.2). "The most important reason to conduct classroom observation is to inform teacher professional development and, subsequently, to know if it is working (Pianta, Hamre, 2009).

Meticulously designed and facilitated classroom observations can help both mentors and mentees to focus their attention on specific aspects of teaching practices, to agree on common evidence-based criteria for the analyses to be commonly approached. Classroom observation tools help them focus on specific teaching and learning behaviours and actions the teacher is expected to change. These tools also can help teachers develop their shared language and understanding of what effective teaching entails (World Bank, 2022, p. 10).

The process becomes more fruitful when it includes adequate reflective follow-up sessions, which are useful for providing valuable insights about teaching practices and student learning. Observational methods can also be inquiry-driven, investigating classroom processes in order to generate hypotheses about their impact on learning (Pianta & Hamre, 2009). Mentors can play an important role in supporting this process, stimulating the mentees to deeply analyse their own instructional practice and ground their decisions and beliefs in evidence. Insightful analytical conversations can be initiated. The reflection part of the 1-1 debrief is an opportunity to facilitate the teacher's reflection by "slowing down" to carefully notice and examine her or his own practice, to develop teachers' thinking, insights, and understandings of their practice, their students, and strategies to improve classroom teaching and learning (World Bank, 2022).

Additionally, "Teach" instrument could also be implemented in the processes of peer mentoring, which is a relationship between two teachers that have a similar professional level that want to help each other become better, career-wise, a relationship that proves to have the same rate of success as the classic mentoring one (Colvin & Ashman, 2010). Teachers could attend each other's lessons and observe, guided by the observation sheet, what their colleague does better, what they need to ameliorate and even what they could do together to ensure better teacher practises.

A more innovative way to use "Teach" in schools is reverse mentoring, an activity in which the roles switch and the mentee becomes the mentor. Morris (2017) states that the value of reverse mentoring is that the more experienced teachers could learn new knowledge and practises from

recent college graduates, the cross-generational knowledge will be improved and younger teachers will be faced with leadership opportunities. The mentee could go and observe the mentor's lessons with the "Teach" observation sheet and understand, after a reflective exercise, what he could do better. This process ensures the transmission of real-life examples and inspiration.

In the end, the Teach-RO tool is not meant to evaluate teachers but to train them and improve their practices together with peers and principals; it helps teachers identify what their areas of improvement. Training modules developed with the project resources initiate the path of effective use of data collected through classroom observation to better support teachers in their daily work. This includes training them on conducting observations, providing feedback that can be continued with mentoring activities that model high-quality teaching practices, facilitating role-plays, and developing action plans to help teachers reach their goals.

5. **Conclusion**

There are hundreds of thousands of teachers in the school system in Romania, each with varying educational qualifications, pre-service training, and performance. In a context of such diversity, designing a comprehensive, contextual, and flexible mentorship program that can address the needs of each teacher is challenging. Mentoring is a one-to-one relationship where the mentor prepares a plan, observes and agrees with the mentee's areas for improvement, including using observation tools, reflects on the lessons, provides timely and constructive feedback and practice, and sets goals for the mentee to practice new skills in future lessons.

As already mentioned, mentoring has potentially many benefits for both the mentor and the novice college, as well as for the school community, educational profession and the whole system. Professional development, establishing a higher sense of achievement and belonging and reduced feeling of isolation, shared challenges and reflections are just some of these opportunities associated with a carefully constructed mentorship experience.

Data from classroom observational protocols can be used in a variety of contexts, including the mentoring process. There is no need to further demonstrate that mentorship should be based on what happens in the classroom; therefore, "Teach" is a very efficient way to better understand the needs of the mentee and to be able to help him/her develop, targeted on their needs.

Starting the mentoring relationship is an essential step for building an efficient process of mutual support, but it is not sufficient. Ensuring that the mentoring relationship has clear objectives, consistent instruments and meaningful application is the next step. Implementing the "Teach" framework in the educational mentoring process represents a scientific and relevant approach which can truly make a difference.

Teaching is still one of the most influential professions, and often we find teachers as role models and mentors tasked with motivating lifelong learning, developing cognitive skills, and instilling socioemotional ones. Going from a poor-performing teacher to a great teacher can increase student learning by multiple years of schooling, as evidenced by research presented in the World Bank Global Platform for Successful Teachers. Effective mentorship programs based on classroom observation can scale up, expand the good practice, and improve teaching practices in a fast-track approach needed in the post-pandemic learning recovery process.

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43

FROM INDUCTION MENTORING TO TEACHING CAREER MENTORING

Adriana DUMITRU[9], Anda Violeta ȘTEFĂNICĂ[10]

Abstract: *The evolution of the mentoring concept from the support offered to beginner teachers to the one offered, depending on the identified professional needs, throughout the teaching career introduces, in addition to countless challenges, a series of positive valences, highlighted more during the pandemic. Reconfiguring the areas of intervention, roles and skills of mentors in the light of this approach, doubled by the reflection on the insertion points during the career evolution of teachers, is a necessary and useful approach, with an impact on increasing the quality of teaching.*

Key words: *mentoring, career, reflection, feedback*

1. Introduction

The teaching career mentoring is considered, in most of the specialty works, as a support and guidance activity sustained by an experienced teacher with expertise in the field, usualy for the professional development of those at the beginning of the teaching career.

Contemporary world challenges with a significant impact on education highlight the necessity to extend the mentoring support from the teachers at the beginning of their career to mentoring throughout the whole teaching career, in order to support professional development and a profesional wellbeing. Implementing a new currciculum, projecting and performing the teaching act and online classroom management, capitalization of blended – learning in the teaching activity, integrating special needs children, organizing didactical and extracurricular activities with impact on media education, durable development etc. often generates the mentoring need for teachers on different stages in their career.

2. Domains of teaching career mentoring

Mentoring offers a large variety of benefits, not only to the teachers at the beginning of their career but also to teachers with more experience, at one or the other pole of the mentoring relation. Actually many teacher-mentors have discovered the mentoring activity to be very satisfying, starting with the experience to project and perform the mentoring activities, make good use of the mentoring process and relation, all from a personal and professional point of view. Being a mentor gives you the unique opportunity to improve your teaching practice and the professional ability. The mentoring relation gives a renowned feeling of connexion with the school community and reduces the professional isolation condition.

The role of the teaching career mentor in providing quality to the didactical activity is complex and can be analyzed from the following domains perspective:

1. Building professional identity	2. Lesson design and implementation	3. Development of communication and interpersonal relationships Building a friendly educational environment	4. Partnership with parents, colleagues and stakeholders	5. Using feedback and reflection techniques
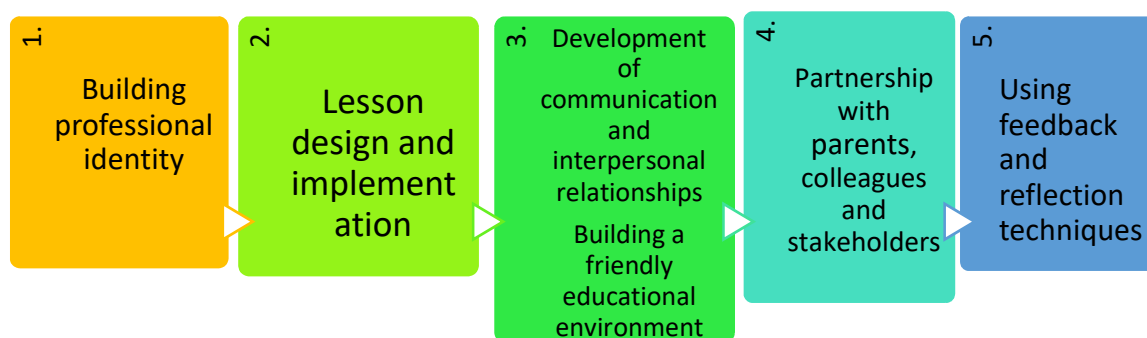
The suport provided by the mentor in each of these domains has a significant impact on the professional behaviour of the mentee.

Building a professional identity is the first domain where the specific mentoring intervention can offer very good results. Professional identity means a relatively stable condition in which teachers see themselves, in the double perspective of their image and role (what they are and what they do). As far as the authors Ahuja Nikolova and Clegg are concerned the image of self is projected on the normative beliefs the teacher has, focused on purposes, values and interaction models in the teaching team they work and the role is associated with the current instructional practice. The same authors observe the development as well as the simultaneous influence of the two aspects, in the context of the concrete professional activities the teacher carries on. The fundamental role of the mentor is to support the balance of the two aspects in cases in which the permanent multiplication of the professional roles can generate discrepances between the two aspects and even image conflicts.

In outlining and developing the professional identity, the mentor can provide support also for:

- Stating the career objectives and concrete activities that lead to accomplish them;
- Identifying the strong points and personal values that support the career objectives;
- Identifying the ways to combine the concrete instructional experience with the activities that lead to accomplishing career objectives;
- Identifying the resources that support knowledge development, abilities and skills necessary to accomplish the career objectives.

To make teaching and learning easier and to facilitate this is one of the fundamental objectives of an efficient mentoring relationship. The mentor and the mentee engage in a continuous reflective practice that sees teaching as a learning facility, collecting data about students' learning and assessment, establish improvement objectives, developing actions and plans, implementing strategies, monitoring progress and regulate the didatic process taking all these aspects into consideration.

The mentor uses a series of positive actions impact on the professional behaviour to support the mentee in designing and carrying out the didatic process. For example, observing a lesson can create a series of professional learning opportunities. Using carefully conceived observations facilitated by reflection and feedback sessions, the menteees obtain valuable perspectives on teaching and students' learning and they can better and more profoundly understand their own didactic process. The mentor pays a significant role in supporting the process when they make sure that the purpose, structure, focus, research and reflection ways on classroom observation are established and negotiated beforehand with the mentee and that there is a reflective and analytical conversation after the observation session.

The observation of the didactic activity carried out by the mentor is also valuable in the didactic mentoring point of view, being focused on two purposes:

- To stimulate and demonstrate the teaching practice on different aspects: building learning experiences, using certain didactic strategies, highlighting assessment techniques etc.
- To develop the teaching practice, by researching on observations, data and proofs on students' learning.

Another example refers to the analysis and reflection discussions lead by the mentor. If we analyze the teaching strategies from the quality perspective, we need to take into consideration a few essential elements. In many cases, the modern instructions strategies apply in a formal manner, witout understanding completely their role in students' learning. Therefore, a simple re-arranging of furniture for group work without planning, coordination and evaluation of the learning process according to collaborative learning rules cannot bring the expected results.

To be efficient in applying interactive teaching strategies must respect a few basic conditions:
- ✓ Building an authentic partnership between teachers and students - every opinion is taken into account and valued in the learning process; both the student and the teaching staff collaborate and participate equally in the production of learning.
- ✓ Capitalizing on negotiation – the possibility that students can influence the class activity through their participation, through the valuable experiences they have and in accordance with their interest in knowledge
- ✓ Responsibility and accountability – the involvement of each student in organizing learning activities, completing work tasks, giving feedback, etc.
- ✓ Stimulating the initiative - valuing students' ideas, their contribution to building learning
- ✓ Respect and tolerance – valuing different opinions, differences between students as a source of learning and development.

All these elements constitute as many opportunities for discussion, analysis and reflection on the teaching process relevant to the mentoring activity, starting from sequences of lessons/ learning activities supported or observed by the mentee, which gradually contribute to increasing the quality of the professional activity.

Building a friendly educational environment is an area where mentoring intervention is very important, in the context of promoting school inclusion. The first step in building inclusion is building a school environment in which all students feel comfortable and welcome, in which parents and other community members feel involved and valued in relation to decisions regarding the organization of the school environment. A series of discussions between the mentor and the mentee, as well as the use of educational environment evaluation grids, are examples of simple but relevant interventions.

Another example, which capitalizes on the field of communication and interpersonal relations, refers to the influence of active listening, questioning and feedback, supported by empathy and mutual respect, which characterizes the professional learning conversations involved in the activity of mentorship, on the definition and development of the mentored teacher's communication relationships with the students. They will constitute an example, a model of communication and relationship that can be easily transferred to the area of didactic activity and student class management

The problem of the reflective practitioner, or how good professionals work, is said to have its origins in Dewey. Dewey (1933) believed that students learn best from their own experiences. He advocated the idea that if learning is based on the student's current skills and knowledge, he, through social interaction, reflection and questions about the new information taught, will be able to better understand the new situation presented and learn from that experience. This view contains some

valuable clues about the necessary processes when teaching the mentees about the skills that need to be developed.

Schon speaks of "reflection on action" to describe the analytical thinking process that any reflective practitioner engages in after an event.

Dennison and Kirk described "the need to be involved in reflective cycles or spirals of professional learning" as having the following stages: "Do. Analyze retrospectively, learn and apply" reminding about the link between reflective practice and learning as an ongoing process.

Lewin and Kolb (1988, 1984) consider effective learning when a person goes through a cycle of four stages:

(1) - concrete experience, followed by

(2) - observation and reflection on experience, which leads to

(3) - analyzing and formulating some conclusions, which are then used

(4) - to predict future situations.

Linda Valli in "Listening to other voices – a description of teacher reflection in USA", talks about reflection in action and reflection on action which involves thinking about one's own person and personal teaching performance. It identifies 5 types of reflection:

Technical reflection	The content of this form of reflection focuses on general instruction and management behaviors based on teaching research.
Reflection in action	Teachers base their decisions on their own unique situation and consider personal teaching performance.
Deliberative reflection	Teachers weigh competing viewpoints and research findings on a range of pedagogical concerns/decisions (eg, curriculum, instructional strategies, classroom rules and organization, etc.).
Personal reflection	Teachers listen to and trust their own inner voice and the voices of others. Content for this type of reflection includes personal growth and relationships with students.
Critical reflection	Teachers consider the social, moral and political dimensions of schooling and judge these dimensions in the light of ethical criteria such as social justice and equal oportunity

Training by practicing reflection on action as well as observation and interpretation skills can help to make this process a second nature that leads intuitively to the right decisions through observations and feedback on teaching, peer review, system of recording experiences, reflections in the form of diaries, professional dialogue sheets, self-assessment, portfolios. And in learning reflective skills, the

mentor must be able to demonstrate the skill, talk about it, provide opportunities for practice and provide relevant feedback, encouraging students to develop and strengthen their monitoring strategies, of self-awareness so that they feel when and how to insist and when to adapt.

Feedback is a tool used permanently, regardless of the field, both in personal and professional life. According to the the Romanian language dictionary, feedback represents "Reaction that manifests itself at the level of different systems (biological, technical, etc.) in order to maintain their stability and balance against external influences; reverse feedback, reverse connection, circular causality, closed causal chain". The Oxford dictionary defines it as a set of information about the performance of a person or a product.

In the educational field, feedback is a conscious reaction of communicating exactly what we appreciate or what bothers us about a behavior at a given moment, how it affects us or what we want others to do. It aims at personal development from an emotional aspect, stimulating a positive attitude towards education. Feedback is considered as the first step towards change, therefore in the mentoring activity the information provided by the mentor to the beginner regarding the analyzed activity is an essential component, a practical principle that is the basis of the professional relationship and a motivational factor of it.

To be effective, feedback must relate to a specific behavioral situation, be based on the observation of that moment, be objective and given in time.

As for the feedback on the mentee's work, the mentor must consider the fact that he is a learning adult, mature and independent and must be treated accordingly. Therefore, the mentor must focus on some aspects that regard the action and not the person, the effects on the objective, on the activity and never judge the person. As the action is formative, the feedback must not only inform on what it is but mostly how can we act from now on to know what we will do in the future.

Analyzing the feedback types T. K. Gamble și M. Gamble make a distinction between the evaluative feedback, which means having an opinion on a problem in discussion and making judgment based on one's own system of values, and the non-evaluative feedback that means information on the interlocutor's feelings or the intention to make opinions on the subject. The evaluative feedback willimprove behaviours and will maintain stability and balance only when it is positive. In its negative form the evaluative feedback has a corrective function and helps decreasing/ elimination of inappropriate communication behaviour. The second type of feedback, nonevaluative, is considered efficient as it supports and optimizes communication.

The descriptive feedback is another type of feedback, considered an authentic one as it does not make value judgment, is specific, well targeted and most of the times is requested. Unlike the evaluative feedback, a prescriptive feedback only offers recommendations and does not analyze the existent situation with the person who receives those recommendations.

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49

The intention and the way the feedback is given is more important than the type of feedback, positive or negative, descriptive or prescriptive. Feedback given in an assertive way has a neutral character, is correctly stated, in due time, is prepared and supported by arguments, given to improve some behaviour or to adjust a certain educational context. The asertiveness must apply in the communication between the mentor and the mentee to make it more efficient and to improve the environment for the whole activity. By having an assertive feedback the development and deepening of the mentorate relationship is provided and they can be sure that the common objectives will be accomplished, such as sharing valuable training experiences.

The last field refers to mentorate for the development of partnerships with the stakeholders.

School is no longer a simple space where the activity is carried on in a closed circuit, where teachers teach to students who learn. The students' parents are one of the main partners of the school and, on the other hand, school plays an important role in the local community, social and cultural life. Every school has the duty to include in their activites the students' families, members of the local community and others. The community made up of teachers, students, parents and citizens take part in the school decisions, cooperate and support each other, as an essesntial element of the way the school works and as a way to promote it.

The role parents are expected to play in their children's school life has changed significantly in the last years. Parents are now asked to get involved and to act as "...qvasi-consumer and decision maker on the educational market and "monitor and guarant of the children's involvement in school life" (Selwyn 2011). Goodall and Montgomery (2013) make a clear distinction between parents' participation and involvement, suggesting that the second term referred to a "feeling of possession of that activity that is stronger than the feeling present in a simple participation" (2013) and he proposes a flexible continuum where schools and families walk back and forth according to the event or activity, from the parents' involvement in school life and parents' involvement in students' learning in three stages: the involvement of parents in school life, parents' involvement in the school process and the involvement of parents in learning.

When parents get involved iin school life, the information is controlled and disseminated by the parents' organisation and parents can get involved in activities designed by the school, at the school's request. This stage is characterised by the fact that the school has the power and it is the first step many schools make towards the journey in which parents are engaged in learning.

When parents are involved in the school process (the second stage), this can happen at school or at home and it is focused on schooling and information exchange between the parents, school and students. This stage offers all the people involved in it a better understanding, knowledge is shared by all of them as well as the responsibility to support the students, which is equally shared by all participants.

In the third stage of the continuum, the parents have the biggest role. While their decisions and interventions can be decided by the school, the choice of action and the way to approach these needs belong to the parents. In this stage the parents choose to get involved in their child learning, not because school asked them to but because they see this as part of their role as a prent.

Only when there is a positive relationship between school and parents the involvement model can change from the involvement in school life to involvement in the students' learning. Building this continuum requires a lot of effort from the school part and a lot of tact, empathy and patience from the teachers. More than that, the basic condition of a good collaboration between teachers and students is to win their trust.

Regarding it as a professional shaping activity assumed consciously, the mentorate is considered in the larger scale of sociality if we think school functioning as an open space. Parents and local community should be informed by the school manager that the school carries out a mentorate programme for teachers and they should be encouraged, they should support the mentors as well as the mentees. This support can be in different forms like, mentees take part in meetings regarding the school functioning or in common programmes and actions of students and parents.

Young teachers need mentorate and suppport to know how to collaborate with parents as partners and to be able to understand and work with different types of families. The mentor should inform the mentee on the solutions adopted by the school for teachers and parents to collaborate, as well as the institutions that offer support in contacting and collaboration with the parents. Thsi way the mentorate process must focus on building and facilitating communication ways and search for meaningful interaction school – parents, improving the collaboration and helping both parties to change the way they work. The mentor has the role of facilitator between parents and mentee, role based on trustworthy relationship, but there must be a previous understanding regarding the depth of the mentors' involvement.

As far as the school involvement in partnerships with the local community, the mentor must encourage the mentee to cooperate and work actively in these actions, carried out with these institutions and together with them.

3. The qualities of the teaching career mentor

In the context of the roles highlighted by reference to these areas, the mentor must have a number of qualities that represent the basis of an effective process. The specialized literature highlights a multitude of qualities. In a personal selection, but not exhaustive, we consider that, the mentoring relationship must be characterized by:

- Efficiency in valuing scientific and pedagogical training

This gives the mentor security, and the mentee comfort and confidence for the development of the relationship.

- Authenticity in the mentoring relationship

Acting in accordance with your thoughts and principles, being open to different experiences and approaches, revealing yourself as a professional you will be able to open a relationship based on sincerity, flexibility and trust.

- Openness and effective communication

In the mentoring relationship, the specific variables of communication are: psychological, cognitive, social and psychosomatic. Known and capitalized on, these variables lead to building a good relationship between the mentor and the mentee. For example, knowing in detail the needs of the mentee and building the mentoring relationship based on them positively influences the interaction. Also, the way we use the language of learning and build a common repertoire together makes the mentoring relationship more efficient. Anticipating possible communication barriers is another factor that crucially supports the mentoring relationship and the outcomes of the mentoring process. Whether we're talking about awareness and letting go of biases, avoiding aggressive or defensive behaviors, or right dosing of messages in terms of density and volume, a focus on effective communication fundamentally supports the mentoring relationship.

- Pedagogical optimism

The mentoring relationship is based on trust and mutual respect, openness and honesty, it is a relationship that allows the mentee to learn to develop in a safe and protected environment. For a successful result, both the mentor and the mentee must feel comfortable in this relationship, and the trust in professional development must be visible at every moment.

- Reflective practice and encouraging reflection

A final aspect is related to the reflection on the learning process in a mentoring context. Reflecting on the process, the mentored teacher has the opportunity to evaluate his activity in the context of the jointly established criteria and objectives. It identifies aspects of its own development process that are working effectively and aspects that could be improved. This process reinforces the importance of the process and empowers teachers to take responsibility for their own work and to set goals or targets for future activities.

3. A profile of the teaching career mentor's competencies

In a synthetic approach, the teaching career mentor needs a set of skills that cover from the scientific area, to the area of ethics and integrity in the teaching career. How these skills are operationalized is the subject of a subsequent article.

| Scientific skills | Communication and interpersonal skills | Pedagogical skills | Digital competences |

| Leadership skills | Ethics and integrity |

Conclusions

Teaching career mentoring is a complex, multifactorial process, with implications for increasing the quality of the work of teaching staff, a response to the increasingly diverse and deeper challenges that the education system faces. Capitalized at the level of the entire evolution of the teacher's career, it will have a significant impact on the innovation and alignment of education systems with the increasingly complex needs of society.

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53

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THE ROLE OF MENTORING IN THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION FROM AN INCLUSIVE AND TECHNOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Manuel PESTANO PÉREZ[11], Raquel Lucía PEREZ BRITO[12], Paula BECERRA PÉREZ[13]

Abstract: *The relevance of inclusiveness and technological values in future education professionals is examined in this study, both in terms of their qualifications and their expectation experience (I'm not sure what you mean by expectation). For this, the role of technology in the classroom, particularly artificial intelligence, as an improvement and positive impact on the acquisition of the necessary skills for the development of human personality has been used, as well as the vision of inclusion in the process of new mentoring to students.*

Key words: *law, mentoring, inclusivity, and technology*

1.Introduction

The scarcity of skilled virtual mentoring professors who can fulfill the various demands and expectations of students, as well as their lack of technology competence, endangers the quality of education that students get. It must be remembered that the right to education is inextricably always tied to the practice of interculturality and inclusion, whether owing to religious and linguistic variety, cultural and gender limitations, different talents, different cognitive styles, or other factors (Booth and Ainscow, 2000). It is well established that paying insufficient attention to students' views, particularly their diversity, is a contributing factor to the lack of an inclusive and multicultural education to which every human being is entitled (Escrig and Menezes, 2015).

Future teachers' attitudes are an important factor in the creation of customized counseling techniques and educational policies that promote integration and tolerance for existing diversity, and this is dependent on education professionals' positive attitudes toward education. All students with specific educational needs are included.

Finding solutions and responding to these issues requires a shift in teacher training (Timperley and Alton-Lee, 2020), as well as an examination of the factors that influence these children's acceptance

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and the application of appropriate alternative methodologies (Avramidis and Norwich, 2002, 2018), so that everyone feels included and has real opportunities to optimize their personality development.

It is then that technology improvements, particularly Artificial or inhuman Intelligence[14] (Pérez Brito, 2021), attract all attention (Castaeda, 2019), which is expanded in the educational process of competency and is already irreversible. The consequences of human-created intelligence's exponential implantation in society will be determined by the human's ability to manage and, above all, analyze how it is already interacting, as well as the possible evolution of the short, medium, and long-term consequences that can be generated, with immediate effects on interrelationships and guidance processes.

It is based on two principles. The first is that when Inhuman Intelligence was initially developed, the goal was to make people's life easier. The second point is that any democratic society's goals relate to respect for human rights, one of which is the right to education. And how to proceed with pedagogical engineering that allows students to work on their own talents and skills is critical on this route. And, of course, how well you understand how to employ new technology in this field will be a factor (Ocaa-Fernández, Valenzuela-Fernández, Garro-Aburto, 2019).

From the philosophical basis used by the Warnock report (1978) to the importance of incorporating the educational community in the inclusion of the center (Esquivel, 1995) to the approaches of the Index for Inclusion, said technological needs are not new from an inclusive point of view, where we must all know and interpret the resources we use (Booth and Ainscow, 2000). They focus their interest on how education professionals build their own attitudes toward their students, helping them in the elaboration of meanings that allow for the integration of all where technology has an even greater presence, through the latter and a set of materials for the inclusive development process.

This scenario has been reflected in recent attempts to legislate with the goal of changing traditional educational procedures, both in terms of organizational and methodological forms. Since they emulated mass industrialized production methods, which are still prevalent in the minds of authorities, teachers, students, families, and society, they have failed to present a clear picture of digitization and techno-pedagogical processes during the previous 30 years (Pestano et al. 2020).

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[14] To communicate the same notion, Artificial Intelligence will henceforth be referred to as Inhuman Intelligence rather than Artificial Intelligence from now on. "Inhuman intellect. The Evolution of Human Rights," by Raquel Luca Perez Brito. Journal of Philosophy of Law and Human Rights, vol. 45, no. 2, 2021, pp. 163-198.

2. The transformations of the educational system

The fact is that the educational system was critical in sustaining and maintaining the changes brought about by both the first industrial revolution and the emergence of capitalism. Without a doubt, the educational system helped to boost the current producing processes. During the Enlightenment, several notable figures believed that this approach to teaching was beneficial to society as a whole.

It is at this time when equitable education for everyone becomes a state commitment, and as a result, public education must be guaranteed, therefore becoming a citizen's right. It was anticipated that this education would enable all citizens to fulfill their equal rights. With this picture of what education could achieve, it's not surprise that when elementary and compulsory public education began, it was expected that education would become the key compensating factor for social disparity. The qualitative leap of the twenty-first century is in how to comprehend the automation process, where it can be achieved, thanks to Inhuman Intelligence, to ensure that this automation is personalized and universal, so that each student feels cared for at all times, and that they can obtain answers to their expectations, thus emergence within the educational system of the figure of the mentor who, with the help of technology, is capable of reaching each of the students.

This is due in part to the fact that learning challenges are most encountered in modalities, relational circumstances, and emotive contexts, where mentoring must be strengthened. These will seldom provide well-being conditions that are a constant that aids learning if they do not give the emotion of knowing, curiosity, if they are not capable of generating imagination or creativity, if they are not backed by the desire caused by professionals (Cuomo, 1995).

This is due, in part, to the fact that learning difficulties are not found mainly in the content, but in the modalities, in relational situations and in affective contexts, where precisely mentoring must have greater consolidation. These, if they do not offer the emotion of knowing, curiosity, if it is not capable of stimulating imagination or creativity, if they are not supported by the desire caused by professionals, well-being situations will hardly be produced that are a constant that facilitates learning (Cuomo, 1995).

Mentoring thus becomes a means through which programs are encouraged to be adequate to meet the educational needs of students (Gairin, 2011). This does not imply that students with higher educational needs receive an academic curriculum different from the others, thus defending the idea of Zabalza et al. (2014) regarding the fact that inclusion and personalized orientation occur only when students with special educational needs receive the entire academic curriculum in the general education program, reinforcing inclusive attitudes throughout the group, and abandoning methodological initiatives. that have prevailed since the Industrial Society.

As previously said, the current situation necessitates pedagogies centered on properly teaching in and for a society of information and knowledge, which is nothing like the society of the industrial revolution of the past. And not just for students with special educational requirements, but for any student, regardless of their individual demands since the goal of the right to education is to achieve the greatest development of the human personality.

In any event, it is apparent that technological advancements, and with them the creation of inhuman intelligence, have far-reaching economic, social, cultural, and political ramifications that extend beyond national borders. Not surprisingly, authoritative voices from international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF)[15] and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) [16]are concerned about the future of labor.

"Artificial intelligence is transforming the way we live and work, and it is bringing enormous advantages to our society and economy." It does, however, introduce additional obstacles as well as ambiguity and ethical considerations. Governments must thus guarantee that AI systems are designed in accordance with our values and laws, so that people can trust that their security and privacy will be prioritized."

However, it is undeniable that future employment will necessitate individuals with the highest available training. And that, in the twenty-first century, this vital training, to maximize educational outcomes, must be done in a personalised manner. For this, adequate mentorship for each uniqueness that occurs in the classroom is required, as is embracing, once and for all, that inclusion is a responsibility rather than an acceptable option. The use of technology in the classroom opens tremendous potential for providing a tailored and universal education. As a result, technology must be governed legally so that it does not become a problem but rather a part of the solution to humanity's issues.

3. The use of technology as a means of innovation in mentoring

To begin with, it is important to understand the multidimensionality of the concept of innovation culture and its link to mentoring. In the first place, the dimensions that have traditionally integrated the transformations and changes in education, strongly linked to competences, are mentioned:

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[15] Technology and the Future of Work, 2018: https://blog-dialogoafondo.imf.org/?p=9184/

5 The digital transition at the service of sustainable development, in the framework of the meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Organization held on May 24, 2019 in Paris. A set of intergovernmental policy guidelines on AI is approved.

To know	To know how to do	To know how to be
•Possess adequate knowledge, such as data, facts, information, concepts, and so on..	•Which involves abilities and skills to be able to apply the knowledge of the first level.	•It entails having the right attitudes, interests, beliefs, and convictions in order to apply what one knows and can accomplish well.
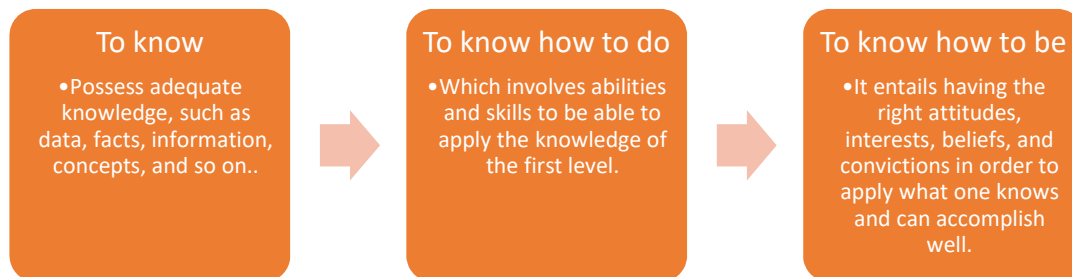
Figure 1:Competency dimensions for assessing cognitive and practical talents and skills.

His view of its significance now has not changed because of these characteristics. In a similar vein, the European Union Council in Stockholm[17] (2001) has previously addressed the worry these transitions raise about improving people's fundamental skills as a critical priority for life in a knowledge-based society and economy.

It is no longer only about increasing our talents, but also about how they must grow throughout the course of our life. In this regard, the Stockholm Council set goals for establishing permanent education systems that would be effective and efficient in the framework of improving capacities related to advanced societies' transition processes.

As a result of innovation, we must be able to develop meaningful, practical, precise cultural change processes while maintaining high ethical standards that allow us to customize educational procedures. As a result, promoting an innovative culture necessitates the execution of a process that necessitates an effective, digital start, which comprises the creation of a framework that promotes transparency, communication, and change awareness.

Comellas (2009) emphasized the necessity to improve skills and capacities to go to the next phase, which reflects an approach to change adaptation within the canons of continuing teacher education and the continual problems it encounters. As a result, the dimension "knowing how to be" would enter the stage, assimilating it to the viability of always keeping ourselves predisposed to new scenarios of understanding and understanding, which would favor even better environments of cooperation, communication, collaboration, and involvement, because if there is any truth in the new innovative organizations, it is that these, without teamwork and the presence of multidisciplinary, could not generate new innovation ecologies.

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[17] The Stockholm European Council was held on March 23 and 24, 2001 on economic and social issues, with full employment, education, training and empowerment of people having a high priority to respond to the new societies.

As a result, cooperation enters the picture to develop a school culture of creativity. With all of this, the educational institution faces new problems, not only because of change processes, but also as a result of the societal transformations that it will be responsible for in the present and future. Aware of these changes, the Eurydice Network (2006) presents a perspective on the necessity for education professionals to adapt, because as society evolves, so do students, necessitating educational updating and renewal.

4. Creating a culture of change to teach individualized learning

Knowing, understanding, and effectively using competence learning in new technologies and disruptive processes is the foundation for a change culture (Area and Adell, 2021). That is why, according to Dr. Koumbou Boly Barry, digital education should not be used to replace classroom learning for the sake of understanding, but rather to develop competence:

"Learning in a physical classroom with male and female teachers remains the greatest approach to provide equal opportunities and educational quality for everyone, and it should not be used to undermine the premise of the right to public education for all." As a result, a worldwide, national, and local discourse should be encouraged so that actors and communities may consider a new educational paradigm together to create the just, peaceful, and democratic societies that we desire."

With this, the basis of training on teaching competencies that allow mentoring work will facilitate a more effective and impactful understanding of digital societies. At the time, Gairín (2011) wondered about the meaning of a training model based on competencies through mentoring that would allow progress, defining it as an integrating and guiding model of the different human resources policies (of professionals), but which would require guidance to really know their ability to act among teachers.

Rodríguez (2009) specifically points out that vocational training competencies should be made up of four large blocks: technical competence, methodological competence, participatory competence and personal competence, oriented towards disruptive and innovative processes. From a holistic perspective, the author conceives each block with the "four pieces of knowledge" described below:
• Technical competence: knowledge as specialized knowledge relating to the professional sector, allowing you to understand the materials and duties relevant to your expert work.
• Methodological competence: the capacity to apply information to real-world circumstances, to use suitable task processes, to solve issues independently, and to creatively transfer learned experiences to new settings.
• Participatory competence: being aware of changes in the labor market and inclined to interpersonal understanding, communication, and collaboration with others, as well as displaying group-oriented conduct.

• Personal competence: learning how to have a realistic picture of oneself, acting on one's own convictions, and taking on tasks that assist us in making the best judgments and reducing difficulties.

The four blocks mentioned, which were first designed by Echevarra (1996, 1998, 1999), emphasize how critical it is for educational systems to incorporate competence-based training into their operations, linking it to the needs and expectations of mentoring; flexible, adaptable to different contexts and derived transformations; motivating, which increases the positive aspects of group participation, cooperation, and involvement, enriching the training; and finally, interdisciplinary.

5. COVID-19 as an opportunity to transform learning

It is a reality that the pandemic caused by COVID-19 has deepened the crisis of the education system by disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable and marginalized. This situation has shown that entrenched structural inequalities have not been overcome. Cases such as women in danger of exclusion, people with disabilities, those living in poverty, minorities, as well as those living in rural areas or nomads have seen their chances of accessing education diminish due to this pandemic[18].

But, on the other hand, there has been a significant advance in the digitization of the educational system out of necessity. And it is that the need has caused the irruption of ICTs in the center, but this step has not been accompanied by the desired pedagogical innovation. Partly due to the scarce training of teachers in technological developments to adapt to new circumstances. However, the pandemic has forced teachers to quickly become familiar with the mandatory use of ICTs to be able to teach their classes for long months from a distance.

It'll only be a matter of time until pedagogical[19] innovation is enforced alongside digital education, not only because it's desired to maximize the expected outcomes of the teaching-learning equation, but also because it's important to foster each student's actual growth of personality.

One instructor per classroom will not be able to discover each student's potential while also mentoring him to attain optimum personality development in a personalized manner. However, it is undeniable that the arrival of Inhuman Intelligence and robotics in the classroom will allow for exponential development of the educational system by allowing for a particularized education to be achieved while also having a universal scope, thanks to the ability to connect the progress of students from all over the world and the international collaboration that the new educational paradigm for the twenty-first century must have. An educational system that has evolved in tandem with the cultural, economic, social, and political evolution of societies.

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[18] https://es.unesco.org/news/preguntas-y-respuestas-relatora-especial-onu-derecho-educacion
[19] *Ibidem*, p. 171

Profesionalizarea carierei didactice - PROF – ID 146587
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61

It is critical to maximize the impact of technical and pedagogical breakthroughs by expanding them to all classrooms. This makes achieving equitable chances for learners all across the world a lot easier. However, we must be cognizant of the hazards that digital education poses if it is not equitably available to all. Educational policy should attempt to decrease as much as possible the socioeconomic divides that may emerge when it comes to access to technological advancements.

As a result, the digital gap is yet another major issue that must be addressed. Millions of people will be left out of the benefits of technology advancement if this does not happen. And, as the digital gap widens, digital schooling will exacerbate existing inequities. As a result, a supranational agreement is required to avert it.

Conclusions

Is the school, and with it, the training administrations, aware of the digital change that is sweeping the country and, with it, new means of transferring learning? In 2017, the Conference of Rectors of Spanish Universities stated: "The digital revolution that is now taking place in societies throughout the world has a direct impact on individuals, businesses, public and private sector organizations, and entities. Most aspects of human activity are being influenced by digital technology (social contact, mobility, data analysis, artificial intelligence, cloud usage, and so on). Organizations, regardless of their field of activity, must incorporate these digital technologies in order to take advantage of the capabilities they provide to transform their processes and promote new organizational models that allow them to adequately integrate themselves into this new digital scenario (Group Report of IT Management Work, 2017, p. 6)". This remark emphasizes the importance of revisiting the educational approaches employed thus far in order to adapt the educational system to multiculturalism, globalization, and technological advancements. The goal of education is to help a person reach his or her full potential. Each person's personal growth is distinct, necessitating the use of a distinctive approach to reach their goals. This personalized, personalized, and universal teaching technique necessitates the use of technology to identify which of each student's innate abilities are and to maximize their development without leaving gaps in their knowledge that inhibit further socializing.

To focus mentorship on this direction, it will be necessary to understand the evolution of future employment in the twenty-first century, acquiring competences via experience learning. Most scholars believe that today, the schooling paradigm centered on knowledge transfer and repetition has no relevance or value. The new basic competences that students must gain during the teaching-learning process must be focused on students being able to solve practical issues, seek meaningful and relevant information, analyze, and think critically, and work as a team and in a manner.

collaborative. Furthermore, students must be able to communicate, express themselves, and have a favorable attitude toward innovation, but our existing educational system fails to provide these outcomes, despite the educational reforms that have been authorized each time the government changes.

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TEACHING CAREER MENTORING FOR SCHOOL INTEGRATION OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Cristina BUTNARU-SANDACHE[20]

Abstract: *The article includes some highlights on how teahing career mentoring can support teachers who have students with special educational needs in their classes. It contains data extracted from the results of a survey, which can be a basis of reflection for mentors in order to identify some emphases in their work, as they are synthesized with the help of students who wish to pursue a teaching career. The effects of mentoring are reflected in a good time management, effective use of teaching strategies, communication adapted to educational requirements and increased confidence of the teacher in his/her own professional and personal abilities.*

Key words: *mentoring, management, differentiation, communication, adaptation*

1. Introduction. Teachers need mentoring to work with SEN students

The educational and social integration of people with special educational needs is an educational challenge that stems from the characteristics of today's society, in which the rapid pace of change sometimes generates gaps between individuals and/or groups, both in terms of information and in cultural and material terms. An axiological framework including values such as *acceptance of diversity, empathy* and *respect* creates the conditions for policies and actions that reduce the gaps, offer opportunities for development and support the process of social adaptation. One effect of these policies is inclusive education through the enrolment of children with special educational needs in mainstream education. The instructional-educational process in which such children participate is not always easy for teachers, whether working with students with various types of disabilities, disruptive behavioural disorders or gifted students. In addition, students going through difficult times or those from disadvantaged social backgrounds may also have special educational needs. Therefore, according to one perspective of analysing and defining inclusive education, it refers

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to "all different kinds of at-risk students, which is a wider focus than focusing on their academic skills alone." Holmqvist and Lelinge (2021) As teaching in these contexts needs to be adapted - differentiated or individualised - to the specific needs of students, teachers often feel challenged. Questions arise - "Will I be able to cope with this professional challenge?", "How will I manage my personal time and the time given to everyone in the class?", fears - "It's complicated and I'm afraid I'll make a mistake", "I don't feel ready to work effectively with these children", dilemmas - about attitude: "Firm or permissive?", on teaching strategies: "Individual or group?". These are some, perhaps the most common, perceptions of teaching work with special pupils, expressed by teachers in various professional and informal contexts. The same concerns are also expressed by some of the students preparing to become teachers. Since mentoring for teaching careers is mainly addressed to beginners, a questionnaire administered on a sample of 112 students, participating in two study programmes - Pedagogy of Primary and Pre-school Education and the Psycho-pedagogical Module of the "Dunarea de Jos" University of Galati, was applied in order to highlight some priorities and support points for mentors who will guide them in a year or two. Starting from the question: "If you had pupils with SEN in your class, what would you like to start the mentoring activity with?" with the following answer options: "What attitude will I have to adopt towards these children?", "How will I manage my time so as to take care of all the children in the class?", "How will I design the teaching strategies so as to focus the activity on all the children?", the results were as follows:

Table 1 - *Priority for mentoring activity*

If you had pupils with SEN in your class, what would you like to start the mentoring activity with?	Time management	Teaching approach	Attitude towards students with SEN
	34%	38,3%	27,7%

Mentoring for teaching careers, including the component of support for approaching and making more effective the activity tailored to the needs of such students, provides important support for teachers in need. The three strands of action: developing the right attitude towards the student with SEN, time management and the teaching approach are basic elements for the development of competences described in the *Standards for teaching career development* (designing educational activity, managing and monitoring the educational process, knowing, advising and treating pupils differently). On the other hand, the mentor's role is not only to provide appropriate professional guidance, but also to help the mentored teacher to identify solutions, to experiment and self-evaluate, to discover him/herself as a resource person in the whole existential web of which he/she

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65

is part. Therefore, building confidence is an equally important line of action of the mentoring activity, aimed at helping the teacher to overcome the psychological threshold generated by the belief that he/she will not be successful in the school integration of pupils with special educational needs.

2. Confidence building: a stage or a constant in teaching mentoring activity?

The difficulties that teachers perceive in relation to their teaching work when they have pupils with SEN in their classrooms are related, on the one hand, to the problems generated by special needs and, on the other hand, to the need to differentiate and individualise the teaching process. This may seem a difficult process especially for trainees, but also for teachers with many years in the system but limited experience in interacting with such children. However, the collaboration between mentor and mentee is able to dilute this perception, given the concrete actions they plan and go through together. Through the coaching component of mentoring, the teacher is involved in a process of self-analysis and identification of personal resources that can be used in the work. Alongside the scientific and psycho-pedagogical training, personality traits such as perseverance, empathy, creativity and patience become real motivational spurs if the mentee identifies opportunities to make the most of them in his/her teaching activity. The delineation of responsibilities, because the teacher is not alone in the efforts to integrate the child with SEB into school, usually brings added confidence.

Moreover, a fundamental stage in successful integration is assessment, the results of which underlie the psycho-educational intervention. Given that "assessment requires teamwork, with the active participation and responsibility of all the specialists involved - psychologists, educational psychologists, doctors, teachers, educators, sociologists, social workers, speech therapists, therapists, etc." (Gherguț, 2011, p. 12), the teacher feels comfortable as part of a group whose interest is to support the child's integration. The results of the assessment clarify the present situation, outline a prognosis, direct the interventions, not only the educational, but also the psychological, medical, therapeutic ones, depending on the situation. It is true that, in some situations, a multidisciplinary team is not necessary, since special educational needs are caused by mild disabilities or even ambiguous, subjective factors which cause communication and relationship or learning difficulties. But the complexity of educational approaches is lower, and in this case the support received from the mentor may be sufficient. If responsibilities are well defined and the teacher knows his/her roles and competences in what can be done for the child, the picture of future activities becomes clearer and confidence in success increases. The results of another questionnaire item administered to the group of students confirm this finding in practice.

Table 2- *Confidence building*

For building self-confidence, you would most benefit from:	Self-analysis Personal resources - self-awareness	Delineation of responsibilities	Analysis of best practices	Study, documentation
	13,4%	30,4%	34,8%	21,4%

It is obvious that a well-directed orientation, with the support of the mentor, in the research literature narrows the gap between the information the teacher has and the situation (type and degree of disability, how behavioural problems manifest themselves, etc.) to which he/she has to adapt. Successful experiences, analysis of the factors that led to success, also have an important impact on self-confidence by strengthening it. But the question arises: should confidence building be a step, a stage, in successful mentoring to support students with SEN? Approached as a stage, when, at what point should it be included in this approach? The answers are difficult to place in an invariable framework, as human diversity resists templates. Some teachers need confidence first, some need rigorous planning first, and others need 'here and now' solutions. What is certain is that confidence in success is a necessary bond for effective work, and goals aimed at building and rebuilding it should be targeted regardless of stage or previous results, if the teacher feels they are useful.

3. Time management

Teachers can become apprehensive about an experience of working with pupils with SEN, and one of the most common (and identifiable) reasons is time. Concerned about the curriculum, about the skills they need to develop with equal opportunities, they are under pressure of time which they feel is insufficient. In fact, pressures may be produced by the curriculum, not by time itself, which is a manageable issue through teaching mentoring.

Management theories, regardless of the field to which they apply, convey a reality that has long been demonstrated in practice: effective planning, focused on clear, achievable objectives, placed in a timely manner and within reasonable timeframes, can also ensure time management. Moreover, the assessment of the child with SEN and the demarcation of responsibilities should be closely followed by such planning. On the one hand, the personalised intervention plan sets out a picture of the path to be followed (the teacher together with the student), with concrete, measurable, phased objectives. On the other hand, the mentee's professional development plan ensures the correlation between the intervention component for the student with special educational needs and the other proposed directions, including in terms of time allocation and deadlines. An element correlated with

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67

the confidence building process is the study of legislation, identification of support persons and institutions, which can create certainty that the teacher will receive help when needed, and therefore be better organised in terms of his/her own responsibilities.

For time management, the future teachers participants in the study consider that they will most need advice from the mentor, as follows:

Table 3 - *Time management*

For time management, you would most benefit from:	Advice for lesson planning	Study of legislation; support people and institutions	Professional development plan
	46,8%	17,3%	36%

Although it is undeniable that the efforts to integrate students with SEN into school are great and sometimes felt perhaps personally overwhelming (especially in the case of novice teachers), it is important not to lead to a loss of motivation. Therefore, the objectives, deadlines, milestones and actions of a plan must be adapted to the individuality, aspirations and personal time of the mentee. The mentor's direct support in the classroom, however, is able to address possible delays and bottlenecks, which could indeed create dysfunction in working with a child who needs close monitoring of progress.

4. Teaching approach

In a narrow sense, mentoring for teaching careers is mostly oriented towards this dimension: the teaching process, the teacher in the classroom. However, in today's world, it is difficult to elude what the teacher is in all his/her individuality, even beyond the classroom. A teacher lacking confidence in his or her abilities and skills, living under stress and time pressure, worried about personal aspirations, will find it more difficult, perhaps incomplete, to adapt to the responsibilities that come with his or her new role, that of supporting the school adaptation of children with SEN. Therefore, when mentoring is at the stage of the teaching approach in the classroom, it is preferable for the teacher to have a clear picture of the learning profile of the child with SEN, the size of the objectives to be achieved and an infusion of confidence. The students participating in the survey carried out at the "Dunărea de Jos" University of Galati have intuited, through their answers, the importance of knowing the learning profile of the student with special educational needs.

Table 4 - *Teaching approach*

For the didactic approach, you would most benefit from:	Inter-assistance in lessons with the mentor	Team-teaching with the mentor	Support in identifying the learning profile	Support in developing the personalised intervention plan
	22,3%	17%	36,7%	24%

The identification of the particularities of the learning profile must be included, even at the assessment stage, among the teacher's interests regarding the student. This guidance clarifies the main benchmarks to be considered when developing teaching strategies: learning difficulties caused by the disorder or disability, learning style, interest in a type or set of activities, motivational types and structures and other benchmarks that can lead the teacher towards an optimal adaptation to the potential of the student with SEN. The learning profile also guides the development of the personalised intervention plan.

After designing the teaching strategies in order to focus on the learner, the next step is to apply them in the teaching process, which can create further discomfort for the teacher. This is because differentiation and individualization of instruction requires a range of procedural, material, and temporal resources that the teacher must professionally incorporate into the academic diversity of the classroom, regardless of the approach - process, product, or content differentiation (Tomlinson, 2017). Mentoring, however, is able to dispel doubts about time and collective management, restore confidence in the mentee's abilities, and provide concrete, step-by-step, clear directions for implementing strategies and evaluating outcomes. A specific mentoring activity – inter-classroom attendance/lesson sharing (mentor to mentee and mentee to mentor) - is as easy as it is effective in this respect. All the more so if the mentor has a student or students with SEN in his/her class. Such activities, on the one hand, create opportunities for role-taking, team-teaching, demonstration sequences and facilitation of learning, and on the other hand provide the psychological comfort that the mentee needs until he/she becomes independent in managing different learning situations. An equally applicable way of broadening the field of analysis in mentoring is to watch video lessons, either those of other teachers or your own. In practice, "teachers observing videos of other teachers tended to analyse the situations with greater depth. However, these teachers evaluated their own negative events more superficially. Teachers found that analysing their own teaching was more emotionally challenging than analysing other teachers' teaching. Furthermore, the teachers'

Profesionalizarea carierei didactice - PROF – ID 146587
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69

disappointment with the teaching that they observed made them search for alternatives and changes" Holmqvist and Lelinge (2021). If video recordings are allowed, analysing one's own lessons in this way, self-evaluation and identifying, with the help of the mentor, what needs to be optimised become very operational.

The direct and indirect support that the mentor provides for an effective teaching is intended to facilitate the investigation and exploitation of all learning opportunities for students with special educational needs: making use of mistakes, access to resources, questions, interactions between students and their freedom of decision. Moreover, including the valuing of mistakes in a development strategy is also appropriate for the mentoring activity itself, because understanding and addressing mistakes as a source of learning is constructive for both students and teacher.

However, no matter how the mentoring plan for the development of teaching skills in relation to pupils with SEN is drawn up, in order to be successful it is recommended to adopt the principle of action in small, predictable, manageable steps, both for the career progress of the teacher and for the learning progress of the child with learning difficulties.

5. Communication and attitude

As a rule, when a child with SEN is part of mainstream education, no special techniques are needed to communicate with him/her. However, some future teachers are willing to learn techniques to help them communicate with such children.

Table 5 - *Communication and attitude*

For effective communication and optimal attitude in dealing with children with SEN, you would most benefit from:	Active listening, non-verbal communication	Specific techniques for communicating with pupils with SEN	Optimal communication with parents of children with SEN
	31,7%	46,3%	22%

In fact, teachers in mainstream education should not worry about not knowing, for example, the tactile or dactylic alphabet. Special education teams are the ones who deal with children with such communication needs. However, given certain developmental or behavioural differences between students in the classroom, the teacher's attitude and the way the communication process is carried out sometimes needs to be adapted to the specificities of students with SEN. Adaptation does not

imply a totally different approach from what is currently happening in the classroom, but rather a nuancing of the communication aspects in relation to students with special needs. Inclusion, on the other hand, is about developing children in a natural social environment, with interactions that help them become aware of and accept differences, with routines that prepare them for integration into the wider society. Mentors with experience in school integration of children with SEN know how much naturalness and normality matters in such situations, so they can provide excellent support for the mentee, both through analysis of best practice in their own work and through demonstrative teaching sequences.

Although inclusion does not invariably involve the use of special communication systems, developing skills such as active listening and non-verbal communication is certainly a way of optimising the educational relationship between teacher and the student with SEN. This is another objective that could be included in the mentoring plan, especially as the opportunities for developing teaching communication skills are numerous. In addition, the use of access technologies by some students with disabilities can clearly improve didactic communication and support the achievement of educational goals. Handwriting support tools, apps for making supplementary materials, devices for reading texts, alternative tools and devices for mathematical calculations and analysis (Pădure, 2015, p. 497) are just some of the technologies that, in certain cases of students with SEN, have the role of facilitating communication, fluidizing messages between teacher and students, multiplying the chances for academic success of these children. The fact that teachers have greatly developed their digital skills during the pandemic brings an experiential added value to mentoring, which can be transferred to the use of applications, software and support techniques for students with special educational needs.

6. Conclusions

As school inclusion is a desideratum for most educational systems in the world, any teacher in mainstream education can be faced with the experience of working with one or even more students with SEN. Such a prospect can lead to concerns and questions about how to approach teaching, both among working teachers and among students who have set out to become teachers. Mentoring for teaching careers is a good opportunity for support, for identifying the most appropriate educational solutions and for building confidence in success. A realistically constructed teaching mentoring plan, tailored to the professional goals and individuality of the mentee, leads to effective action, based on concrete and achievable objectives, with reference to indicators that facilitate both evaluation and necessary adjustments during the activities.

Teaching mentoring is important both for teachers with various reluctances and fears about adapting educational approaches to specific needs and for students with special educational needs, because

Profesionalizarea carierei didactice - PROF – ID 146587   71
Proiect cofinanțat din Fondul Social European prin Programul Operațional Capital Uman 2014-2020

with the indirect support of the mentor they can benefit from optimal school integration. Future teachers are confident in the process of teaching mentoring, they feel comfortable with the idea that they will find mentors in schools to guide them, they appreciate in advance the support they might receive from them.

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NEW PERSPECTIVES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES IN THE FIELD OF TEACHER TRAINING

Simona Mioara MARIN [21]

Abstract: *The times we live in two decades after the beginning of the 21st century are marked by changes and reconfigurations in all areas of social life and implicitly in the education system. Global-political conditions and socioeconomic changes in the labor market generate increased expectations of society towards the main provider of human resources with a higher professional status. As a result, the policies and strategies adopted at the European level and then transposed at the national level aim to increase the level of professional performance of graduates and implicitly an increase in the quality of teacher training programs. The initial and continuous training of the staff in the education system is changing through pilot actions initiated at the national level by the Ministry of Education that coordinates projects with European funding. Initial training benefits from the development of alternative routes through the legislation of the two-year teaching master's degree and the creation of a system of educational units for pedagogical practice, and in continuous training a new model is initiated with the rethinking of the evolution in the teaching career, in the form of training and growth with progressive professional courses, from to didactic degree II and then didactic degree I, most of this course being validated in school communities through didactic mentoring.*

Key words: *educational policies, initial and continuous training of teaching staff, teaching mentoring, learning communities,* challenges, opportunities and limits of teaching profession

1. Introduction – new perspectives and directions of action at European level

Policies, strategies, models of training and evolution in the teaching career. In a few words we can outline the issue of a very large area in the field of education, that of training teaching staff and professional development in school communities. Educational systems feel the pressure generated by the need for quality education, and the expectations for school, as the main socially invested

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institution with the role of forming generations of children, young people, adults as future professionals, are constantly growing and constantly changing. To this dynamic context, we also add the avalanche of technologies and the mix of classical school, in classrooms, with online, digitized and remote school.

In this article we integrate some current topics with the intention of correlating and reconfiguring the policies in the field of teacher training. What actions do we notice at European Union level in the development of policies for the teaching profession 20 years after the beginning of the XXI-st century? Which European bodies give up-to-date guidance at European level? How do we reconfigure, in Romania, our own system of training the teaching staff? What concrete policies and projects can we nominate? What future actions do we put on the list of priorities or, in other words, what does the "To do it list" look like? These are questions to which the answers can be given by the competent institutions, but also by each school and teacher separately, where the effects of educational policies actually reach and education is carried out.

The European Union, through its official bodies, is directing its recent actions towards the revaluation of the teaching profession and the acquisition by teachers and school managers of the best initial training, but also of multiple opportunities for continuous training and professional development. This idea also includes the approaches united under the title "**Teachers, trainers and school leaders**"[22] , among which it is worth mentioning :

- ✓ **"European Innovative Teaching Award"** [23] **–** action aimed at recognizing the outstanding work of teachers and involving schools in European cooperation projects;
- ✓ **"Erasmus+ Teacher Academies"**[24] **-** a programme designed to stimulate European partnerships of teachers and teacher training providers to develop an international perspective on teacher education.
- ✓ **"The teaching profession"**[25] – strategic orientation that reaffirms the importance of professional development for teachers and school managers. Their knowledge, skills and attitudes are decisive for the quality and professionalism of their work, which has a direct effect on students' learning outcomes.

Expectations for teachers, school managers and teacher trainers are increasing, proportional to the impact they have in generating a high-quality education for all those who go through a study program. The need to continuously develop their skills and update their professional acquisitions puts additional pressure on the development and evolution of the teaching career.

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[22] https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/teachers-trainers-and-school-leaders
[23] European Innovative Teaching Award | European Education Area (europa.eu)
[24] https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/programme-guide/part-b/key-action-2/teacher-academies
[25] The teaching professions | European Education Area (europa.eu)

Profesionalizarea carierei didactice - PROF - ID 146587
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On the same note of support for the teaching profession, there are doubts at European Union level about the risk that a decrease in the prestige of the teaching profession and the lack of staff could affect the quality of school education in many EU Member States. As a result, the joint efforts, policies and strategies of the Member States are oriented towards providing motivation and support for teaching staff to excel in their work at the department and, at the same time, all education systems are supported in an attempt to make the teaching profession more attractive to a greater number of candidates to the school environment.

In the expert groups set up at European level representatives from ministries of education, employers and professional organizations from all European countries are integrated, who have regular meetings in which they analyze the policies relevant to teachers and school leaders, debate and share challenges and good practices. Most of these expert groups develop guides useful to policymakers, with topics specific to the teaching profession, combining general theories and principles with concrete examples from across the EU.

The comparative studies carried out and the new advanced policies at the level of the EC, OECD, EUA and other relevant bodies, can be and is desirable to become a specialized framework for analyzing, evaluating and reconfiguring their own system of training the teaching staff.

We exemplify with the Euridice report on "Teachers' careers in Europe: access, progress and support"[26] in which conclusions of interest to policymakers are found. The report covers key thematic areas in the field of teacher staff training, having general data and presentations about the demand and supply of teachers, the debut in the profession, the mobility of teachers, continuous professional training and career development, the application of professional standards and the evaluation of teachers' competences.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is internationally representative of its work in developing the best policies to increase the quality of life. With 60 years of experience in policies and initiatives on prosperity, equity, opportunity and well-being for all, the OECD focuses on the best policies to prepare the world of tomorrow.[27] From the recent actions that follow the line of this article, we mention the study of great complexity and scale "**Teachers' Professional Learning**" (TPL)[28] which subjects to investigation the policies for the training and professional development of teachers, reflecting at the level of the participating countries challenges, opportunities, threats and innovations. The design of the study aims to present to the policy makers a quick feedback, optimizing the databases and facilitating the exchange of good practices and peer learning in the specific field of initial training and internship in the teaching career

[26] European Commission /EACEA/Eurydice, 2018, Teachers careers frames in Europe: access, progress and support. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Office for Publications of European Union, ISBN 978-92-9492-909-9 doi:10.2797/895054
[27] https://www.oecd.org/about/impact/
[28] https://www.oecd.org/education/teachers-professional-learning-study/

and then in the continuous training and evolution in the teaching career with its different forms. Part I of the TPL study focuses on 6 topics specific to initial training and internship (Initial Teacher Preparation -ITP).   It aims to collect and present data from the participating countries on 6 dimensions: attract the most suitable candidates into Initial Teacher Education (ITE), select the most suitable candidates into ITE, equip prospective teachers with knowledge and skills, deliver ITE programmes effectively, certify, select and hire new teachers, support beginning teachers. Part II of the TPL study explores the policies that support the training and continuous professional development of teachers (Continuing Professional Leaning - CPL), focusing on 5 dimensions: motivation: What motivates teachers to engage in CPL?, access: How do teachers access CPL?, provision: How and by whom is CPL provided?, content: How are CPL contents selected to match needs?, quality: How is the quality of CPL ensured? Policies to support teachers in continuous training for professional development and evolving in their teaching career are a fundamental programme for the OECD.

If initial training is the prerequisite for having new teachers trained for teaching work, they can only grow professionally through continuous training. Thus, it becomes vital that at the level of the educational system there is a very good concept and way of career development through which to facilitate the deepening and updating of knowledge, connecting with the latest research, themes and teaching practices in order to be able to meet the changing needs of students. The study is a continuation of the concerns in the field of in-service teacher education and a correlation with specific data collected in other researches, such as those indicating the level of participation in professional development and the impact in optimizing teaching work:
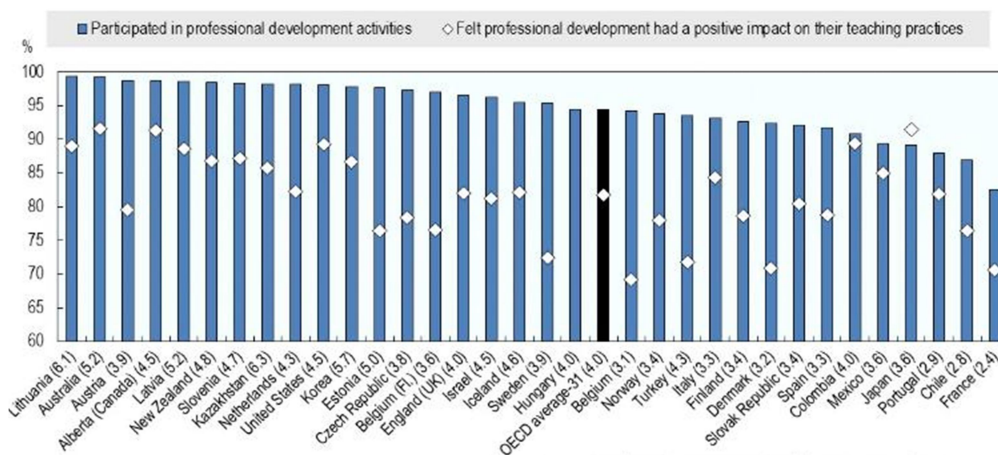
Source: OECD (2019), TALIS 2018: Vol I, Tables I.5.1., I.5.7 and I.5.15.

Profesionalizarea carierei didactice - PROF - ID 146587
Proiect cofinanţat din Fondul Social European prin Programul Operaţional Capital Uman 2014-2020

Another entity with European impact and visibility is the European Association Universities - EUA -[29] with relevance in the field of teacher training from the perspective of the providers of study programs for initial and continuing training which are mostly structures of the university education. EUA represents more than 850 universities in 49 European countries and plays a crucial role in implementing the Bologna Convention and influencing EU decisions in higher education, research and innovation, in cooperation with other organisations, the EUA is an independent voice of European universities. Among the recent initiatives we mention the project "Leadership and Organisation for Teaching and Learning at European Universities" – LOTUS[30] –co-financed by the Erasmus+ program of the European Union as a support initiative in the implementation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) reform. The aim of the project is to contribute to the increase of institutional capacity and management of strategic changes to support learning and teaching in university institutions in Europe, by involving various actors - official representatives from the ministry, consortia and university associations, students, university staff, etc. - in support of transformations and innovations in learning and teaching.

2. **The project "Professionalization of the teaching career - PROF" – European investment in the development of national policies and strategies in the field of teaching staff training**

The professionalization of the teaching career has acquired in time, the status of desideratum of the educational reform in Romania. As I have argued in other articles "the evolution of the educational system depends on the quality of the human resources. The training and development of the teaching staff, in keeping with the reference professional standards for the teaching career, must become a key component of the personnel and school organizational development policies. In this context, the professionalizing of the teaching career through the implementation of a system of standards based on didactic competences has become a reference framework for the assessment of the human resources and primary condition for quality assurance in the Romanian education" (Marin, S.M. 2013).[31]

In support of the idea of didactic professionalization, we continue the series of nominations with a relevant initiative at national level and we synthetically present one of the most visible actions to change the policies and practices in the field of teacher training. The action is worth mentioning especially due to the strategic, systemic and integrative character in the sense of involving official structures of the Ministry of Education, but also representative institutions in the university and pre-university education. We refer to the Strategic Project "Professionalization of the teaching

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[29] https://eua.eu/about/who-we-are.html
[30] https://www.eua.eu/resources/projects/786-lotus.html
[31] Marin, S. M. (2013), Policies and Strategies of Training Human Resources in education, Didactic And Pedagogical Publishing, Bucharest, ISBN 978-973-30-3493-3.

career – PROF" (project code: POCU/904/6/25/146587) which is financed from the European Structural Funds, Priority Axis 6 - Education and competences, Composite Operation OS 6.5, 6.6. - Improving the competences of the teaching staff in school education in order to promote quality educational services oriented towards the needs of the students and an inclusive school. The beneficiary and coordinator of the project is the Ministry of Education itself, having partners from higher education and pre-university institutions, and the implementation period is March 31st, 2021 – December 31st, 2023.

The general objective of the project consists in ensuring professional mentorship throughout the teaching career in the pre-university education system, by creating a coherent and reliable national system of professional training and development of the teaching competence, as psycho-pedagogical training, necessary for the occupation and exercise of a teaching position, as well as for obtaining pedagogical performance in pre-university education in Romania, in the teaching / training activity and in the educational management activity, in the context of the global process of digitization of education systems.[32]

The national context must be correlated with the global orientation and with the European policies to which Romania has subscribed, as well as to the overall specificity of the knowledge society that brings a new grid of values regarding education, research, development and innovation. The impact of European agreements and regulations is felt at all levels of the education system, with effects in paradigm and vision changes, especially in the field of educational policies and human resources training strategies.

The initiative launched by the "PROF" project brings forward the need for professional support provided to teachers, throughout the activity, from the beginning and then, at each stage of career development, the proposed solution being to relaunch the institution of mentoring the teaching career, in accordance with the recommendations of the OECD and European Commission report on good teaching in schools in the Community space and national public policy documents. The transformation of the didactic mentoring into a model of didactive support and its regulation through public policies assumed by the ministry, is at the second reiteration, after the attempt in 2011 when the first normative acts in this regard were adopted (O.M. nr. 5485 / 2011). This time, the idea has more chances of success, given the financing of the project and undertaking of the result indicators, in other words, the action is a European investment in the human resource in the Romanian educational system. On this occasion, a series of topics subscribed to the professionalization of the teaching career are relaunched in the Romanian space, and approached cyclically with each new official initiative in the field, among which we mention selectively the most

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[32] https://www.edu.ro/PROF

relevant and of national impact, which we can consider both challenges and opportunities for the development of the field:

- ✓ the standards of the teaching profession - rethought and correlated for the debut in the teaching career - the mentoring of internships/insertion - as well as for the stages of career evolution and professional development - teaching career mentoring;
- ✓ the operationalization of the strategies regarding the teaching career, by rethinking the roles and the development of some institutions/structures: training centers for the teaching career - in higher education, tutoring centers for the teaching career - at county level through, the pedagogical practice bases, in the pre-university education, centers for coordinating the network of application schools, all these being under the coordination of the National Center for Mentorship of the Teaching Career - autonomous public institution, of national interest, with legal personality, to organize, coordinate, monitor, and evaluate the national network of e-learning and educational resources for the formation and development of the teaching competence necessary for access and development in the teaching career;
- ✓ continuous training in the teaching career adapted to the current specificity of the Romanian school and to the changing roles of the teachers, including to the global context of the digitalization of education, at the levels and fields declared sensitive/vulnerable, within the Romanian educational system;
- ✓ creating new, equitable, transparent and objective mechanisms for evaluating the teaching performance at the beginning and during the teaching profession, based on quality standards and competence profiles in the teaching career.

3. Conclusions or "to do list"

The challenge of the "PROF" project and of the new educational policies is to take learning and didactic professional development to the individual but also institutional level. The debate on teaching topics related to how to teach and learn better in Romanian schools, brings into discussion a complementary dimension, related to the institutional capacity to produce quality education and generate learning, at the individual and organization level. The topic is legitimate, all the more because we always ask our pupils and students to learn, which should also be done by the educational institution itself, in order to improve learning experiences in the school community. The professional development of the teaching staff and the career development need a learning community in which the climate and teamwork work for motivation and the best possible results of both students and education staff. Encouraging and supporting schools to become "learning

institutions" and "learning community" are conditions for success for the desideratum of increasing quality in education.[33] Surely there are multiple ways and means to become a "learning institution", one of which was piloted through the "PROF" project in the cooperation of their pre-university school units with the Houses of the teaching staff and with the universities providing initial and continuous training programs for the teaching staff.

 Through the objectives pursued and the lines of action launched, the project is an official opportunity to support and promote the network of learning communities at the level of school units and the functionality of structures of trans-level educational partnership, with the effective integration of universities and pre-university institutions. The concrete actions taken to develop a dynamic system between pupils/students/adults and teachers, such as workshops, discussion and cooperation panels for the curriculum and other relevant topics, carried out in an official but also non-formal format, as well as inviting external experts to provide feedback and recommending ways of optimization, are successful steps in the institutional learning process.

The transformation of mentoring into professional support for teachers in pedagogical practice, internship and evolution in the teaching career, involves systematic actions at legislative level and implementing rules regarding the professional development and recognition of didactic work. At the level of principles and directions of action in the continuous formation of human resources in pre-university education[34], we bring to attention the indisputable truth that the progress of the education system depends on the quality of the human resource. In this sense, the organization and improvement of one's own teaching staff, which meets the professional standards of reference for the didatic career, must become a dominant component in the personnel and organizational development policies of the school units. In this context, the professionalization of the teaching career by implementing a system of standards based on didactic competences constitutes a general framework of reference in the evaluation of the human resource and a condition for increasing the quality of education in Romanian education.

In order to mention the notable progress in the field, we certainly need many more actions and projects completed with concrete results in educational policies, that will produce a coherent legislation. Recent developments and changes in the field of education require the reconfiguration of the system of continuous training, professional development and evolution in the teaching career on the following directions of action:

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[33] Alecu, S. M. (2007), Development of the school organization. Project management, Bucharest: EDP (Chapter 1).

[34] Marin, S.M. (2012), "Change and Innovation in the Educational Policies and Strategies for Human Resources Development", ISI Proceedings, Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, Volume 47, 2012, pg. 1662-1667, Ed Elsevier (www.elsevier.com), indexed Thomson Reuters Conference Proceedings Citation Index (ISI Web of Science), Scopus, ScienceDirect http://www.sciencedirect.com), https://pcs.webofknowledge.com/

• flexible, modular, differentiated structuring of programs and activities of continuous training/didactic professional development;

• evaluation and certification of the qualification and improvement level by reference to the didactic performance profile and specific professional standards;

• restructuring of teaching degrees by implementing and using the system of transferable professional credits and establishing a framework for their recognition and equivalence in continuous training / didactic professional development;

• substituting the criterion of seniority in the profession with other professional criteria and carrying out the continuous training based on the individual and organizational professional development plans assumed at the level of the school units.

The stakes of reconfiguring the continuous training system are huge and involve the elaboration of an adequate set of educational policies based on the orientation of the teaching career on the line of values, performance, evolution and professional development, ensuring a dynamic and alternative route, correlation of institutional structures, programs and normative acts regulating the status, evaluation and professional standards. In this respect, we can conclude synthetically with a variant of "to do list" in which to include new guidelines and principles in the field of continuous training of teaching staff:

• creating the legislative, normative and methodological framework, which would provide coherent ways of insertion, evolution and professional development in the teaching career;

• organizing continuous training based on the competences and professional standards of the teaching staff, with explicit monitoring and quantification of the level of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values;

• confirmation of teaching performances by quantifying the results at the level of the school community, in a specific context of teaching-learning-evaluation;

• the transparency and objectivity of the procedures used in assessing the level of performance and the feedback offered to official bodies, teachers, parents, the community;

• the involvement of each teacher in his/her own professional development by applying career development plans, making the training opportunities more flexible and diversifying, valuing the didactic reflexivity, identifying the areas and possibilities of professional development, the planning actions and putting into practice of new acquisitions;

• alternative and differentiated routes in teaching professional development and career development by reference to the levels of teaching competences, to the strategy of the school seen as an organization and crediting with supervision through mentoring, of new models of non-formal, implicit, guided or independent learning.

The educational reality requires updating and extending the regulations in the field, with the purpose of approaching the professionalization for the teaching career as a process of formation and development of the set of competences that allow the undertaking and achievement of specific tasks at a high level of performance. This perspective also includes the current approach of analyzing and highlighting the European and national context from the perspective of policies and the legislative framework, the European benchmarks and the strategic directions at national level regarding the professional training and development of teachers.

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Marin, S. M. (2013), Politici şi strategii de formare a resurselor umane din educaţie, Editura Didactică şi Pedagogică, Bucureşti, ISBN 978-973-30-3493-3

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https://www.edu.ro/PROF

https://education.ec.europa.eu/focus-topics/teachers-trainers-and-school-leaders

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ONLINE CONTINUOUS TRAINING OF PRE-UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

Claudiu LANGA[35]

Abstract: *Technological progress and the pandemic Covid 19 context influenced the evolution of pedagogical paradigms, as regards the implementation of the educational process and chiefly the training of human resource and a system adapted to new challenges. The normative international background implemented numerous measures as concerns the technologization of the educational process and the training of human resource. Equally, Romania, reorganized the teachers' continuous professional training, by reason of the necessity to develop the digital competences and to adapt to the needs of supplying education in the online/hybrid system.*

Key words: *digital competence, continuous training, digital teacher*

1. Introduction

The organization of the educational process exclusively online brought opportunities as concerns the exploiting of information technologies but also a stringent need to rethink the educational variables. Teachers and students have been challenged to adapt rapidly and to contribute to the evolution of the educational process, which was possible through the integration of online instruments. These instruments bring a series of benefits in the educational environment such as: the stimulation of independent, autonomous learning, easy access to knowledge, encouragement of integrated approach, development of digital competences, etc.

2. Theoretical foundation

2.1. Development of digital competence - European context

Digital competence is a key competence which represents the target of many European policies, being one of the key-competences necessary for long-life learning. The latest update of this recommendation (May 2018), defines digital competence as a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes

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Profesionalizarea carierei didactice - PROF – ID 146587
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83

integrated in a critical and responsible use of digital technologies for learning, work and active participation in society. The plan focuses on the necessity to support and expand the use of digital educational practices: 1) the optimal use of digital technology in teaching and learning; 2) the development of digital technologies relevant for digital transformation. (European Commission, 2018).

The European Commission Report (2020) identifies teachers' role in the development of digital education; identically, they must have access to continuous learning and to the development professional opportunities adapted to their needs and to their discipline (digital teaching methods and innovation in digital education). Also, digital technology should be exploited in order to facilitate the supply of flexible learning opportunities, accessible to all categories of teachers in the educational setting. (http://www.cdep.ro/afaceri_europene/CE/2020/COM_2020_624_RO_ACTE_f.pdf)

Building-up teachers' digital skills is a durative process which needs investment and systemic effort, a fact underlined by numerous specialty studies. Špernjak and Šorgo (2009, in Lakkala, Ilomäki & Kantosalo,2011, p. 5) explain three necessary stages in developing teachers' digital competences: information about the importance of using technology in the educational process; teachers' training in the use of technology; support offered to teachers in building the skills of digital literacy.

At the international level, one can notice a considerable interest for training preuniversity teachers through continuous training programs and in addition for the analysis of their efficiency. Two variables have been identified which measure the efficiency of continuous training programs, namely the participant teachers' satisfaction and the academic results of their pupils (Kirkpatrick, 1994, in Ceobanu, Cucoș, Pănișoară, 2020, pp. 305-306).

The building of teachers' digital competences will focus on 6 categories of skills (Novak, 2019, p. 263): 1: Competences of data literacy (browsing, searching and filtering data, information and digital content), 2: online communication and collaboration (sharing information and content through digital technologies; interaction and collaboration through digital technologies for co-construction and co-creation of resources; to adapt communication strategies to the specific audience and to be aware of cultural and generational diversity in digital environments); 3: Digital content creation (to create and edit digital content in different formats- documents, text, graphic, images, video, music; integrating and re-elaborating digital content; observing copyright and licences), 4. Safety (to protect personal data and privacy in digital environments; to be able to avoid health-risks and threats to physical and psychological well-being while using digital technologies), 5: Problem-solving (creative use of digital technologies).

Teachers' formation programs must be supported by experimental studies (Darling-Hammond, 2012 in Melash and others, 2020, p. 378), which should emphasize teachers' real needs related to digitalization.

2.2. Development of teachers' digital competences – national context

The initial and continuous training of teachers will be submitted to a wide process of developing educational strategies specific to the formation of teachers, strategies including an open-resources system in the e-learning domain. (Tudor, 2019)

Analysing the system of teachers' professionalization, the studies underline that the building of teachers' competences focus upon following axes: teacher as a social actor, teacher researcher, teacher educator and practitioner (Beckers, 2007, in Păun, 2017, p. 180). The paradigm of professionalization emphasizes the modification of the relation between teacher's basic competences and „soft" competences, contributing to the development of other types of teachers: teacher expert, reflective teacher (Păun, 2017, pp. 185-186), digital teacher (concept developed through numerous projects which target to professionalize the didactic career using technology).

In Romania, the teachers' continuous training programs represent the main modality to develop this personnel category, the activity being regulated through a national legislative framework. The pandemic context determined the reorganization of the normative background, mainly in terms of the modality of supplying the programs, as the physical presence has been restricted.

The report Opportunities of Online Environment for Adult Education (2020) highlights some difficulties of the Romanian educational system as concerns online continuous training. The report underlines that, in this process it is necessary to pay attention not only to digital competences and media literacy but also to „soft skills", namely pedagogical competences, communication skills, multicultural skills, knowledge about working with adults, aged persons, persons with disabilities, migrants, etc.

3. Study design

3.1. *Objectives*

The aim of the study is to analyze teachers' perception in relation to the degree of adaptability of the educational system to online continuous training, as well as the identification of the distinctiveness of online didactic activities within the continuous training programs, through technology.

3.2. *Material and Methods*

The investigative approach was based on questionnaires sent through google forms. The instrument applied on teachers was structured taking into account the following dimensions:

- Difficulties incurred by teachers in developing online didactic activities within the continuous training programs, by the agency of technology;

- The degree of stress associated with the participation of online continuous training programs;

- Advantages and disadvantages of online continuous training programs;

- The factual data - didactic experience, holding management positions, teaching degree.

- The study was carried out on a group of 103 preuniversity teachers from the 10 counties of Romania:

Characteristics of participants

Table 1

Characteristics	Preuniversity teachers	
	No. or %	
Total number of participants	*103*	*100%*
Professional status		
Permanent teacher certification	16	15.5%
Teacher certification level II	24	23.3%
Teacher certification level I	63	61.2%

3.3. *Results*

Difficulties incurred by teachers within the online continuous training programs

Table 2

		Often		Rare		Very rare		Never	
Difficulties incurred within the online training programs	Learning sequences	8	7.8%	39	37.9%	52	50.5%	4	3.9%
	Feedback of trainers	13	12.6%	33	32%	35	34%	22	21.4%
	Interaction with trainers	16	15.6%	25	24.3%	44	42.7%	18	17.5%
	Continuous evaluation within the program	4	3.9%	49	47.6%	32	31.1%	18	17.5%
	Final evaluation	8	7.8%	37	35.9%	35	34%	23	22.3%

Teachers who participated in the study affirm that the most important difficulties they got within the online continuous training programs are related to the trainers' feedback and to the effective interaction with them. Communication by means of audio-video platforms cannot be a substitute for interhuman communication, which is based not only on verbal and paraverbal elements present within the online system but also on nonverbal communication which is fundamental in persuading the interlocutor. In online communication, nonverbal elements are reduced to minimal values.

Continuous and final evaluation are not considered to be difficult, since in adult education, evaluation is done preponderently through a portfolio.

Aspects of participating to online continuous training programs difficult to manage according to the Professional status (evolutional level in the didactic career)

Table 3

		Professional status (evolutional level in the didactic career):			
		Permanent teacher certification	Teacher certification level II	Teacher certification level I	Total
Aspects of participating to online continuous training programs difficult to manage	Use of computer/ other devices to connect	0	0	16	16
		0.0%	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	Communication with the trainer	0	4	4	8
		0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	Communication with other participants	4	8	11	23
		17.4%	34.8%	47.8%	100.0%
	Achievement of activities within the training program	4	4	0	8
		50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%
	Keeping deadlines	0	4	4	8
		0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
	Integration of activities in the usual working schedule	4	0	28	32
		12.5%	0.0%	87.5%	100.0%
	Transfer of knowledge/skills acquired in the classroom	4	4	0	8
		50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total		16	24	63	103
		15.5%	23.3%	61.2%	100.0%

From the analysis of teachers' answers concerning the aspects difficult to manage related to the participation in the online continuous training programs, we observe a preponderent identification of the communication with other participants and the integration of activities in the usual working schedule.

Interaction with other participants is reduced because in the online system the breaks between activities do not offer the possibility of communicating among students as it happens in case of on-site training.

Synchronous didactic activities, within the continuous training programs are scheduled on choice at weekends, in order not to disturb pupils' timetable.

The use of computer and of other technical devices does not have a high degree of difficulty since for over a year, training programs have been running exclusively online, and didactic activities with pupils have been developed through web-based platforms.

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87

The advantages of online continuous training programs organized according to the Professional status (evolutional level in the didactic career)

Table 4

| | | Professional status (evolutional level in the didactic career): | | | |
		Permanent teacher certification	Teacher certification level II	Teacher certification level I	Total
Advantages of online continuous training programs	the possibility to participate to the continuous training program without travel expenses	0	24	28	52
		0.0%	46.2%	53.8%	100.0%
	Interaction with teachers from other counties	12	0	19	31
		38.7%	0.0%	61.3%	100.0%
	Development of digital competences	4	0	16	20
		20.0%	0.0%	80.0%	100.0%
Total		16	24	63	103
		15.5%	23.3%	61.2%	100.0%

The answers emphasize a significant level of participating to the continuous training activity without travel expenses. This aspect allows enrolment to courses supplied by any accredited entity, regardless its geographical location. Interaction with teachers from others counties offers the opportunity to have an authentic exchange of good practices in the educational area.

Disadvantages of the online continuous training programs according to the Professional status (evolutional level in the didactic career)

Table 5

| | | Professional status (evolutional level in the didactic career): | | | |
		Permanent teacher certification	Teacher certification level II	Teacher certification level I	Total
Disadvantages of online continuous training programs	Inefficient communication within training activities	12	16	4	32
		37.5%	50.0%	12.5%	100.0%
	High cost related to necessary technical infrastructure	0	4	8	12
		0.0%	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
	Reduced interaction with the participants in the training program	4	4	51	59
		6.8%	6.8%	86.4%	100.0%
Total		16	24	63	103
		15.5%	23.3%	61.2%	100.0%

Analyzing the teachers' opinions related to the aspects concerning online continuous training, we observe the preponderent identification of disadvantages, as a matter of course in the context of the radical change in the working manner. The reduced interaction with the participants from the training program is the main disadvantage highlighted by the participant teachers. In this case, communication is very frequently perceived as being somehow artificial, on one hand due to the impossibility of obtaining real communicational feedback and on the other hand due to the awkward placing context of virtual space.

Attractiveness for online continuous training programs in future according to the Professional status (evolutional level in the didactic career)

Table 6

| | | Professional status (evolutional level in the didactic career): | | | |
		Permanent teacher certification	Teacher certification level II	Teacher certification level I	Total
Attractiveness for the online continuous training programs in future according to health safety	Strongly disagree	2	0	6	8
		25.0%	0.0%	75.0%	100.0%
	Disagree	4	5	7	16
		25.0%	31.3%	43.8%	100.0%
	Agree	4	11	30	45
		8.9%	24.4%	66.7%	100.0%
	Totally agree	6	8	20	34
		17.6%	23.5%	58.8%	100.0%
Total		16	24	63	103
		15.5%	23.3%	61.2%	100.0%

The data shown in table 6 underline the fact that attractiveness of online continuous training programs in future according to health safety is real for the subjects investigated. Amid growing concern about the evolution of pandemics and alarming information released too often in social media, the online supply of continuous training programs will likely continue in the near future.

3.4. *Conclusions and Discussion*

Following the interdiction concerning agglomerated educational spaces, Romania reorganized the teachers' training process by reason of the need to develop digital competences and to adapt to the demands of online/hybrid supplying education system.

Teachers' continuous training should pay attention not only to digital competences and media literacy but also to „soft skills", such as pedagogical competences and communication skills in order to overcome the difficulties felt by the teachers who participated in online continuous training activities.

Profesionalizarea carierei didactice - PROF – ID 146587
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89

Organizing the online educational system implies special training; it requires not only the adapting and management of the content, ensuring the necessary tools for the instructional process, the flexibility of the teaching methodology but also the training of human resource for such a didactic experience.

The success of online or hybrid continuous training programs is a result of the collaborative effort amid a teacher, a systems analyst, a school manager and the quality of technical infrastructure.

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DIDACTIC CO-PLANNING AS A COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY IN SCHOOLS

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Abstract: *Mentorship activities in schools are analysed as a strategy of ensuring teachers' training. Mentorship in school supplies the appropriate environment for the development of the collaborative system between* **teachers and mentor**-*teachers as an experience in their professional development in the workplace. The advancement of mentorship at school level represents a means of teachers' training for their professional incipit and for continuous development during their didactic career. The building up of a learning community at school level can be possible through the development of a shared vision centred upon the instruction of all pupils and teachers.*

Key words: *didactic mentorship, didactic co-planning, co-teaching (collaborative planning), reflective teaching*

1. Introduction

Mentorship in academic settings represents the modality by means of which school will become a community which promotes learning, for teachers and pupils, for managers, etc. (Senge, 2016, p. 489), by exploiting teachers' expertise through involving them in training activities for future trainers, in the development /research activities, as they become more aware about their professional development opportunities.

Developing mentorship as a collaborative activity is a challenge for every academic setting. School supplies the environment which will ensure the collaboration among teachers, in order to build a team „which will work together in order to solve didactic unclearness, (...) to cooperate in planning and frequent reflection upon lessons, educational objectives and success criteria." (Hattie, 2014, p. 308) Teachers' professional needs, as individuals, as well as school needs, considered as a group of teachers, should be posed at the level of each school: *what are the teachers' training needs and how can school help them develop? As individuals*, teachers must be aware of the opportunities they have inside and outside of their academic career. Teachers' professional development stands as a dynamic interaction between 3 abilities, all of them necessary: motivation to develop personal abilities and

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91

also others'; the ability to put them into practice; equally, in case of an opportunity, teachers need support to develop the necessary abilities for functioning in the new role. *As a group of teachers,* they must be encouraged to reflect, to improve and to support their profession.

Mentorship in the academic setting implies sharing ethical and professional responsibilities at school level while school must stimulate this collaborative working style which is based on trust, communication, consistency, organisation, flexibility, respect, mutual support. (Sandu, 2020, p. 168) Also, the achievement of effective mentoring implies from the mentor's part communication skills, as well as active listening, assertive communication, manifestation and modelling of affects. (Tăușan, 2015, pp. 497-503)

2. Theoretical Foundation

2.1. Mentorship as a collaborative activity in school

Didactic mentorship can be defined as a relation between two or more teachers sharing the planning, organization, delivery and assessment of instruction (Bacharach et al., 2010 in Rabin, 2020, p. 135). Collaboration between teachers will be achieved from the perspective of well-defined goals for the collaborative activity (Sandu, 2020, pp. 186-192), co-planning and reflective teaching being two essential chains in developing the learning community in the educational setting.

The goal of the mentoring activity is to counsel novice teachers in passing from the initial orientation stage in their profession (professional incipit) through the professional practice stage to the development stage of a learning community. In order to improve professional practice, each teacher must answer some questions, such as: how does my didactic activity evolve at the beginning of my career? (The period in which every teacher identifies himself with the institutional culture); how can I improve my didactic practice permanently? (The period of professional reflection in which every teacher searches for training modalities to improve didactic practices); how can I contribute to the development of a learning professional community, at school or outside it? (A period of sharing professional experience, of exploiting the expertise for institutional development). (The Alberta Teachers' Association, 2003, p. 5)

Many studies underline the efficiency of collaborative activities in schools as regards a rise in pupils' learning outcomes. Building opportunities for pupils to interact with more teachers allows them to identify the human /professional model they appreciate most and different teaching styles, which means not only a strategy to reduce learning difficulties but also a real example of teamwork. (Gallimore, Ermeling, Saunders and Goldenberg, 2009; Goddard and collab., 2010; Ronfeldt, Farmer, McQueen and Grissom, 2015; Vescio, Ross and Adams, 2008) (in Rabin, 2020, p. 136).

The benefits of collaborative action for teachers are based on the advantages of professional dialogue and the stimulation of a critical attitude among co-teachers. The mentors involved in co-teaching reported a rise in the confidence of their didactic competences (Goodnough and collab, 2009; Murphy and collab., 2009), in their class management skills (Larson and Goebel, 2008) and in the capacity to meet the pupils' learning needs (Kroeger et al., 2012; McHatton& Daniel). The perceptions of teachers involved in mentoring activities are correlated positively with the feeling of effective teaching, as they consider that the mentoring relation is the most critical training (Edgar, Roberts and Murphy, 2011) (in Rabin, 2020, p. 136). Langa (2015) has underlined the importance of acquiring transversal competences by students in order for them to become good specialists in the field of educational sciences. In the context of more and more complex tasks, efficient cooperation in professional, interdisciplinary work teams is all the more important so as their efficient performance can no longer be made by acting individually.

2.2. Didactic co-planning (collaborative planning)

The development of an educational community must be based on the practice of co-teaching /co-planning, the co-planning being an integral part of a successful co-teaching relation, in which all teachers use their individual expertise for the benefit of all pupils/teachers. „Given the increasing diversity of today's schools and the prevalence of teacher accountability issues … learning to teach in isolation should no longer be an unquestioned practice" (Bacharach et al., 2010, in Rabin, 2020, p. 135).

Didactic co-planning as a modality to empowering teachers implies a systematic collaboration of a group of teachers in a school which assumes peer responsibilities in building pupils' cultural and social development, in point of contents, didactic methodology, mutual decisions and performing different roles in implementing the developed projects (Mihai Diaconu, in Sandu, 2020, p. 184). Some teachers approach this strategy as an opportunity to learn the planning process and consequently, to improve their didactic experience. Co-teaching and co-planning are analysed in this case, as "a way of modelling the teaching internship in an apprenticeship model". (Grady, Cayton, Preston, Sinicrope, 2019, p. 80)

Co-planning represent an extension of co-teaching, defined as a relationship of two or more teachers who work together with the same class and share responsibilities in pupils' instruction (the mentor and the mentee work together to meet the pupils' needs more efficiently) (Friend& Bursuck, 2011; Friend& Cook, 2000 in Badiali, Titus, 2010, p. 74).

The planning process offers teachers a „road map" which guides them through the lesson. Harmer (2001) underlines that „planning helps, then, because it allows teachers to think about

where they're going and gives them time to have ideas for tomorrow's and next week's lessons" (Carreno, Ortiz, 2017, p. 175).

In achieving an efficient co-teaching /co-planning relation, parity is an important component with co-teachers as concerns: objectives of activity and learning outcomes; role distribution in the planning activity; instruction models that will be used; forms of differentiation in didactic activity. Through collaborative planning /didactic co-planning teachers share their expertise and come to shared agreements about how the instruction will occur (in Pratt, Imbody, Wolf, Patterson, 2016, p. 2)

Collaborative planning is possible when co-teachers share a common philosophy on pupils' learning but also have a personal engagement for collaboration. (Pratt, Imbody, Wolf, Patterson, 2016, p. 2) Co-planning focuses teachers' debates on learning goals, objectives and outcomes. Teachers will collaborate to identify learning experiences, to elaborate the learning contents, to plan didactic methodology and assessment tools of pupils' progress. It is suggested that teachers should use a co-planning template which will allow them to best articulate the learning objectives aligned with instructional situations.

A successful experience in co-planning implies a three-stage process: pre-planning stage – the analysis of teachers and mentors' perception about co-planning, the strategy used and its advantages and drawbacks; the while-planning stage – teachers and mentors plan their activities, when the main factors which should be taken into consideration are time management, the planning strategy of activities and the chosen resources; the post-planning stage – optimization of the „pre-planning stage", so that teachers and mentors should be able to evaluate the objectives and didactic efficiency of the activities and resources used. (Carreno, Ortiz, 2017, pp. 186-192).

Starting from the question *How is what we are doing together substantively better for students than what one of us would do alone*?, the author states that „co-planning is the most important component of co-teaching" (Murawski, 2012, p. 8) and „finding time for co-planning is one of the most common barriers to effective co-teaching." (Murawski, 2012, p. 8)

The author recommends 10 tips for using co-planning time more efficiently in school (Murawski, 2012, pp. 9-12): select an appropriate environment to achieve co-planning; establish a regular plan to plan collaboratively; rapport building has to be gradually developed in the group of teachers who participate in co-planning; determine regular roles and responsibilities, equal share in planning, teaching and assessing; building in regular time for assessing and feedback which would foster a collaborative reflection over the process, the use of recommended co-planning tools, such as the WHAT/HOW/WHO approach (WHAT standards WHAT objectives, WHAT timeframe, WHAT Content), HOW (HOW do I organize content, HOW do I organize learning experiences, HOW do I assess), WHO (WHO has learning difficulties, WHO does not meet the objectives of learning). (Murawski, 2012, pp. 11-12)

Planning is a critical component of teaching, during which "teachers make decisions that ultimately impact students' opportunities to learn" (Grady, Cayton, Preston, Sinicrope, 2019, p. 79). M. Grady and collab. identified six strategies which facilitate co-planning between mentors and novice teachers; the authors emphasize the complex character of didactic planning and claim that teachers' capacity to plan differs according to their experience. Novice teachers have difficulties in adapting planning to pupils' learning needs, being more focused on planning strategies than on building instructional situations.

2.3. Reflective teaching

Co-planning offers opportunities of interaction between mentor-teachers and mentee- teachers, generating reflections upon the planning documents and their implementation. Smith (2005, p. 154) underline that novice teachers „learn about various aspects of teaching by participating in a community of teachers with guidance from a more experienced mentor", while the expert teacher can learn through the planning process of teaching the others.

Since research showed the importance of co-planning, the findings in the field also point to some difficulties in the efficacy of this process: one of these is related to models in the elaboration of co-planning documents; other practical challenges are related to different teaching styles of teachers. (Friend, Cook, Hurley-Chamberlain, Shamberger, 2010, pp. 20-23) For an optimal co-teaching partnership, 2 primary solutions refer to the reflective attitude and efficient allotment of time for the planning activity by all teachers. Creative and critical thinking in the context of co-planning help teachers build new approaches of teaching /learning and personal and collaborative reflection are essential in the professional development and in promoting professional collaboration in any organization.

3. Study Design

3.1. *Objectives*

The study aims at identifying the opinion of mentor-teachers as concerns the necessary values for developing an efficient mentorship in the educational setting. Equally, the study investigate their opinions as regards the support needs of novice teachers not only in point of didactic planning but also exploiting the critical analysis of certain mentoring strategies identified in the specialty literature.

3.2. *Participants*

In order to analyse the proposed objectives, the study was addressed to teachers participating in the development of mentoring competences program, 105 Methodist teachers having a relevant didactic

experience (I-st teacher degree) selected from 11 districts of the country who teach at different schooling levels (33% primary, 19% middle class, 48% high-school) and with different specializations (Primary and Preschool Teacher, Romanian /Foreign language and literature, Geography, History, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Informatics, Biology, Technologies, Psychpedagogy, Economics, Physical Education).

3.3. *Material and Methods*

Mentor teachers' opinions have been quantified by means of a written instrument administered by Google Classroom platform to the participants in the development of mentoring competences program. The instrument includes open-ended items, built under the form of a reflective journal and the assessment degree is measured through a three scale point (small – average – large).

Also, within organized debates, critical analysis was used to discuss the mentoring strategies which can be implemented by mentor teachers in the development plan of the mentorship program. The 6 strategies analysed are (Grady, Cayton, Preston, Sinicrope, 2019, pp. 79-91):

One Plans, One Assists is a strategy in which co-teachers work jointly to finalize the lesson plan – a teacher (the mentor) has the main responsibility for the lesson plan, while the other teacher (the mentee) contributes different aspects of the planning document.

Partner Planning is a co-planning strategy in which each teacher takes responsibility for different parts of the lesson plan, while through common reflections they decide upon the final structure of the planning document.

Parallel Planning is a planning strategy for which each teacher develops an entire lesson plan, thereupon they discuss critically each plan and decide upon the integration into one plan; this strategy implies an effort of critical analysis and the power to decide upon the adequate planning variant by giving up one's own, if the need arises.

One Reflect, One Plans is a planning strategy in which mentors think aloud about planning and the mentees write the lesson plan, this strategy being recommended in the mentoring stages for professional incipit.

One Plans, One Reacts is feedback type planning through which a co-teacher plans the lesson independently while the other makes suggestions for improvement.

Team Planning is the strategy when both teachers plan actively at the same time and in the same space and the feedback and collaboration take place in real time.

3.4. *Results*

At the item „To what extent do you consider mentoring necessary in developing didactic planning documents?", the respondents appreciate that the benefits of mentorship will be visible as regards the following dimensions of didactic activities planning; derivation of key competences in concrete didactic situations (*to a large extent*), didactic transposition of contents (*to a large extent*), construing learning situations adequate to the age profile (*to a very large extent*). Most respondents exploit the role of mentorship in school in favour of developing the self-reflective attitude of the mentee, as well as for developing the mentee's capacity to correlate the components of the didactic process and of feedback over the undertaking of didactic planning.

The development of reliable mentoring relationship at the institutional level is fostered by the mentor's qualities – relevant expertise and knowledge in his field, reliability, and capacity for hard work, the will to become better and be part of pupils' successful outcomes, empathy and discursive communication, honesty and the will to invest in growth and development, capacity to adapt to new situations. The basic values considered to form the necessary attitudes in the mentoring activity, identified in the subjects' opinion are: interest in their role and profession, correctness, empathy and generosity, pragmatism (discernment and poise), positivity (positive attitude in the mentoring relationship), moral and professional integrity, clarity and objectiveness. The axiological system of the mentor should be complex and dynamic in order to face challenges and to represent a real reference point for the others.

The use of the 6 proposed mentoring strategies is analysed in relation to the variable needs for support in the development of the didactic career identified at the mentored persons.

Two of the mentioned strategies - *One Plans, One Assists* and *One Plans*, *One Reacts* - represent modalities through which mentor teachers will mostly guide novice teachers in order to develop their planning competences, paying attention to the following dimensions: building instructional situations adequate to class profile (to a large extent) respectively the selection of contents suitable for developing pupils' competences (on average).

One Reflect, one Plans proves to be an appropriate strategy mainly in case of interaction with novice teachers, who need guidance and feedback in the instruction management. This strategy offers the mentee the opportunity to achieve the architecture of a particular plan, through creating a feeling of confidence in one's potential.

Partner Planning is a co-planning strategy applicable successfully in planning activities within a curricular area (geography – history – civic education; physics – chemistry – biology etc.), where the building of learning situations is conditioned by the forming of similar competences derived from the same key competence.

Parallel Planning and *Team Planning* are collaborative modalities in planning among teachers with relevant didactic expertise and experience; through these strategies, teachers have the possibility to submit to reflection the process of didactic planning.

3.5. *Conclusions and Discussion*

The development of an organizational culture gives a distinct personality to the respective school in the educational community. Therefore, didactic mentorship must be oriented towards action, engaging a group of teachers, from the same discipline /curricular area, who collaborate in order to develop and implement efficient didactic activities, adequate class management and intervention strategies, etc. Mentorship in schools implies collaboration and collaboration in schools presupposes to go beyond curricular barriers and to include specialists from outside the curricular area, who bring experiences offering another perspective over the didactic or scientific domain.

The organization and promotion of professional teamwork activities (teaching, planning, and mentoring) will offer teachers a greater flexibility and creativity in the educational activities management. Teachers must be eager to relate and communicate, to admit they need support and professional guidance, to accept teamwork and to seize upon the joint opportunities which can enable them to become more efficient in practicing professional duties.

Acknowledgements

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Section 2: European experiences of mentoring and professional development of teachers

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101

EUROPEAN POLICIES AND MODELS REGARDING TEACHERS TRAINING

Laura ŞERBĂNESCU[37]

Abstract: *Current European education policies bring to the centre of attention dimensions such as quality, teachers and trainers, gender inclusion, the dual green and digital transition, higher education, geopolitics. Of these, the present article highlights and analyses the component of teachers and trainers in relation to the different models of initial and ongoing training of teachers encountered at European level. Comparison with the teachers training system in Romania is also included. Opportunities and challenges are also identified in teachers training systems at European level and implicitly in the national system, and proposals for efficiency and topics of reflection are included.*

Key words: *teacher training, models, European educational policies.*

1. Introduction

The article aims to present and analyse the latest educational policies on teachers training, in the context of the existence of several models in different European education systems.

The concern regarding training of human resources in education is not a new one in educational policies, but, in the most recent documents, it acquires new dimensions and accents.

On the other hand, high-performance teachers training systems tend to become examples of good practice. The teachers training models present at European level are diverse and can offer or take over performance elements, provided that they can be correlated with the specificity of education systems.

2. Creating the European Education Area, an ambitious concern of current European education policies

The European Commission's communication, from September 2020, on achieving the European Education Area by 2025 outlines teachers and trainers among the six proposed areas of action, along

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with quality, gender inclusion, the dual green and digital transition, higher education, hhand the geopolitical dimension.

2.1. Directions of action in creating the European Education Area

In the following we will present the main landmarks related to the six directions of action proposed for the realization of the European Education Area by 2025 (European Commission, 2020, p. 7-15).
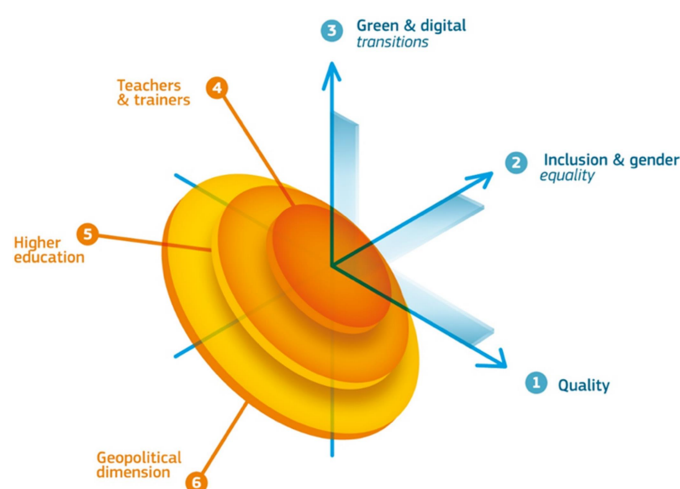
Fig. 1. *Proposed directions of action to achieve the European Education Area by 2025 (European Commission, 2020, p. 7).*

Quality assurance will consist of: mastering the basic skills, including digital competences; mastery of transversal skills; promoting the dual freedom of learners and teachers to be mobile and of the institutions to freely associate with each other in Europe and beyond; encouraging foreign languages learning and multilingualism; supporting teachers in terms of cultural and linguistic diversity in schools; bringing a European perspective in education; maintaining education and training institutions as safe environments.

Inclusion and gender equality will focus on dimensions such as: the level of education and graduation should be decoupled from social, economic and cultural status; educations systems at all levels should comply with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; education and training systems (supporting employability and participation in education and training) should be more flexible, resilient and future-proof; robust and inclusive lifelong learning strategies: re-entry into school, access to higher education and vocational education and training programs; cross-border cooperation should be strengthened (youth, sport, culture) to promote non-formal

learning; developing awareness of gender issues in education processes and in educational institutions; dissolving gender stereotypes; proper gender balance in leadership positions.

Green and digital transitions: encouraging skills for the green economy, by supporting a new and sustainable education and training infrastructure and by renovating existing buildings; increasing the number of professionals working towards a climate-neutral and resource-efficient economy; integrating sustainable environmental perspectives into the natural and human sciences and supporting shifts in skills, methods, processes and cultures; equipping citizens with digital skills, but also with other competences, such as entrepreneurship and learning to learn.

Teachers and trainers: overcoming teacher shortages; the teaching profession as such must be revalorized in social terms and, in some member states, also in financial terms; continuous opportunities for professional development (teaching skills for students with SEN, use of digital technologies and teaching in multilingual and multicultural classrooms); international mobility of students, teacher and teacher trainers should become part of teacher education.

Higher education: closer and deeper cooperation between higher education institutions; cross-border policy framework; higher education institutions as central actors of the "knowledge square": education, research, innovation, and services for society; automatic recognition of qualifications and study periods abroad; greater attention to be paid to specialized education programs in advanced digital skills.

Geopolitical dimension: cooperation in education is a key topic to be completed in order to achieve the Union's geopolitical priorities and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals; the change in the global order (eg China's rise, the retreat of the United States from the multilateral order) requires the strengthening of European international cooperation, including in the field of education; collaboration between educational institutions, both inside and outside the Union, contributes to attracting the best talent worldwide and to promote peer learning and joint international research and innovation projects; extending the partnership between the European Education Area and non-EU countries is an integral part of the vision to be achieved by 2025.

2.2. Teacher training, direction of action in creating the European Education Area

The vision for the educational profession within the European Education Area includes: highly competent and motivated teachers; opportunities for support and professional development during various careers; within the European area of education, teaching and training should be valued professions (European Commission, 2020, p. 12).

Referring to the Romanian education system and to the field of teachers training implicitly, we have the issue of identifying answers to some of the challenges encountered:

- What are the concrete applicable methods to increase the level of competence of Romanian teachers?

- What are the motivational levers necessary to ensure the participation of Romanian teachers in the continuous training?

- What opportunities and career support options can we identify for Romanian teachers?

- By what means will the teaching profession become an appreciated profession in Romania?

The proposed objectives for the direction of action Teachers and Trainers are: overcoming the shortage of teachers; revalorization of the teaching profession; continuous opportunities for professional development and international mobility (European Commission, 2020, p. 12).

Fig. 2. *Proposed objectives for the direction of action Teachers and Trainers*

In terms of overcoming the shortage of teachers, there are deficits in different EU member states, at all levels of education, mainly for specific subjects and for children with special educational needs. Another relevant element is that about a third of the teaching population will retire in the next decade (European Commission, 2020, p. 12).

The implicit question regarding the problem of teacher's shortage in Romania is:

- What are the concrete ways in which the shortage of teachers in Romania can be overcome?

Regarding the aspect of revalorization of the teaching profession, this concerns both social and financial terms. Thus, at European level, only one in five teachers in lower secondary education considers the teaching profession to be valued by society and about half of teachers consider excessive administrative burdens to be a stress factor in the profession (European Commission, 2020, p. 12).

In this context, we aim to identify the means through which the teaching profession in Romania can be revalorized.

Analyzing the opportunities for professional development, it is found that a significant number of European teachers express the need to develop their teaching skills for: students with special educational needs, the use of digital technologies, teaching in multilingual and multicultural classes (European Commission, 2020, pp. 12).

In this context, topics for analysis and debate on the Romanian education system can be:

- Are the needs for continuous training on the components of students with SEN, the use of digital technologies and teaching in multilingual and multicultural classes specific to Romanian teachers as well?

- Do we identify (and) other training needs / areas of interest for Romanian teachers?

Regarding the international mobility of students, teachers, and trainers, it is stated that this must become part of teachers training. The aim of mobility is to meet the needs of students, and the means are to increase access to a variety of approaches and quality teaching (European Commission, 2020, p. 12).

In this context, we wonder how the theme of international mobility of teachers / trainers / pupils / students / can become part of their vocational training in Romania?

Improving teachers' skills and increasing their motivation can be achieved through several intermediate means and objectives proposed by the Commission: Erasmus academies for teachers; European guidelines for the development of national career frameworks in the years 2021-2022; Policy framework for increasing the number and quality of mobility opportunities; European Award for Innovative Teaching (European Commission, 2020, p. 22).

MEANS AND INTERMEDIATE OBJECTIVES	
25 Erasmus Academies for teachers until 2025	• **Objective:** to create networks of institutions for teacher training and teacher associations
European guidelines for the development of national career frameworks	• **New concept:** Coherent framework for careers in education
Policy framework for increasing the number and quality of mobility opportunities	• **Objective:** Teacher training in Europe, based on their actual mobility needs
European Award for Innovative Teaching	• **Objective:** to recognize the work of teachers who make an outstanding contribution to the profession

Fig. 3. *Intermediate means and objectives for improving teachers' skills and increasing their motivation*

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107

Thus, by 2025, it is planned to be organized a number of 25 Erasmus Academies for teachers in order to create networks of institutions for teachers training and teacher associations. The estimated benefits are the creation of communities of practice (initial training and continuing professional development; information needed to develop national and European teacher training policies; supporting innovation in teacher practice); learning opportunities on pedagogical issues of common interest (involvement in dialogue with society; education for sustainable development; teaching in multilingual classes); structural partnerships and joint programs between institutions and other providers and associations in the field of teacher training (cross-border training and learning).

The European guidelines for the development of national career frameworks in the years 2021-2022 aim to support career progress. The means identified consist of mutual learning between countries, as they adapt.

A new concept is also introduced, namely the creation of a coherent framework for careers in school education. The policy framework for increasing the number and quality of mobility opportunities aims to train teachers in Europe, based on their actual mobility needs, and the means identified are provided by the Commission's collaboration with member states and interested parties.

The European Award for Innovative Teaching aims to recognize the work of teachers (and their schools) who make an exceptional contribution to the profession, and the means identified are to capitalize on good practice (European Language Certificate; Jan Amos Comenius Award; National and European eTwinning Awards).

3. European teacher training models

3.1. Initial teacher education in Europe

Regarding initial teacher education in Europe, a fundamental concept is the full qualification of teachers who have completed initial training. Also, there are, in some education systems, alternative pathways for obtaining the teaching qualification (European Commission, 2018, p. 33).

Similarly, in the Romanian teacher education system we meet the option of full qualification by completing an internship year and passing the final exam in education.

The qualification of the teaching staff, starting with 2012, in all EU member states, includes the obtaining of the bachelor's degree. Exceptions are teachers who will teach in high school, where a master's degree is also required. The duration of the studies for obtaining the didactic qualification varies between four and five years.

In our country, all teachers have a bachelor's degree, including most of those who teach in preschool and primary education and have completed the bachelor's degree in Pedagogy of Primary and Preschool Education. High school teachers also have a master's degree.

The components of the initial teacher education have different weights, the general one including courses related to the field of education and knowledge of the subjects that the candidates will teach after the qualification, and the professional one comprising the pedagogical practice in class (with weights between 10 and 30%).

Teachers' education models in Europe are the consecutive one and the simultaneous one. There are education systems where both models coexist.

Starting with the 2020-2021 academic year, through the master's degree in teaching, which appears as an alternative to the education previously provided by the university departments for teacher education, in Romania are implemented both models of initial teacher education: the simultaneous model and the consecutive model.

Full qualification of teachers who have completed initial education is not always a sufficient condition in European education systems. Thus, there may be additional criteria such as: promotion of a contest; professional competence confirmation; internship (initiation) or accreditation, registration, or certification program (European Commission, 2018, pp. 33-36).
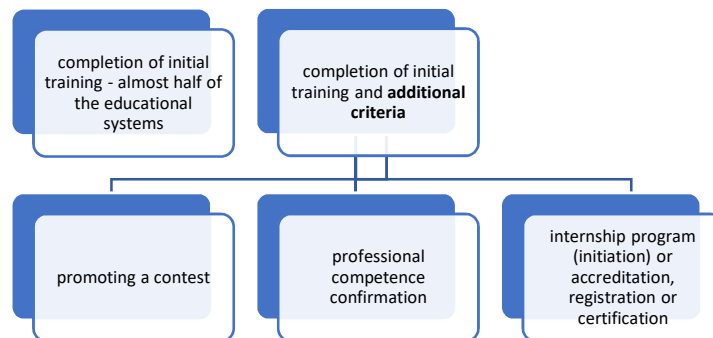
Fig. 4. *Full qualification of teachers who have completed the initial teacher education*

Alternative routes for a teaching qualification consist of: short vocational guidance programs (provided by "traditional" teacher education institutions, with flexible forms of enrollment: part-time, distance or mixed education, evening courses) or training based on employment, which allows trainees to work in a school and follow an individual training program (European Commission, 2018, pp. 36-39).

In Romania, we similarly encounter postgraduate programs for the initial teacher education, in a combined regime, delivered by higher education institutions with specialized departments. We also meet the hiring of teachers with the status of unqualified substitute teacher, for a certain period, until the completion of qualification and certification studies.

Internships and mentoring are ways of professional support for teachers and take different forms. Thus, there are different types of support for beginner teachers (personal, social, professional) and different elements of internship programs (mentoring - a mandatory element of internship programs

in almost all educational systems; vocational training; mutual peer review; scheduled meetings with the principal school) (European Commission, 2018, pp. 51-56).

In Romania, the internship lasts one year, mentoring is present as a legal provision, but it is not formally provided at national level.

3.2. Models, strategies, and measures for the continuing professional development of teachers in Europe

At European level, there are discrepancies between the supply of continuing professional development and the needs expressed by teachers. These discrepancies are lower in countries where schools and teachers themselves are responsible for setting training priorities. Also, the time spent in continuous professional development is longer in countries where it is mandatory (European Commission, 2018, pp. 57-58).

In Romania, continuous training is mandatory, the obligation being recorded in the National Education Law no. 1/2011, but there is also no sanction in the legislation for not fulfilling this condition. There are instead mentioned in specific methodologies limitations on the evolution and development of future career.

The barriers that stand in the way of participating in professional development are: lack of time; overlapping training programs with teaching activities; absence of incentives.

Higher participation rates in professional development correlate with: higher levels of financial support and the opportunity to participate in continuing professional development activities during the work program.

The status of continuous professional development is generally mandatory.

The most common forms of motivation are: financial; legal regulations; internal regulations; granting useful credits for career advancement.

Regarding the financing of teachers training, we encounter different models: the fund allocated to schools; included in per-student funding; included in the salary fund; managed at national (Government / Ministry of Education) or regional level, etc. (European Commission, 2018, pp. 57-58).

The planning of continuous professional development at school level is done through the plans of continuous professional development, the differences between them consisting in: levels of responsibility; frequency and size of participation; contents etc. (European Commission, 2018, pp. 58-60).

The levels of authority responsible for defining needs and priorities can be: national level; school; director; professor (European Commission, 2018, pp. 60-62).

Measures to facilitate participation can be given by: free of charge; career development; salary increase. There are also additional measures such as: grants for teachers; participation in courses during the work schedule; study leave (European Commission, 2018, pp. 63-64).
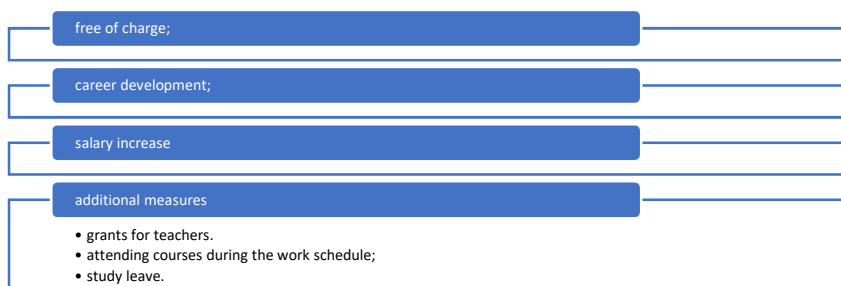
Fig. 5. *Measures to facilitate teacher participation in continuing professional development*

Specialized support for teachers with pupils with general learning difficulties may include functions such as: educational psychologists, experienced teachers, speech and learning therapists, pedagogues, language teachers for speakers of other languages, learning mentors, attendance officers, social workers or healthcare suport workers, etc. (European Commission, 2018, pp. 64-66).

Support for personal and professional matters may consist in: support for managing interpersonal relationships; support for development and improvement of professional practice (European Commission, 2018, pp. 66-68).

Regarding career management and self-management, the specific elements of different education systems provide nuances regarding: the types of career structures; advancement; the evolution of the teaching career.

Thus, we encounter several career structures defined by a set of skills and / or responsibilities and paid career structures that can allow a teacher to broaden his experience or take on additional tasks or responsibilities (European Commission, 2018, p. 69). -71).

The requirements related to the evolution of the teaching career can be from the following categories: positive evaluation / appraisal; the length of professional experience; the demonstration of specific professional development; research activities; conducting or designing continuing professional development courses (European Commission, 2018, pp. 72-75).

The evolution of the teaching career, which implies additional roles and responsibilities (European Commission, 2018, pp. 75-76), includes:

- subjects / curricula: subject / curriculum coordinator, pedagogical coordinator, program coordinator, head of study, school advisor, ICT coordinator, language laboratory coordinator, coordinator of working groups / expert groups / committees, teacher researcher.

- pupil support: learning coaches, remedial education coordinator, special education coordinator, guidance officer.

- school life: class teacher / tutor, project coordinator, home / school liaison coordinator.

- initial teacher education / continuous professional development: continuous professional development coordinator, teacher trainer;

- evaluation: advisor/ inspector for other schools, examination coordinator .

The Romanian education system has specificities in this area, here the teacher education being delimited in evolution in the teaching career, by obtaining teaching degrees and continuous professional development, by participating in continuous training programs and accumulating, implicitly, the transferable professional credits mentioned in law.

Career guidance also influences the evolution of the teaching career by : providing information; coaching or career advancement counseling; career guidance on wider roles / responsibilities open to teachers, improving the level of qualification or enhancing their official status (European Commission, 2018, pp. 72-77).

The teacher competence frameworks issued by top-level authorities include the following categories: psycho-pedagogical competencies; subject knowledge and its teaching approaches; organization of learning and evaluation; innovative teaching approaches; communication with pupils; cooperation with colleagues and relationships with parents and other external partners (European Commission, 2018, pp. 78-79).

These teacher competence frameworks are used in different professional contexts (European Commission, 2018, pp. 80-82): initial teacher education: defining the learning outcomes to be achieved by the end of the initial teacher education; entry into the profession: accreditation / licensing criteria for teachers, selection / recruitment criteria, evaluation of teachers' competencies at the end of the internship; continuous professional development: development of continuous professional development programs, preparation of individual continuous professional development plans of teachers; others: teacher evaluation / evaluation criteria, teacher promotion, disciplinary procedures / cases of serious misconduct.

Competence frameworks formalized by specific methodologies are also found in the Romanian teacher training system, their uses being similar to those in other European education systems.

Conclusions and discussions

Analyzing the latest European and national educational policies in the field of teacher education, we observe the permanent concern for their improvement and permanent development. We also note their correlation with teacher education models implemented in different European education systems.

Considering the challenges posed by the educational policy documents and the education models for European teachers, the possible answers of the Romanian education system consist in taking over the European elements that can be implemented on the one hand and in identifying the national specificities on the other. So, from the comparative analysis contained in this article are revealed the components of the Romanian teacher training system which are similar to high-performance

European systems (the presence of alternative models of initial teacher education, duration of studies, competencies, etc.). We can also identify the vulnerable components, generally given by the insufficient social valorization of the teaching profession and by the salary still unsuitable for a high professional and social status.

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TUTORS FOR NEWLY QUALIFIED TEACHERS IN ITALY: A RESOURCE FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Massimiliano FIORUCCI, Giovanni MORETTI[38]

Abstract: This contribution examines the roles and functions performed by tutors of newly qualified teachers in Italy as part of the organisation of their induction and probation year. The teacher's tutor is considered a strategic resource for the development of both the professionalism of the teachers and the school autonomy. This study presents the results of a multi-year training project for teachers' tutors carried out by the Department of Educational Sciences of the Roma Tre University, in collaboration with the Regional School Office for Lazio, in the Region of Lazio, from the 2017/2018 school year to the 2019/2020 school year, which involved 2,390 teachers' tutors in service in schools.

Keywords: Italian tutor education, Mentoring, Newly qualified teacher, Professional development, Teacher induction.

1. Introduction

The induction phase at a school and in the classroom is a critical step for newly qualified teachers, which often represents a stress factor and gives rise to a feeling of being abandoned, with a lack of support (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009; Buchanan et al., 2013; Harfitt, 2015; Biagioli, 2015). To overcome these difficulties, educational policies in particular are needed that are aimed at linking initial training with 'on-the-job' training, and that include the introduction of tutoring and mentoring activities aimed at supporting the work of newly qualified teachers (i.e., those who have just gained a permanent teaching position) during their critical induction phase and in their subsequent professional development (Heilbronn, Jones, Bubb & Totterdell, 2002; Löfström & Eisenschmidt, 2009; Darling-Hammond, Jaquith & Hamilton 2012; Kent, Green & Feldman, 2012; Kemmis et al., 2014).

In Italy, educational research has mainly focused on the role of the 'intern' tutor (on teacher training) during their initial training to become a teacher, and it has paid little attention to the role played by the tutors of newly qualified teachers (Fiorucci & Moretti, 2019). The results of a recent study on

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School Principals and 'middle management' in Italy that examined the performance of 12 middle management positions (which included tutors for newly qualified teachers and the coordinators of these tutors) showed that the tutors' work was negatively correlated with the development of the school's sense of collective self-efficacy (Paletta, 2020).

The requested support from the tutors of newly qualified teachers is on the whole considerable; however, there is currently little or no attention paid to the training of the teachers' tutors themselves (Fiorucci & Moretti, 2019). With a view to improving the teaching–learning processes, the tutor of a newly qualified teacher must be considered as one of the indispensable strategic figures in the induction phase, who can help in the development of the training path of the newly qualified teacher that is provided for by Law. It is therefore appropriate to pay due attention also to the training of the teachers' tutors, who are called upon to provide the roles of supervision, observation and critical evaluation (Ministerial Decree 850/2015, Law 107/215). This will enhance the tutoring and mentoring practices that international research has identified as effective resources for the induction phase of newly qualified teachers (Heilbronn, Jones, Bubb & Totterdell, 2002; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Kemmis et al., 2014). It is also necessary to motivate the teachers' tutors to carry out their roles with care and to enhance their active participation, by providing them with the necessary tools to promote the development of a reflective and collaborative professional dimension, both personally and together with the newly qualified teachers (Puchner & Taylor, 2006). They need to work in such a way as to converge on the building of a learning community that is open to the practice of mutual understanding and exchange, and to the promotion of lasting partnership agreements between Universities, Schools and the Territory (Moretti, 2019). The achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda, which is aimed at "ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all", represents an indispensable goal for Italy. Indeed, Italy is a country in which lifelong teacher education is a strategic element in the qualification of both the teaching–learning processes and the lifelong in-service training.

2. Organisation of the induction and probation year

In Italy, the induction phase for newly qualified teachers is based on the organisation of the so-called 'induction and probation year', the successful completion of which is required for the newly qualified teacher to have their permanent position confirmed. In this phase, in-service training is mandatory, and it is managed through several institutional bodies that operate at the 'macrosystem' level (e.g., Ministry of Public Education, National Institute of Documentation, Innovation and Educational Research [INDIRE]), and at the 'mesosystem' level (e.g., Regional School Offices; Balduzzi, 2011; Mangione, Pettenati, Rosa, 2016; Calenda & Tammaro, 2017). The organisation of the induction and

probation year is established by Italian Law no. 107/2015 and by Ministerial Decree (Decreto Ministeriale) D.M. n. 850/2015. A course of 50 hours of activity is required, as follows: (a) 6 hours for preparatory (kick-off) meetings and meetings for the final feed-back;

(b) 12 hours for at least four training workshops of 3 hours each, with activities in small groups;

(c) 12 hours for professional supervision, through a peer-to-peer approach, aimed at defining a 'Training Agreement' and at mutual monitoring of the activities in the classroom;

(d) 20 hours for online training prepared and monitored by INDIRE, which involves putting together a digital training portfolio that comprises: three activities of self-assessment of professional skills; a training curriculum; planning, documentation and reflection on two teaching activities; four monitoring questionnaires at various stages of the pathway; and self-training and social interactions (Figure 1).
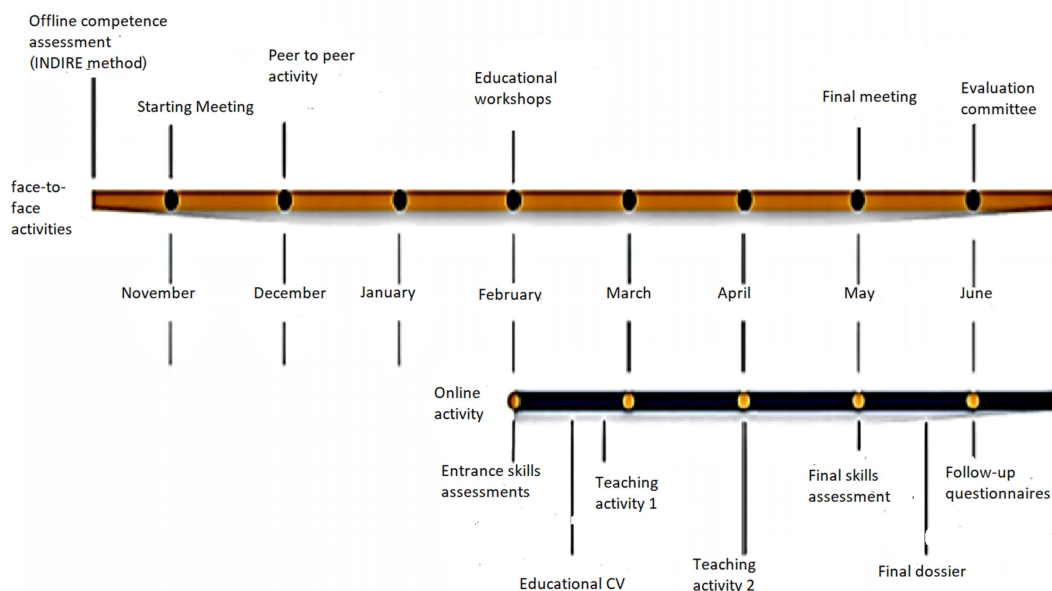
Fig. 1. Organisation of the induction and probation year of newly qualified teachers in Italy

As well as defining the organisation of the induction and probation year, the aforementioned Ministerial Decree D.M. 850/2015 outlines the roles and tasks assigned to the tutors of each newly qualified teacher. Indeed, Art. 12 states that "The teacher's tutor welcomes the newly qualified teacher into the work community, encourages their participation in the various activities of the community life of the school, and exercises every useful form of listening, counseling and collaboration to improve the quality and effectiveness of the teaching. The role of the teachers' tutors also includes the preparation of activities of mutual monitoring in the classroom". The same

D.M. 850/2015 specifies that a teacher's tutor is designated by the School Principal (Headteacher; Dirigente scolastico) after having heard the opinion of the Academic Board, with a list of the essential duties of the tutor, which are:

(i) to collaborate in the formulation of the initial and final evaluations of the skills, and in the Training Agreement of the newly qualified teacher;

(ii) to perform peer-to-peer activities (e.g., planning, mutual observation, analysis);

(iii) to submit a reasoned opinion on the characteristics of the professional performance of the teacher in their induction and probation year (defined as 'istruttoria'; i.e., an investigation into);

(iv) to take part in the Evaluation Committee in the final interview that the teacher will undergo at the end of their probation year.

Faced with this significant workload, teachers' tutors receive modest economic remuneration in exchange, and a certificate that just certifies that the tutors' activities have actually been carried out. This relative lack of recognition, together with other intervening factors, undoubtedly contributes to demotivation of teachers, such that it is not surprising that they might later on be unwilling to take on the role of tutor.

In Italy, a teacher can become a tutor following the acceptance of their application by the Academic Board and the School Principal. The application is on a personal basis, and is left to the free choice of the individual teacher, if interested. The application is evaluated by taking into account whether or not the teacher has specific qualifications (e.g., educational qualifications, working experience, other cultural and professional qualifications [e.g., a doctorate and at least 2 years of scientific research]), and any publications or other educational qualifications. The procedure is formulated clearly and analytically according to national legislation, although in reality, due to the absence of applications, most of the time the School Principal has to intervene directly to try to convince teachers to apply for the role of tutor. In other cases, the Academic Board can intervene by inviting, and maybe putting indirect pressure on, teachers to apply who have never been tutors for their school previously. This pressure is exercised by taking into account a 'rule' that is not often written, but appears to be accepted by teachers, which indicates the principle of rotation of these duties that are additional to general teaching duties. Overall, the low numbers of teachers who apply to take on the role of tutor is an expression of low personal motivation, limited social recognition of the work carried out by teachers' tutors, and often the perception of personal inadequacy also connected to the lack of specific professional preparation. These brief final considerations confirm the urgency to give greater value to the role of teachers' tutor, and to pay the utmost attention to their training.

3. School autonomy and role of the School Principal in Italy

In Italy, Law no. 59/1997, Article 21, established the functional autonomy of educational institutions. Autonomous schools that have reached an optimal size (minimum, 500; maximum 900 pupils) were gradually attributed a 'legal personality' by the year 2000. The Regulations referred to in the Decree of the President of the Republic of Italy 275/1999 that defined and finalised the organisational and didactic autonomy of research, experimentation and development. Reform Law 107/2015 fully implemented this autonomy of educational institutions, also in relation to their financial endowments, thus also increasing their accounting autonomy. However, as there is an absence of intermediate services and support for schools to date in Italy, school autonomy can only be exercised within the limits of the human, financial and instrumental resources that are available under current legislation, and in any case, without putting any new or greater burdens on public finances.

In summary, some of the elements that characterise school autonomy in Italy can be identified in the preparation by schools of a Three-Year Plan of Training and Education on Offer (Piano Triennale dell' offerta Formativa; PTOF), a Self-Assessment Report, and an Improvement Plan. This provides the possibility of requesting the necessary "staff for autonomy", which includes the possibility to ask the Ministry of Education for the necessary teachers, divided into teachers of specific subjects, and including aides for the special-needs teachers, and teachers for additional extracurricular activities. It is important that the schools recognize what the freedom to autonomously defines: a "share" of the curriculum dealing with timetable flexibility, the school calendar, the strengthening of certain subjects or skills. Autonomous schools can enter into understandings, agreements, conventions, contracts and projects with other bodies or organisations or with external experts. They can also make use of external funding and of buildings (i.e., owned by the Municipality or the Province) for educational, recreational and sport activities that can be offered to the community outside of school hours.

Each autonomous educational institution is assigned a School Principal, who carries out the supervision, management, organisational and coordination tasks, and is responsible for the management of the financial and instrumental resources and the results of the service, as well as for the development of the human resources (Ministerial Decree no. 850/2015).

In agreement with all of this, the School Principal is required to have a decisive role in the choices that accompany the training of teachers, including for newly qualified teachers and for those with the role of teacher's tutor. Indeed, the School Principal has to constantly intervene here through multiple actions, such as:
(i) examination of the applications submitted by aspiring teachers' tutors (and often also convincing teachers to apply for the role);

(ii) assignment of scores to the working experience and the cultural and professional qualifications that are indicated in the applications;

(iii) establishment of the Training Agreement that involves newly qualified teachers and their tutors;

(iv) certifying that the number of hours dedicated to the peer-to-peer observation between a tutor and a newly qualified teacher have been satisfied;

(v) visiting the newly qualified teacher's class at least once;

(vi) appointment of the tutor after having heard the opinion of the Academic Board;

(vii) assessment of the tutor's investigation (istruttoria);

(viii) submission of a report for each teacher undergoing induction and probation;

(ix) calling for and chairing the Evaluation Committee;

(x) issuing of a motivating provision to confirm the hiring on a permanent basis of a teacher who has successfully completed their probationary year, or in the case of a negative evaluation, requiring the repetition of the probation period.

4. The training path of the tutors

The Department of Educational Sciences (DSF) of the Roma Tre University has been engaged since 2017 to date in the design and development of a training course aimed at the tutors of newly qualified teachers (i.e., those who have just gained a permanent teaching position) in their probationary year. In the start-up phase, the course was carried out in collaboration with the Regional School Office for Lazio, and it involved 2,390 teachers' tutors in the Lazio Region, with the activities carried out in a 'blended' mode. These included one in-person meeting in the offices of the DSF, and further studies to be carried out online through a dedicated 'Moodle' platform. The activities were carried out in the school years 2017/2018, 2018/2019 and 2019/2020. During the COVID-19 pandemic, all of these activities were interrupted. Resumption of the training activities is expected during the current school year (2021/2022), to be carried out in both synchronous and asynchronous online modes.

The main objective of this multi-year training course so far has been to promote professional practices and to consolidate the skills of the tutors, in accordance with the provisions of Ministerial Decree 850/2015. The issues that were addressed in the training activities included:

(a) the function and activities of the tutor of a newly qualified teacher during the probation year;

(b) observation and peer observation in the school context (observation grids; microteaching and video-annotation);

(c) peer-to-peer training and reflection on the professional practices (theoretical framework of the community of practice);

(d) knowledge of the operational tools and methods of professional tutors of newly qualified teachers (observation and self-observation, peer review, teaching documentation, professional counseling);

(e) knowledge of dialogic and collaborative teaching strategies and devices (i.e., training and evaluation feedback);

(f) promotion of the ability for teachers' tutors to carry out tutoring, counseling and professional supervision functions, taking into account the aims and specific characteristics of the educational and school contexts.

As part of the course, a fact-finding survey was carried out (Fiorucci & Moretti, 2019) that was aimed at investigating the roles and functions of teachers' tutors, and analysing the strengths and weaknesses that characterise the management of the induction period of newly qualified teachers. From the results of the research, which was carried out through a questionnaire, many interesting aspects emerged that help to better understand the dynamics associated with exercising this role of teachers' tutor within a school, and within the tutor–newly qualified teacher relationship. In addition, the results of the survey were useful for further development of the training offer, which in the academic year 2019/2020 was characterised by the development of seven training modules dedicated to groups of 25 teachers. These were aimed at deepening the strategies and tools that are useful for improvement of tutoring and mentoring, in a diachronic manner and through training research (Asquini, 2018),.

In all, 669 tutors took part in the training activities carried out in the school year 2019/2020, from schools of all levels. With an average age of 49 years and 8 months, 88.4% were female, and 69.1% were first-time tutors. In 43.6% of cases, they were engaged in school middle management. In particular, the tutors expressed the need to consolidate and develop their own knowledge and skills in didactic methodologies and in the relational and communication areas (Figure 2).
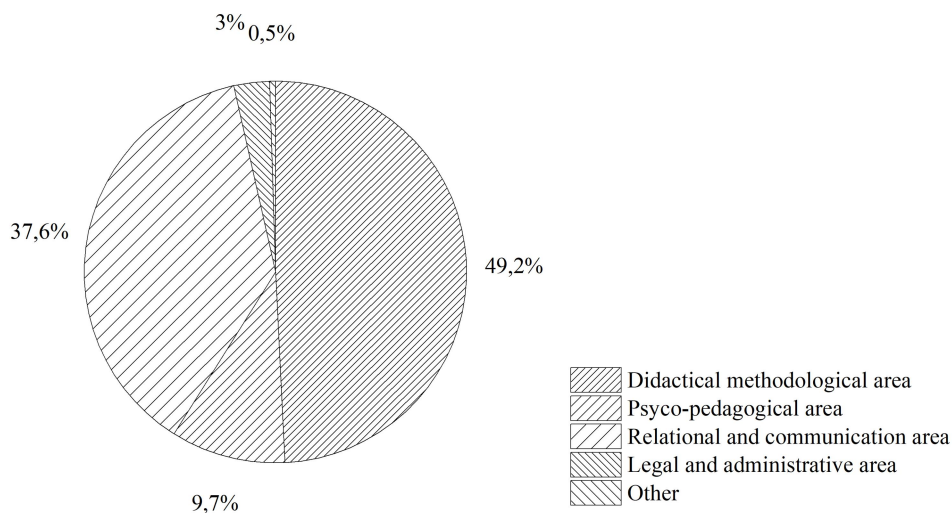
Fig. 2. Professional development areas chosen by the tutors

The course allowed the existing relationships between the University and the Territory to be consolidated and strengthened. Also, analysis of the data collected made it possible to more actively respond to the training needs of the teachers' tutors, by noting the strengths and criticalities involved in carrying out of their role as a teachers' tutor.

5. Strengths and weaknesses of the role of a tutor

As part of the survey that accompanied the training project, the teachers' tutors were asked to identify the aspects they considered to be positive about the experience of their role as a teachers' tutor. The positive aspects highlighted by the analysis of the data are illustrated in Figure 3, and these mainly concerned:

(i) the possibility for improvement of their teaching methodologies, through mutual comparisons (41%);

(ii) the sharing experience, which involved an exchange of strategies, good practices and reflections on their didactic methodologies (31.6%);

(iii) being able to undergo a further training and qualifying experience (of their own) for their professional development (29.1%);

(iv) the interesting opportunities for collaboration and discussion between teachers' tutors and newly qualified teachers (29.1%).
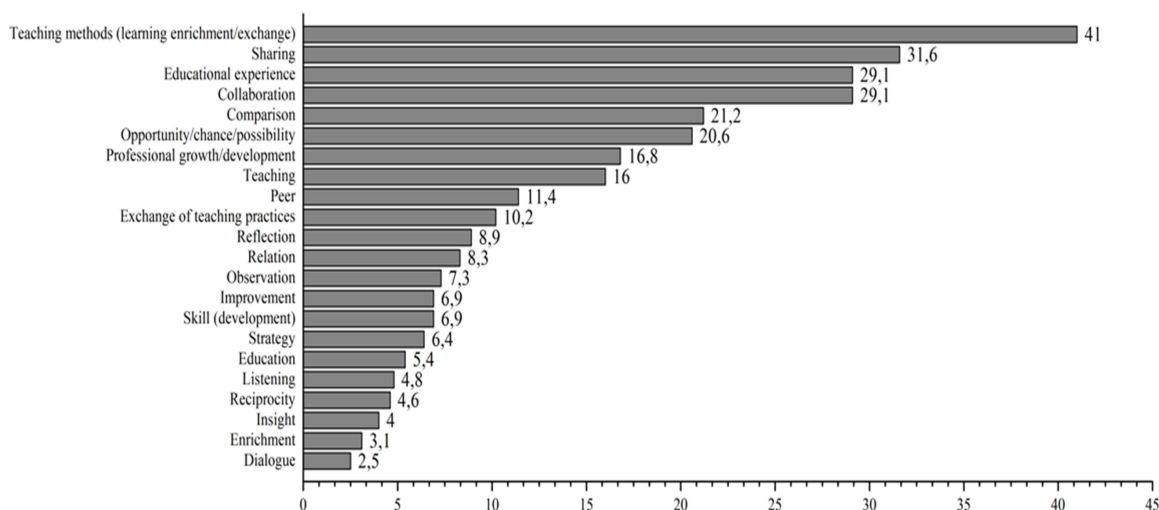
Fig. 3. Strengths of the training course identified by the teachers' tutors

Other answers here included the concept of the opportunity or chance to grow from a professional point of view, the interest in peer tutoring practices, the development of skills, and the relational dimension characterised by listening, reciprocity, dialogue and enrichment. These are some of the most recurring statements made by the tutors:

(a) "the possibility to review their own work and teaching methods through comparison";

(b) "the possibility to make their own professional experience available to a colleague";

(c) "an opportunity for the development of a reflective attitude of their own observations, planning and evaluation skills in a self-training perspective".

Among the critical or problematic issues that characterised the tutor experiences according to the teachers' tutors who participated in the training course these were, in order of importance:

(i) the work overload and the incompatibility of schedules that hinder the tutorial relationships;

(ii) the excessive time that had to be devoted to bureaucratic aspects and formal reporting;

(iii) the limited time available for comparisons or exchange, and for reflection and sharing of teaching practices;

(iv) the often-felt experience that peer observation was an expression of an evaluation or control activity, with the tutor often "perceived as controller", "intruder" or being "judgmental";

(v) the difficulty of providing feedback that can actually be perceived by the newly qualified teachers as a stimulus for professional development;

(vi) the absence of formal, professional and economic recognition of the tutor function.

6. Professional development perspectives for newly qualified teachers and for tutors

The training course carried out by the DSF made it possible to consolidate the relations between Universities, schools and the Territory. The analysis of the data collected made it possible to respond more consciously and flexibly to the varied training needs expressed by the teachers' tutors. With regard to future perspectives, the evaluation of the training project made it possible to identify some qualifying elements for further initiatives and projects aimed at the tutors of newly qualified teachers, as listed here:

- the building of an interinstitutional collaborative environment (i.e., University, Regional School Offices, Area Networks) that can design the shared Training–Research paths;

- specific involvement in the Training–Research paths of young teachers or tutors with only a few years of service (as age appeared to affect the understanding of the role of tutor);

- involvement in the Training–Research by particular schools with School Principals who attribute value to the training of teachers' tutors and newly qualified teachers;

- development of the basic skills that are considered indispensable to carry out the role of teachers' tutor or coordinator of teachers' tutors, with continuity over time;

- development of the ability to face situations of uncertainty and emergency challenges, and the ability to re-modulate or re-design the educational activities (Moretti & Morini, 2021).

The overall results of the survey carried out are in line with the proposals for initial and in-service

training of secondary school teachers, prepared in Italy by the National University Conference of Educational Sciences (*Conferenza Universitaria Nazionale di Scienze della Formazione*; Cunsf, 2019), which recognizes the specific value of the tutorial functions, attributes strategic importance to the training of tutors for newly qualified teachers, and suggests the adoption of a unitary and homogeneous training strategy.

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Profesionalizarea carierei didactice - PROF – ID 146587
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123

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125

STRUCTURE AND PERSPECTIVES OF THE SECOND PHASE OF TEACHER TRAINING IN THE FEDERAL STATE OF BRANDENBURG (GERMANY) FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF POTSDAM

Felix REINHARDT[39]

Abstract: *In Germany there is a multi-phase model of teacher training. The article describes the structure of the second phase of teacher training in the federal state of Brandenburg and provides insights into current challenges and trends. Traditionally, after the university studies, the second phase is a preparatory service for the teaching profession. The trainees are supported by trainers from study seminars and training teachers from schools. From the point of view of the University of Potsdam, the integration with university studies should be continuously developed.*

Key words: *teacher training, cross-institutional cooperation, mentoring*

1. Introduction

Schools need well-trained teachers to provide the best possible support for the young learner. Therefore, teacher training plays an important role in the school system. In Germany, there is a special multi-phase model for the training of teachers. At the International Conference on Mentoring in Teacher Education and Professional Training, which was organized by the Romanian Ministry of Education, various development perspectives of teacher training were presented. The aim of this article is to present the structure and current developments of the second phase in the Federal State of Brandenburg (Germany), which is strongly geared towards practice. The article provides the perspective of the University of Potsdam on the second phase of teacher training. It emphasizes the role of mentoring within the transition process from university to working life.

The article is structured as follows: First an overview of the concept of the second phase of teacher training in Brandenburg is given. This is followed by results of surveys among teacher training that

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are outlined to draw conclusions for current challenges of the second phase of teacher training. In the end current trends for the further development of the second phase of teacher training, being in the discussion or practice in Brandenburg, are described.

In order to better understand the system of teacher training in Germany, one must know that Germany consists of sixteen federal states, each with its own legislation. Education is an important field of the competence of the state governments. Hepp describes education policy as the "heart" and "core business" of the federal states policies (2011:166). That is why there are sixteen education and teacher training systems in Germany. Moreover the system of teacher education can be described as "fragmented" (Blömeke 2009:6). All systems have in common that there are various institutions involved in teacher training, which in turn are structured according to different phases. Furthermore, the article focuses on the federal state of Brandenburg. The responsible ministry in Brandenburg is the Ministry for Education, Youth and Sport with the current minister Britta Ernst from the Social Democratic Party (SPD).

2. The Concept of the Second Phase of Teacher Training in Brandenburg

The development of several phases in teacher training has historical reasons. Already in 1890, a "seminar year" at a "Gymnasium" in preparation for practice was introduced alongside the university studies for teachers, because the university studies were very much oriented towards philology and less on pedagogy. After 1945 this tradition of a preparatory service after the university course was continued, and in 1970 at a conference of ministers of education, it was expanded to include all types of schools und special training institutions were introduced. (Lenhard 2004)

Today there are three phases in teacher training in Brandenburg. First there is the university course. The reforms of the university course initiated by the Bologna process were implemented differently in the different states (Vogt & Scholz 2020). In Brandenburg a Bachelor-Master-system could be established since 2004. The practical training is forming the second phase. The third phase follows with career entry and offers for advanced training. The phases are organizationally and spatially separated. If you study in Brandenburg, the university course takes place at the University of Potsdam. The (training) schools and the study seminars of the cities of Potsdam, Bernau, Cottbus form the structure of the second phase. For the advanced training there are different institutions, for example the state institute for schools and media in the city of Ludwigsfelde.

The goals of the phases are set out in the respective regulations. In the General Study and Examination Regulations for Teaching-related Bachelor and Master Courses at the University of Potsdam (BAMALA-O) it says „Teacher training lays the scientific foundations for teaching by imparting basic professional skills in the areas of teaching, upbringing, assessment and innovation

[…]" (UP 2020). On the other hand it is said in the regulations of the preparatory service of the second phase (OVP): "The aim of the preparatory service is to enable candidate teachers to practice the profession of teaching independently. In particular, this means that they acquire the ability to act professionally […]" (MBJS 2019a). The basic idea of the two phases is: theoretical knowledge should be acquired at the university. The action-oriented training with a focus on rather independent teaching is successful in the second phase.

The relationship between the phases was also made explicit in a decision by the Conference of Ministers of Education on the standards of teacher training: educational sciences (KMK 2019). The connection of the phases is more demanding than it seems at first glance. The challenge is to connect and delineate the phases at the same time. Especially since increasing the practical part in the first phase (a one-semester stay at school during the university teacher training course) has become common sense (Gröschner & Klaß 2020). The Conference of Ministers of Education solves this problem by weighting. In the first phase, the "focus" is on theory to open up pedagogical practice. In the second phase, on the other hand, the "center" is on practice, which in turn is to be reflected on theoretically (KMK 2019:4).

This second phase has a differentiated structure (MBJS 2019c). The ministry of Education, Youth and Sport is the head of administration. To become a trainee, you need the first state examination from a university. There is an application process at the ministry with a time limit. The trainees are not full teacher. They have a special role. The trainees are called trainee teachers ("Lehramtsanwärter"). They are civil servants of Brandenburg during the period of the training ("Studienreferendar"). The training currently lasts one year. After that year of training, you will need to reapply again at the ministry to be hired as a full teacher.

The training takes place at the study seminars and die (training) schools. The study seminars and (training) schools are semi-autonomous educational systems (with their own management and staff) under state supervision (ministry). The staff at the study seminars consists of teachers who often work in schools at the same time with a reduced number of lessons. They are named "training coaches" und "subject-related seminar leader". The training coaches lead a coaching together with the trainees, accompanying the trainees in their learning process to general pedagogic matters. The coaching is a rather new structure in the study seminars. The idea is for the trainee to work on his or her development together with the coach (for example on topics like classroom management or behavioral problems of the pupils). The subject-related seminar leader focuses on support for didactic questions of the subject (for example questions of lesson planning and performance assessment). There is a wide range of courses available during training: Introductory courses, specialist seminars, excursions and educational workshop weeks. In some courses, the trainees also have to make contributions such as lectures or written statements.

Each trainee is assigned to a training school for the practical training. These schools are "normal" schools being often close to the study seminars. For each subject, the trainee receives a training teacher at the school. The trainee starts with observations in the classes of the two training teachers. Afterwards the trainee takes over guided lessons and finally independent lessons. The trainee should also participate at school conferences, consultation days and general school life. Class visits are an important check of the trainees' performance. The trainee must submit a written lesson plan. The training teacher, the principal and the subject-related seminar leader then take part in the lesson and give the trainee feedback afterwards. The training ends with the second state examination. The final examination consists of observed lessons for each subject in the training school and an oral examination in the study seminar. After the training, the young teachers should have developed professional skills in teaching as part of their professional biography learning processes.

3. Research Results on the Effects of the Second Phase of Teacher Training

Interestingly, there is comparatively little research on the second phase in Germany in contrast to the other phases (Anderson-Park & Abs 2020). One reason may be the comparatively difficult access to the research field.

An important topic is the so-called "practice shock". This means an experience of being overwhelmed when starting a career due to the demands of the teaching profession in practice. Research has shown that the emotional exhaustion resulting from the experience of being overwhelmed decreases over the course of the second phase. A study examines the course of emotional exhaustion at the beginning of the second phase (measuring time 1), at the end (measuring time 2) and when starting work (measuring time 3). It turned out that the experience of being overwhelmed at the actual start of a career increases again significantly. The researchers therefore speak of a "second practice shock" (Dicke et al. 2016). Schmidt, Klusmann & Kunter (2016), on the other hand, came to the conclusion that career starters have more positive experiences. Reasons may be a better role identification and a more intense experience of autonomy.

In some studies, the trainees were asked to evaluate the structures of the second phase. In Brandenburg, in 2004/2005, a research team examined the quality of the training in the second phase using various methods (Schubarth et al. 2006). The strengths and weaknesses analysis include suggestions for upgrading the training school in the program, professionalizing the training teachers and better coordinating the study seminar and the training school (Schubarth et al. 2006: 161f.). Research bei Munderloh 2018 shows, that trainees would like closer cooperation between study seminars and training schools, for example through exchanges between seminar leaders and teachers. Also many trainees in a Bavaria-wide questionnaire survey complain about the lack of a coordinated transition from university to the second phase (Alles 2019). Coherence is actually

intended to counteract fragmentation or the theory-practice gap in teacher education. However, more than half of the 537 trainees surveyed state that coherence has not been sufficiently developed. And not only the evaluation of the coherence, but also the assessment of the communication skills is assessed more critically by the trainees than the trainers (Anderson-Park & Abs 2021).

With a view to the professionalization of the trainees, in the research by Schubarth et al. they find, that on the positive site the trainees say, that the training is very important for the development of their practical skills, they appreciate the significant increase in skills in testing and reflecting on lessons and study seminars are a place for exchanging experiences. On the other hand, they report that the training is very high loaded and has a lot of potential for conflicts (Schubarth et al. 2006: 161-162).

There are also initial research results on the comparatively young instrument of coaching in the second phase. In a study, the views of 21 trainees from the second phase in North Rhine-Westphalia on the coaching instrument were collected using qualitative methods (Krächter 2018). The result shows a promotion of problem reflection and self-reflection and thus a recognizable development of competence among the respondents.

 I would now like to clarify some challenges for a better understanding of the research.

4. Challenges of the second phase of teacher training

Challenges in the second phase concern different aspects. For clarification, the role of the trainees, institutional requirements and practical ones will be discussed. First, as already described the trainee should develop an individual professional biography (Reese-Schnitker 2021). Individual means making your own decisions about how to organize your lessons based on your own knowledge and belief and of course the curriculum. But there is a dependency of the trainee on instructors at the study seminar and the school which have their own opinion of good teaching. Then the strategies of the trainees can be more likely to copy and take over instead of individual decisions.

Second, if you found different institutions, these also develop their own requirements, which can differ from one another. A high level of stress of the trainees is possible due to different role expectations of the institutions. For example, often the subject-related seminar leader wants to see a specific didactic approach from the trainees, because the trainee acts as a learner in the study seminar. He is confronted with a high ideal of good teaching und is seen as an innovator. In school, however, the trainee maybe first fights for recognition in the class. It is the first longer time in the role of a teacher and the first contact with the everyday reality under a high pressure to act. To handle these different role expectations of the institutions can be tough.

Third, lessons must be ensured in the school. It can be tempting for school administrators to give trainees more lessons than intended. But the official low number of lessons should ensure that the trainee has more time to prepare well. This advantage is often lost if many lessons have to be taken over.

5. Current trends for the development of the second phase of teacher training

The challenges outlined are addressed through current trends for the development of the second phase of teacher training. To further clarify the role of the trainee the ministry established competency-oriented evaluation standards to make the requirements even more transparent. The trainees receive these standards for orientation, called the "competence profile". It includes the areas of "further development of the pedagogically professional attitude" (e.g. empathy and enthusiasm) and "further development of job-related skills" (e.g. diagnosis and assessment) (MBJS 2019c). However, no distinction is made between levels of competence and the terms used, such as empathy, still offer a lot of room for interpretation. A further individualization of the training should be reached by coaching and the establishment of a feedback culture. The experience of the trainees should be taken up more, for example through casework. Through that the study seminar wants to lower the hierarchy. First studies in this area show the effectiveness of coaching in the second phase (Krächter 2018).

The important institutional developments include, on the one hand, the high-quality training of training teachers and, on the other hand, the further development of inter-institutional cooperation.

A qualification program of training teachers is used for quality assurance and to support the training teachers, since it can be demanding to be a training teacher. For the training candidates it is often an additional job. In addition, conflicts can arise in the often very close relationships. For this reason, training courses are offered in this area, which up until now have only had to be attended on a voluntary basis (MBJS 2019b). The University of Potsdam is also striving to qualify the training teachers who supervise the students doing internships at Brandenburg schools. The concept provides workshops on role clarification, lesson planning and general advice on school matters. Learning from each other between mentor and mentee is emphasized (UP 2021).

The further development of an institutional cooperation between the theoretically oriented first phase and the practically oriented second phase is a permanent goal. The closer cooperation should support the trainees dealing with the high requirement of merging of theory and practice together. One approach is the early integration of personnel from the second phase in the first phase. So-called "training teams" were set up for this purpose (Gemsa & Wendland 2011). They consist of lecturers from the university, trainers from the study seminars and training teachers from the

training schools. They accompany the students during their internship at the schools. The experiences so far confirm that the exchange is clearly promoted by the team structure. However, it must also be said that due to the low degree of stabilization of this structure, success depends heavily on the good will of all those involved. In addition, it is quite controversial whether the additional effort generated by the cooperation is in a good relation to the benefit (Weber & Czerwenka 2021)

From the perspective of the University of Potsdam the cross-phase cooperation should be further developed in the long term by the fact that there is a coordinated curriculum between the three phases with insights into the competencies (Schubarth & Speck 2021). Because different scenarios are conceivable for the further development of the phases (Terhart 2018), a coordinated curriculum would at the same time strengthen the justification of the various phases and their close interaction.

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133

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MENTOR TRAINING FOR INTERDISCIPLINARITY IN THE CONTEXT OF AGENDA 2030

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Abstract: *The material presented here is an analysis of secondary teacher training in Spain, and in particular in the Balearic Islands region. It is framed in the context of the 2030 Agenda and addresses the introduction of an interdisciplinary axis for initial teacher training based on attention to cultural diversity and education for sustainable development. The current situation is described and examined according to the SWOT analysis. As a result, some proposals for improvement and reflections are presented for their correct incorporation in the Master's Degree in Teacher Education.*

Key words: *Agenda 2030, Cultural Diversity, Education for Sustainable Development, DUA, SWOT.*

Introduction

The situation of social inequality and environmental unsustainability identified by different international organisations in recent years (United Nations Department of Economic & Social Affairs - UNDESA-, 2021; Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change -IPCC-, 2018; Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services -IPBES-, 2019; World Wildlife Fund - WWF-, 2020), has highlighted the need to introduce these topics in education, and more specifically, in pre-service and in-service teacher training as a tool with which to promote these values in educational centres. In fact, the international agenda set to tackle these problems, the 2030 Agenda, proposes a total of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to deal with them, and it includes one (the fourth, SDG4: Quality Education) which is directly related with ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promotion of lifelong learning opportunities for all (United Nations, 2015).

The 2030 Agenda stresses the need to leave no one behind, thus contributing to equal opportunities. In this premise, education acquires a special value, an element whose strengthening is essential to guarantee a transformation with criteria of social justice. In the case of Spain, the priorities for

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political action aimed at accelerating public services that respond to a democratic and resilient welfare state include some actions in the education system, among which we find: guaranteeing educational opportunities, the full development of students' personalities and abilities, ensuring that no one is left behind, combating school segregation, ensuring a focus on equity, equal opportunities and educational quality, as well as intensifying educational support for the most socio-educationally vulnerable students (Secretaría de Estado para la Agenda 2030, 2021, cited in Morey & Vecina, 2021).

Furthermore, the 2030 Agenda is organised around five fundamental axes, known as the 5Ps: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership. Among these, in relation to teacher training, we consider that there are two that could and should be introduced in the training of this group in a cross-cutting manner: those referring to the People axis and those to the Planet axis, i.e. those more directly related to social equality and those related to sustainable development (SD).

In Spain, the training of secondary education teachers is carried out through a master's degree whose purpose is focused on the acquisition of didactic competences for the teaching of a subject related to the area of knowledge of the basic university studies. The duration of the master's degree does not exceed one academic year and one third of it is devoted to external placements, i.e. the completion of a practicum in a secondary education centre.

Given that in Spain, competences in the field of education correspond to each Autonomous Community (it means, each of the 19 administrative regions consisting of one or more provinces in which the Spanish territory is divided) and, in turn, university centres also have a certain degree of autonomy to define their educational programmes, the Master's Degree in Teacher Training, although based on common foundations, differs in some curricular contents depending on the university centre where it is taught. Therefore, this Master's degree does not present an identical set of subjects at national level, but some of them are differentiated according to the territory with the aim, precisely, of adapting to the needs of the most immediate context.

One of the main criticisms of the Master's Degree in Teacher Education in Spain is its fragmentary nature; it is considered to neglect continuity and to lack an organisation coherent with the teaching it aims to provide (Viñao, 2013).

Twenty-first century society requires teachers who are capable of responding to current educational contexts and, therefore, to diversity from a perspective centred on equity and inclusiveness. To this end, these professionals must have training that, beyond working on teaching skills, also enables them to develop essential values such as sustainability, interculturality and transdisciplinarity (Cernadas-Ríos, Lorenzo-Moledo & Santos-Rego, 2019). Only by guaranteeing an educational response to each and every student (inclusive education) and by exercising and promoting environmental sustainability as an essential pillar to ensure equitable social development (Education for Sustainable Development) will real social cohesion be achieved.

On this basis, and taking as an example the Master's Degree in Teacher Training of our most immediate context, the University of the Balearic Islands, we set out below what we consider to be and what we think should be the pillars for the approach to the Person and the Planet axis in the initial training of future secondary education teachers.

To this end, the following sections will introduce the reader to a subject that is already being taught in the Master's Degree in Teacher Training: "Curricular characteristics of the stages and the educational centres". This subject will be presented in order to exemplify one of what we consider to be one of the major advances in the "People Axis" of the 2030 Agenda with regard to the training of future teachers. In turn, this example will help us to design and model the other axis, yet to be designed and incorporated in relation to the "Planet Axis" in optimal teacher preparation.

2. Cultural diversity and teacher training

As mentioned above, the Master's Degree in Teacher Training qualifies students to work as teachers in secondary education centres and, therefore, its content must guarantee adequate training to face the challenges of the education system and society; at the same time, it must adapt to the new training needs based on the teaching (and use) of new teaching methodologies.

At the University of the Balearic Islands (UIB), this master's degree consists of a total of 60 ECTS, of which 40 correspond to compulsory subjects (15 ECTS of generic subjects and 25 ECTS of specific subjects), 6 ECTS to the Master's Final Project and 14 ECTS to the Work Placement in teaching centres (i.e. between 350 and 375 hours in secondary education centres). The internship is divided into 2 periods, one of observation and first contact in the centres (November) and the other of development of the educational intervention as a teacher under supervision (from March to May).

Among the compulsory generic subjects (i.e. common to all subject areas) is "Curricular characteristics of the stages and the educational centres", a subject of 2 ECTS (the rest of the subjects have between 3 and 4 ECTS). The contents of the subject focus on attention to diversity in secondary education centres, i.e. on the socio-educational response to be offered to pupils who are considered to have specific educational support needs (Figure 1 describes the types of pupils who are considered to have specific educational support needs).
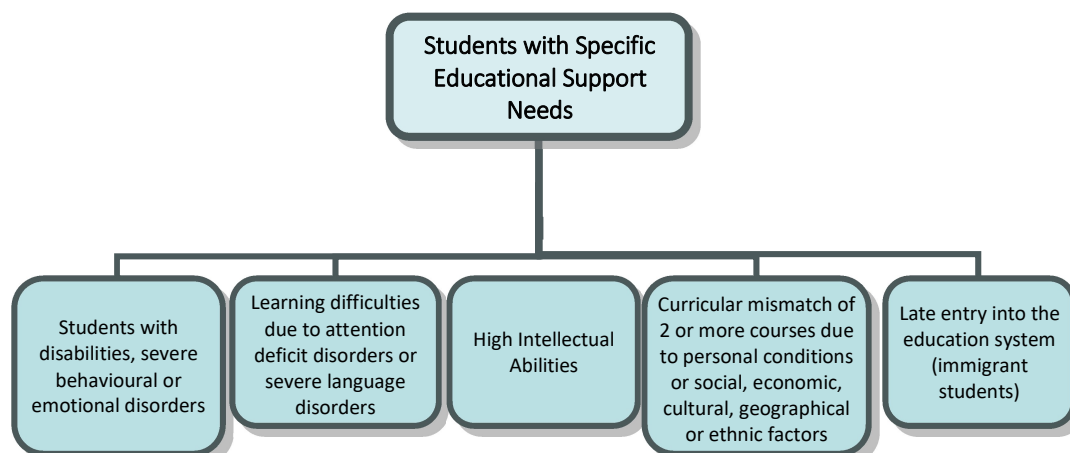
Fig.1. *Definition given by the regulatory framework for "Students with Specific Educational Support Needs"*

This subject offers future teachers the necessary strategies and sensitivity to work with the heterogeneity of the student body, considering difference (and among this, cultural diversity) as an intrinsic element of the human being but, above all, as an enriching factor of the educational act itself. Teachers must be able to offer optimum attention to diversity and, in particular, to cultural diversity (so present in our classrooms). To this end, the starting point of the subject is the concept of Inclusive Education.

Remember that Inclusive Education (UNESCO, 2005) is an approach that expresses how to change educational structures and other learning atmospheres to meet the needs of the variety of learners. To do this, it must start from the key elements that inclusion (Ainscow & Miles, 2009) is about Presence, Participation and Achievement for all learners. Here, for us, 'presence' is about where children are educated, and how reliably and punctually they attend; furthermore, 'participation' is about the quality of their experiences while they are there and so must incorporate the views of the pupils themselves; and 'achievement' is about learning outcomes across the curriculum, not just test or exam results.

Based on the strategies for optimal attention to diversity, the subject "Curricular characteristics of the stages and the educational centres" is based on teaching methodologies such as Cooperative Learning, Co-Teaching and, in particular and especially, Universal Design for Learning (UDL).

The Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST, 2014) defines Universal Design for Learning (UDL) as "a set of principles for curriculum development that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn. UDL provides a blueprint for creating instructional goals, methods, materials, and assessments that work for everyone-not a single, one-size-fits-all solution but rather flexible approaches that can be customized and adjusted for individual needs". Figure 2 shows how the UDL has three guiding

principles which include: a) provide multiple means of representation; b) provide multiple means of action and expression, and c) provide multiple means of engagement.
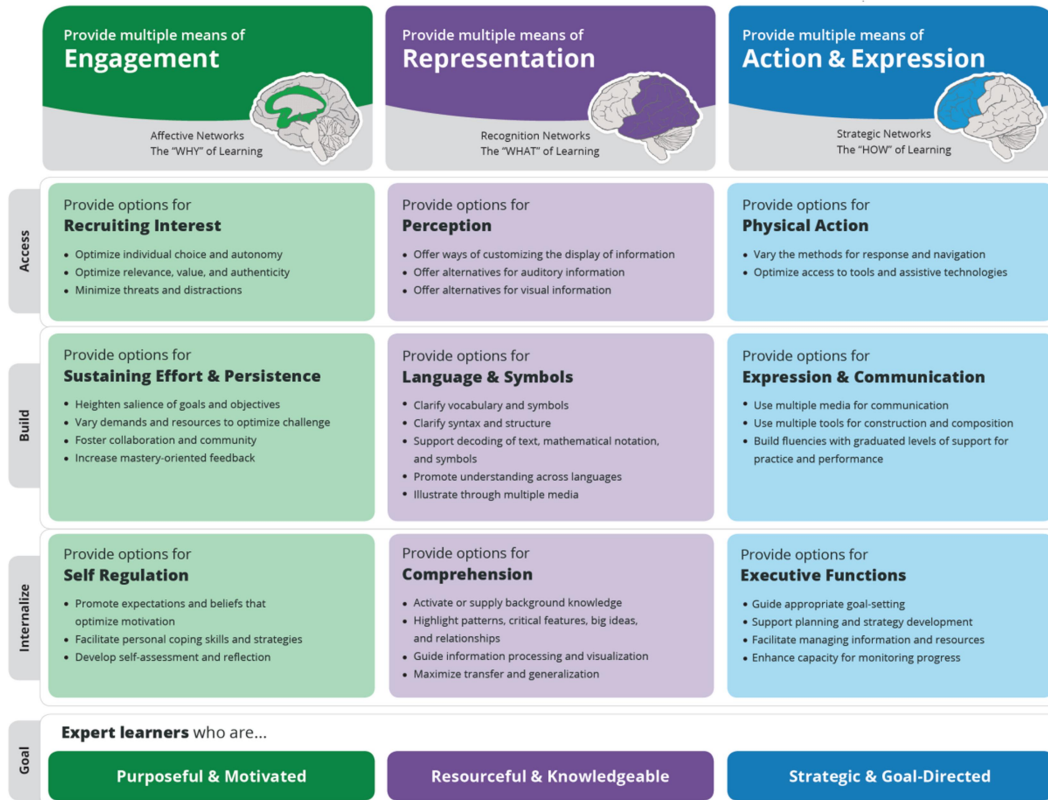
Fig.2. *Universal Design for Learning Guidelines representation (Center for Applied Special Technology -CAST-, 2018)*

As we were saying, secondary level educators need increased training on how they can best teach in a multicultural, or simply in a divers, setting to assist all their future students to succeed in learning. In fact, as Kieran & Anderson (2018) state "frequently overlooked aspects of culturally responsive pedagogy are compared with the facets of the UDL framework to provide teachers with additional considerations when planning for effective instruction".

3. Education for Sustainable Development and teacher training

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), from its environmental dimension, must be linked to teacher training. This education is defined as that which "empowers learners of all ages with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to address the interconnected global challenges we are facing,

including climate change, environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity, poverty and inequality" (UNESCO, 2021).

Society's increased environmental awareness, especially as a result of the Fridays for Future student climate movements, has led to environmental issues being brought back into the focus of educational action in schools. New generations are exerting a high social pressure that requires teachers to be up-to-date and to work on climate change, biodiversity loss or other environmental problems in the classroom. Teachers have taken up or are trying to take up this pressure from society and are beginning to work on integrating the culture of environmental sustainability in schools, making it necessary to train teachers in environmental sustainability or ESD. The lack of teacher training in this education has been demonstrated in numerous studies (Álvarez-García, Sureda-Negre & Comas-Forgas, 2015; Amirshokoohi, 2010; Ogunyemi & Ifegbesan, 2011); for this reason, teacher training programmes should incorporate this education in a cross-cutting manner that goes beyond science subjects.

So, that, how to introduce it? As it has already been pointed out, there is currently no plan for specific teacher training in ESD in the Spanish teacher education system. However, considering the organisation of the current secondary teacher education system, the following recommendations can be made for its introduction:

Equip trainee teachers with strategies for locating relevant and reliable information to ensure teachers' basic scientific knowledge.

Promote innovative methodologies on ESD from non-formal education initiatives (e.g. environmental education facilities).

Encourage practices in secondary schools that are pioneers in ESD initiatives and, in case there is training in science subjects, to put in place a system for the development of ESD in secondary schools.

If, in addition to these general lines, this training is based on the approach of a specific ESD subject in the curriculum of secondary teacher training, we consider that it should be structured according to the following basic content:

- Environmental Systems and socioecological problems
- Sustainability as a goal: Agenda 2030
- Documentation in Sustainability and ESD
- ESD: objectives, characteristics and methods
- ESD in schools: strategies and toolkits
- ESD in non -formal contexts: a tool for training

However, we consider that it is important for the insertion of ESD in high-schools not only the training of teachers, but also the way in which this education is inserted in the school itself. The values promoted by ESD would be effective insofar as teachers transfer their ESD competencies into two strategic axes of secondary schools: in the curricular content and in the context in which the teaching-learning process is taking place. It would therefore be a matter of the insertion of ESD in two differentiated but complementary and necessary strategies, the curricular and the organisational one, according to the model proposed by Hungerford & Peyton (1992).

4. Analysis and comparison among cultural diversity education and sustainable development education

Having presented the characteristics and orientations that the two types of education take, or rather should take, we consider it necessary to take an overview of the two types of education by means of a comparative analysis based on the SWOT analysis (Leigh, 2009) (Table 1).

SWOT analysis for cultural diversity education and ESD

Table 1

	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Cultural diversity	Regulatory framework that requires attention to diversity (not optimal) in educational centres. Consequence: incorporation of a subject in the Master's degree. The Master has a selection of centres that work with innovative methodologies so that students can do their internships	Being considered as a second-class subject (only one with 2 ECTS) Universal Design for Learning is still a utopia in the Spanish education system.	For the last 2 years, permanent training in innovative teaching methodologies has been implemented with mentor teachers in secondary schools	Cultural diversity as a "Sub-typology" of diversity (overestimation of medical diagnoses or behavioural disorders)
ESD	Trainee teachers are interested in and feel the need for ESD training for introducing culture of sustainability in high school	No specific subject on sustainability or ESD is included in the teacher training master's degree	Some secondary schools integrate ESD and its methodologies into the school's philosophy and can therefore be used to train trainee teachers through the Master's internships	Sustainability or ESD is cross-cutting, so it runs the risk of dissolving if teachers are not trained or motivated to introduce it in classrooms or schools

The great thing about SWOT analysis is that it provides a broad view of both the internal and external factors involved. In this particular case, this analysis clearly reveals the need to work on both axes immediately in the initial training of secondary school teachers.

Broadly speaking, common points can be seen, such as the interest in developing these subjects (whether this is driven by a regulatory framework or by the teaching community) or the danger that the contents dedicated to the "People Axis" and the "Planet Axis" continue to be approached only from a transversal or almost anecdotal perspective (with less teaching load, for example).

In fact, the greatest connection is to be found in innovative teaching methodologies: it is these that not only sow hope among the new generations of teachers, but also represent the best focus of learning for them, since it is in the schools where they are already in use that the best "teaching laboratories" are to be found.

5. Conclusions

The situation analysed for each type of basic axis in initial secondary teacher training leads us to determine that there are synergies in the way in which both should be oriented to ensure this correct teacher training, namely the following:

A subject on cultural diversity and ESD is necessary and should be of a sufficient teaching load (more than 3 ECTS). At the same time, teachers of other subjects should bear in mind the values and contents to be dealt with within the framework of these axes. This is the only way to convey to the Master's students a unique message based on environmental sustainability and equity.

Practice centres are required to be at the forefront and experienced in the application of both types of education to serve as an example for trainee teachers. To this end, it is essential to establish valid and objective criteria for the selection of schools as traineeship centres.

Teaching staff, both in the master's degree and as mentors in the internship centres, must have training and/or experience in these basic axis -Attention to Cultural Diversity and Education for Sustainable Development-. For this purpose, a hybrid teacher model, i.e. being able to rely on both university and secondary school teachers, would be the ideal formula

Last but not least, a final point should be added. Measures to incorporate these axes cannot be put into practice unless the underlying structures are first transformed. In this case, we are referring, on the one hand, to the design and adoption of a sustainability plan for the Master itself, with efficient energy saving measures, environmentally educative activities and reduce and reuse of available resources (to give some examples). On the other hand, with teacher recruitment policies that encourage and promote the incorporation of teachers from minority cultural backgrounds who serve as a reference point for the transformation of teaching. Definitely, to build a Master's with an

internal coherence that allows the values with which it identifies to be made visible to the entire educational community.

Therefore, by ensuring quality teacher training in these two educational axes it will be possible to raise the awareness of the educational community, so that the guidelines of the 2030 Agenda can be integrated at the local level. Thus, our proposals at a more concrete and pragmatic level (Master's Degree) aim to respond to the objectives and guidelines proposed on a global scale from the 2030 Agenda. The fact is that only by designing and applying the commitments of the 2030 Agenda to the closest, everyday sphere can we guarantee both the achievement of the objectives and the sustainability over time of the lines that have generated them: environmental protection, equity, quality education, among other proposals.

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THE ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE OF TEACHER TRAINING IN BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG

Ricarda KAISER[43]

Abstract: *How do you become a teacher in Germany? In this work, the second teacher training course, is presented. After the prospective teachers have studied between 10 and 12 semesters and have obtained their bachelor's and master's degrees, the preparatory service begins. In one and a half years, the trainee teachers receive a didactic and practical specialization in preparation for their profession. In the following I present the different actors and content of the second training phase in Baden-Württemberg.*

Key words: *didactics, teaching practice, teacher training*

1. Introduction

In Germany, teacher training is divided into two phases. It starts with studying at a teacher training college for the primary level and the secondary level 1 (up to class 10) or at the university for the secondary level 2 (Gymnasium). For both degrees, students must obtain a master's degree. This summary will focus on the subsequent second phase, in which the trainee teachers complete a traineeship. The aim of this is to consolidate the previous study content didactically and practically and to enable practical experience in teaching practice.

Since Germany is organized along federal lines in matters of the education system, there are slight deviations in implementation within the sixteen federal states. The structure of teacher training in Baden-Württemberg is presented below. There is no right to a comparative representation of all 16 federal states.

2. General information on obtaining the second state examination for the various teaching positions in Baden-Württemberg

Teacher training begins with a course of study at a teacher training college or at a university. The first phase of teacher training ends with the First State Examination. This exam is completed specifically for a particular teaching position. There are four possible degrees.

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- Primary school teacher (grades 1-4 of elementary schools)
- Teaching degree for the secondary level 1 (grades 1-10 of the Hauptschulen, Werkrealschulen, Realschulen and community schools
- Teaching qualification for secondary level 2 (grades 5-12 or 13 of grammar schools or community schools with an upper level)
- Teaching qualification for special education (all classes at the special education and counseling centers and in inclusion at the general schools)

In the second phase, a corresponding preparatory service takes place, at the end of which there is the second state examination. The respective examination regulations form the legal basis.

In Baden-Württemberg, around 500 candidates are currently taking the first and second state examination.

On December 3, 2013, the Council of Ministers decided on a comprehensive reform of teacher training. All teacher training courses were converted to a bachelor's and master's structure in the 2015/16 winter semester.

3. The tasks of the seminars for training and advanced training of teachers in Baden-Württemberg

The seminars for training and further education in Baden-Württemberg are part of the center for school development and teacher training. Their core task is to train for the respective teaching positions based on the training and examination regulations of the Ministry of Education.

They prepare the prospective teachers in the preparatory service (traineeship) for their profession as teachers at the school, so they bridge the gap between science and school practice.

At the same time, the seminars contribute to the further training of teachers, the further development of schools and their teaching practice and the quality assurance of teacher training. They also work on the development of educational plans, on the scientific monitoring of school experiments and on the development of concepts for further education and training.

4. The training volume

The trainee teachers work at a training school from the start of their legal clerkship. Here they give between 12 and 13 hours of instruction in the subjects they study. In the first six months, there is a shadowing period, so that they either sit in on the lessons of experienced colleagues or hold their own lessons under supervision and support and with detailed preparation and follow-up by mentors. In addition, on the "seminar days" you will be taught by your lecturers in the didactics of the subjects you have studied, in pedagogy and in interdisciplinary areas of competence. In the following you can

see two exemplary representations of the training volume, in which the proportion of teaching hours in the seminars is presented.

5. Support at school by mentors

The training of the candidate teachers takes place in a dual system between school and seminar. In the training schools, the candidates are supported by mentors who provide insights into their own lessons and extracurricular activities in the teaching profession. They support and advise the young teachers in the planning, implementation and follow-up of their own teaching projects.

The seminar works closely with the mentors. Joint consultations of the teaching posts take place after class visits, in which the school management also participates. In addition, there is an annual joint service meeting between the schools and the seminary.

A further training program is offered for the group of mentors, with annual introductory events for new mentors and an ongoing program on changing key topics.

A constantly updated information sheet for mentors provides information about possible participation in open training events and special events in the seminar and in the learning workshops. There is also the possibility of personal discussions with the trainers of the seminar.

6. Areas of Expertise

The mentors and trainers work together to teach overarching areas of competence. They are jointly responsible for qualifying the student teachers in the following four areas of competence:

6.1. Teaching competency
- Planning and designing teaching and learning processes
- Develop and use teaching methods and types of tasks
- Assess learning requirements
- Consider learning requirements in teaching and learning processes
- Shaping and reflecting on interactions

6.2. Competence area of education
- Perceiving and acknowledging diversity of ideas
- Analyzing school conflicts and implementing action strategies appropriate to the situation
- Acting as an example

6.3. Competence area of support, advice, assessment
- Recognizing levels of development, learning requirements, learning needs and learning progress and sustainably promoting learning processes
- Give learning-conducive dialogue-oriented feedback

6.4. Competence area innovation
- Continuous development of professional skills
- Record and evaluate feedback and integrate it productively into the professional field of activity

7. Training Standards

The standards for the training at the seminars for training and further training of teachers for the preparatory services are divided into the following areas:
- The standards in each subject or group of subjects were preceded by guiding principles that describe the principles of the training in more detail.
- The actual standards describe the competences to which the training at the seminars should lead. In this context, competence means the ability to act in a factually justified manner.
- Topics substantiate the skills described and explain the content of the skills that can be anchored in the training.

The standards make teacher training at the seminars more concrete and transparent for everyone involved in the training process. They thus become the benchmark for training quality and training success. At the same time, the seminars undertake to adapt their training program to the standards and to guarantee opportunities for acquiring the skills described.

In the preparatory service for the primary school teaching profession at the seminars for training and further education of teachers, the skills acquired during the course of study are expanded and deepened in close relation to school practice and on the basis of the educational plans in such a way that the educational and educational mandate at primary schools is successfully and responsibly fulfilled can be. The frame of reference is formed by the subjects specified in the education plan 2016 of the state of Baden-Württemberg, the general perspectives "education for sustainable development", "education for tolerance and acceptance of diversity", "prevention and health promotion" as well as the topic-specific perspectives "professional orientation", " media education" and "consumer education".

The training standards for the preparatory service were drawn up jointly by employees of the seminars for training and further education of teachers and the teacher training colleges on behalf of the Ministry of Education. Representatives of the churches were involved in the commissions for

Protestant and Catholic religious teaching. The standards form the binding framework for the state-wide implementation of the ordinance of the Ministry of Education on the preparatory service and the second state examination for teaching positions. Deepening and regional priorities are possible in terms of a corresponding seminar curriculum at the individual locations.

The training standards describe the competences that make teachers specialists for teaching and learning in a changed school reality on the basis of specialist, subject-didactic and educational science knowledge and skills. These skills are laid down during the course of study, further developed in the preparatory service and deepened and individually developed in the course of the professional biography. In particular, the focus is on the following areas of competence:

- Perception of the educational mission of the school, occupation and role of the teacher
- Sustainable design of teaching and learning processes
- Accept diversity as a challenge and seize opportunities
- Diagnosis and promotion of individual learning processes, performance description, performance measurement and performance assessment
- Counseling for students and parents/guardians
- Cooperation with colleagues and other people and institutions involved in school work
- School development and evaluation procedures

The standards form a reliable framework for the training of prospective teachers who are perceived as independent learners.

At the same time, they are also the benchmark for the quality and success of the preparatory service at the state seminars for didactics and teacher training. Whether the standards are met and the training of the prospective teachers is successful can be seen in the learning of the students. Seminaries and schools must therefore work closely together during the preparatory service. At the same time, the present standards are a benchmark for advising prospective teachers and for internal seminar evaluation. It is planned to review these standards after a test phase and, if necessary, to further develop them against the background of nationwide standards for teacher training.

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INNOVATIVE ENVIRONMENTS AND TOOLS FOR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: TEACHER ACTIVITY GROUPS IN ROMANIA

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Abstract: *This paper presents some theoretical considerations and practical examples that illustrate how Communities of Practice - CoPs – function as Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programmes and how they differ from more traditional approaches to professional development. It also highlights how this approach to professional growth has been applied in the English for the Community Programme, implemented jointly by British Council Romania and the Romanian-American Foundation starting with the year 2017.*

Key words: *Community of Practice, TAG, alternative professional development.*

1. Introduction

Teachers around the world have been preoccupied with aspects relating to their learning, their professional growth and how their career paths evolve in different contexts where their performance may be assessed by the state or other organisations and may impact student learning. With CPD, learning become conscious and proactive. CPD stands for Continuing Professional Development. CPD represents a commitment of professionals towards the enhancement of skills and proficiency in their careers. CPD combines different methodologies to learning: training workshops, conferences and events, e-learning programmes, best practice techniques and sharing ideas. They all aim for an individual to improve and have effective professional development. Training, which is a term sometimes used interchangeably with CPD is believed to be formal and linear, concerned with learning how to do something specific, relating to skill and competence. Training can be as simple as using an online tool or application and as complex as learning how to fly a helicopter. Development is

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often informal and has a wide application, offering tools to do a range of things and relating to capability and competency. It involves progress from basic knowledge to more advanced, mature or complex understanding. It can also be about widening one's range of transferable skills like leadership, organising information, etc.

A paper published in 2018 suggests that a great number of teachers lack the skills to teach effectively and governments use professional development programmes to improve those skills (Popova et al, 2018). The EU views continuing professional development as an obligation the teachers in pre-university education must fulfil in order for them to accumulate transferable credits through one of the following: programmes aimed at the improvement of "scientific, psycho-pedagogical and pedagogical training", training in "management, guidance and evaluation", training courses that lead to didactic degrees II and I, professional conversion programmes and studies in a field of license (National Policies online). Teachers in Romania have to accumulate credits, they have to go through yearly evaluations, inspections, and they put together portfolios. They must also obtain the definitive as a teacher in education degree, a requirement that has been the same for decades, as well as a number of others. In recent years, a number of professional development courses have been organized by various bodies with or without pay and many teachers of all specialties have been interested in them. Many programmes have been offered by the Didactic Bodies at county level (known as CCDs), which are subordinated to the Ministry of Education.

Alternative programmes have also been available and one such initiative is the project entitled English for the Community, implemented in Romania by British Council and the Romanian-American Foundation (RAF). The project specifically addressed teachers of English as a foreign language, as the project set out as a tool to help teachers and their students in hubs with touristic potential. Knowledge of English is seen as a key skill for ecotourism. Effective skills in English offer young people opportunities for employment in the ecotourism sector and reduce the need to seek work elsewhere, usually abroad.

As the project developed, more and more teachers of other specialties were drawn to it. At present, the activities in the project have brought together librarians, teachers of English, History, Romanian, Physics and other specialties.

2. Communities of Practice

2.1. Theoretical background

Professionals from various fields, including education may choose to work together in professional learning communities (Watson, 2014). Teachers have been known to build teacher communities that constitute contexts for professional development (Vangrieken, Meredith, Packer & Kyndt, 2017). The

shape of these communities may vary, ranging from large groups with many participants – those who start the group may be joined by others, who participate in their activities occasionally. One definition of such communities refers to them as "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (Wenger-Trayner and Wenger-Trayner, 2015)

Communities of practice are thought to be within a range of formal to informal, practising innovation and problem-solving, creating new knowledge, offering opportunities to members to reflect on their experiences, share them with peers, ask and answer questions relevant to their professional practice.

Weston and Hindly (2019) suggest that effective professional development is considered relevant by participants and one of the aims is to create an impact on students, while supporting teachers' learning too. Lieberman and Miller (2014, p. 9) define professional learning as a constant intellectual activity, which promotes interaction and exchanges of ideas with peers over an extended period. Weston and Hindly also emphasize the importance of structured learning and collaboration (Weston & Hindly, 2019, p. 64). Patton and Parker (2017) believe that teacher education communities of practice can achieve more than collaboration, showing that participation in such communities may reduce isolation and encourage participants to enhance teaching and research skills. Jimenez-Silva and Olson (2012) examined how such communities may benefit pre-service teachers, grounding their research in social and historical/cultural theories that explain human development. Their study states that members of communities of practice participate in cultural practices, which develops their insight into their practice, about their identity and knowledge in relation to the community. Worldwide, in the past decade, activities carried out in teachers' communities of practice have included contributing to blogs, attending meetings with superiors and peers, workshops, webinars, attending meetings with professional coaches, etc.

The three key elements that communities of practice share are: the domain in which professionals are active, the community and the practice. The community represents the group as well as the space where the group comes together to learn and practice what is learnt, to share resources and connect, to reflect on experiences, to offer support and to gain deep insight into the learning processes and their outcomes, the way our skills develop, etc.

In Romania, nine communities of practice were created within the project called English for the Community, a British Council initiative in collaboration with the Romanian-American Foundation. The project's methodological background and resources include a framework and materials from the Teaching for Success programme. Started in 2015, British Council's CPD programme aims at laying the foundations for alternative methods of continuing professional development, offering framework, resources and support and raising awareness of decisional factors regarding the fact that professional development programmes aimed at large audiences over a short period seem to be failing and not making changes in the teaching – learning process.

2.2. *English for the Community*

The project started with the recruitment of nine Country Trainers at the end of 2017 and an awareness-raising workshop in January 2018. A baseline study was conducted, involving classroom observations and collection of views of teachers, learners, head teachers in eight selected locations. Then, the Country Trainers went through a training programme, after which they delivered a 5-day Teaching for Success training to school teachers in all nine locations in the month of February 2018. Having attended the training, some of the teachers applied for the positions of Local Facilitators and two were selected for each location. The Local Facilitators and Country Trainers attended a workshop together and had a one-day event for School Inspectors in April 2018. In the same month, the Country Trainers met for a round-up and the first Teacher Activity Groups (TAGs) took place. TAGs were regularly monitored and evaluated and workshops were offered to the Local Facilitators every six months between April 2018 and April 2020. The nine TAGs offer support to teachers in and around the following counties: Bihor, Maramureș, Suceava, Neamț, Harghita, Brașov, Sibiu, Hunedoara and Mureș. Around 100 teachers attend TAGs regularly.

An impact report produced in 2021, available online (https://www.britishcouncil.ro/en/programmes/society/english-community) showed that approximately 150 teachers demonstrate more developed skills for effective teaching, reaching around 20.000 students. The impact on learners was shown to include increased interactivity in lessons, use of varied resources, a more relaxed teaching style, greater attention to students' needs. Students became more motivated and confident in learning and using English.

3. TAGs and their implementation in Romania

It is believed that teacher meetings in Maharashtra, West Indies were among the first TAG activities. They started out as informal gatherings and they were finally recognized by the Indian Government. British Council actively promoted them and with their help, TAGs started in Jordan, Egypt and many other countries worldwide, including some countries in Europe. Considering how successful they have been shown to be, TAGs are becoming more and more popular all over the world.

3.1. An outline of Romanian TAGs

TAGs have a regular structure with eight stages with various length and focus points. Their duration in hours (pre-pandemic): three hours, with a coffee break and approximately two hours online. The first part of the TAG refers to its aims. Facilitators give details of the aims to the participants and ask them which aims they find most interesting. At the end of the session, teachers talk about which

aims they feel have been achieved in the session and which topics they would like to investigate in more detail. In the next stage - Warm up – the facilitators demonstrate a warmer activity. The aims of using a warmer at the beginning of each TAG are: to establish a friendly, informal atmosphere for the session and introduce the participants to an activity that they can use in their own classroom with their students, as long as the language content is at an appropriate level for learners. In this way, the demonstration of a warmer will give the teachers ideas for their own classroom practice. At the end of a TAG session, participants are asked to design an activity and plan how to apply it in their own classroom. After the warm up, the next stage is to provide the opportunity to discuss how the participants used the plan they had developed and how using their ideas in their classroom worked. It is an important section of the session, as it gives the participants a chance to discuss their learning from the previous session. Aspects regarding how it can be practically applied are shared with the group. The next stage - Discuss - gives teachers the opportunity to have a conversation about what they currently do in the classroom, what works well for them and what suggestions they could make to other participants. Also, participants can describe how they feel about previous experiences, for example, the experience of being observed or being assessed. The aims of this section are to raise participants' awareness about specific teaching issues and to help them to identify challenges for learners, and how they can be solved. The Read section includes an article and reading activity with a set of pre-reading and post-reading questions. Just as in a classroom activity, pre-reading questions help to prepare the reader for the reading task. Participants then read the text and discuss together if the ideas in the article are useful and how they could be applied to their own classroom. They think of additional activities or alternatives to those suggested in the article or just complete a short task based on the materials. The aim of this stage is to encourage teachers to read and discuss the reading text in the session itself, helping each other to clarify and apply ideas from the text. The TAG contains a stage where teachers do a video and/or listen/watch activity, organised in the same way as the reading activity with steps that are quite similar. In the Think stage, participants build on what they discuss in the session to use their ideas in practical context. For example, the activities from this section may ask the participants to decide which classroom activities and strategies are useful in their own classroom, to provide solutions for problems, to take part in an activity which demonstrates the steps of a writing lesson, etc. If there is time, teachers can demonstrate activities they have come across in this section which they particularly like or other activities they have found to be successful in their own classroom, which have a similar purpose. At the end of the TAG, participants reflect on what they have learnt during the session and decide which ideas are most helpful for their own teaching, plan how they will use the activity for their own classroom and they can give and receive feedback on the design of their activity and/or plan from other members of the group. Facilitators encourage the participants to try out their activities in their teaching contexts until the next TAG session and keep a record of what they planned to do and what they did.

3.2. How are Romanian TAGs special?

Romanian TAGs, supported by British Council and the Romanian-American Foundation (RAF), meet once a month during the school year and all the teachers with English speaking skills are very welcome. The participants at each TAG come from the same location, the county where the TAG takes place, so they are familiar with the same context, the same challenges and the same sources of satisfaction of teaching learners in that location. The Local Facilitators support the selection of suitable venue for the TAG, liaising with local stakeholders as required and communicating to all members the dates and venues of sessions sufficiently in advance. The communication with TAG members in the location and in the other eight locations across Romania is maintained through Facebook, WhatsApp and other social media. There is a monthly report written by the Local Facilitators for the British Council project staff that includes details about TAG successes and any challenges experienced. The framework for sessions is provided by ideas in the TAG Participant Workbook and the Local Facilitator Handbook, the input being based on selected activities, texts and videos from the British Council Teaching for Success collection. The Participant Workbook and the Local Facilitator Handbook provided suggestions for the first twelve sessions of the TAG. After the first year, support has been provided by the Country Trainers and Local Facilitators who designed the sessions themselves and by the British Council expert who is in charge of designing this year's session (Academic Advisor).

An important feature of the TAG is that all participants have the chance to interact. Teachers, all having a shared purpose, work together towards a similar goal: to improve the quality of their teaching for their own professional satisfaction. The atmosphere in a TAG meeting is more informal than a training session - a little like a club for teachers. However, there are important difference between a TAG and a club, consisting in: the set of aims that TAGs have, the organised structure of each session and the framework to work within. Each TAG is also associated with the other TAGs in locations across the country as an integral part of the English for the Community project. TAGs do not need a "leader" or someone whose skills and knowledge are very different from the majority of participants. The role of Local Facilitators, who are also teachers in the locations where TAGS take place, is to guide the discussion and to encourage all participants to contribute and share ideas. Moreover, they take part in all the activities, contribute with their own ideas and encourage others to do the same. Together, Local Facilitators and the participants pool their skills and awareness and "construct" new approaches to classroom teaching. Successful TAGs are an example of teachers taking charge of their own continuing professional development and they are very much the product of their members. Everyone actively works together, teachers share ideas, apply their learning to their own classroom and discuss their results with colleagues in the sessions that follow. Everybody has a part to play in the TAG and the more everybody is involved, the more learning will take place. Unlike training events or courses, TAGs are ongoing and take place regularly and TAG

members keep in touch between sessions and share what they do in the classroom. In addition to this, TAGs are fully sustainable. They are powered by the enthusiasm and interest of their members and will run successfully as long as TAG members are happy to contribute. The success of TAGs and the continuing professional development of teachers involved lies in the hands of their members.

Conclusions

TAGs offer great opportunities for collaborative professional development. TAGs are theoretically supported. Many systems of education around the world are increasingly turning to approaches that fosters teacher collaboration. When teachers are benefitting, their learners will benefit too: they will be more motivated, they will be more involved, their attitudes to learning will change. It is also important to remember the barriers which limit the potential of TAGs to support teaching and learning. Teachers need support from the educational system generally and from other factors. Teachers also need key processes: inquiry, reflection, sharing. Teachers need to meet regularly and engage in these kinds of processes. Communities of practice rely on a theoretical framework that has been adapted to the field of education. Communities of practice offer social professional development and TAGs are one instance of how a teacher community works. A community of practice is a group with a shared interest in education, a practical interest – the work teachers do in the classroom. The purpose of the group is to learn together. TAGs represent structured, facilitated and sustained groups, focusing on collaboration, meaningful engagement with colleagues over time. Teachers do not simply meet but they follow a structure in each meeting. Local Facilitators are there to guide and support the group. The teachers learn with each other and from one another, by talking, sharing, collaborating, reflecting, supported by content provided or created by teachers themselves. TAGs have worked before the pandemic and they have transitioned successfully online during the pandemic. Colleagues, collaboration, common goals and communities are among the main key terms that can be applied when describing how teachers can benefit from collaborative approaches to CPD.

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Section 3: Landmarks for the development of teacher mentoring

EXPECTATIONS OF FUTURE MENTOR TEACHERS WITHIN THE TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR TEACHING CAREER MENTORS

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Abstract: *The present paper presents the expectations of a group of 205 participants at the PROF I - The Professionalization of the teaching career, regarding the training of trainers in the field of the teaching career mentorship. The qualitative data gathered is discussed in relation with the vision of the participants on the future roles of the mentor and the status of teaching career mentorship in Romania. The main objective of the study was to identify the expectations of the participants at the beginning of the training of teacher mentor trainers. Participants' expectations were studied in relation to their vision for the present and future of teacher mentoring, the increased responsibility of beginners for professional integration, under the assistance and guidance of dedicated mentors and the motivation of future teaching mentors to take on new professional roles related to training, related to new teachers' training for managing current school issues. The conclusions of the paper allow the development of the theme of the training program in the sense of adequately meeting their needs and expectations regarding the mentoring relationship, with visible benefits both in terms of professional development of beginners and in terms of the evolution of the mentor.*

Key words: *mentoring, mentorship, professionalization, teaching career, training of mentors*

1. Introduction

The teaching mentorship programme (PROF I) is limited to the project "The Professionalization of the teaching career - PROF (POCU/904/6/25/146587), which is the first systemic training programme tailored for teachers teaching in the pre-academic education system in Romania. This programme aims at meeting the needs of mentor teacher trainers who will develop training activities in the field of teaching career mentorship.

Among the aims of the "PROF I - Teaching Career Mentorship", the following are some of the strongest ones: Training mentors to responsibly undertake the social role of the mentor teacher; to

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fully undertake the various roles which incur docimological implications; to exhibit a self-reflective behaviour and a reflective behaviour on one's own didactic activities and of the disciples; to demonstrate openness toward the innovative requirements necessary for own professional development and that of the disciples etc. (PROF accreditation file, 2021)

2. Special focal shifts

Training the trainers for teaching career mentors within the programme "PROF I - Teaching Career Mentorship" involved the completion of six training modules with 120 hours of training. The modules focused on the following topics:
- Teaching Career Mentorship - from Concept to Action
- Elements of Adults' Education and the Teaching Career Mentorship - values, principles, and characteristics
- Planning the Mentoring Activity
- The Management of the Teaching Career Mentorship Process
- Counselling for training and professional development in the Teaching Career Mentorship
- Assessment and Validation of professional teaching skills (PROF accreditation file, 2021)

The training of the target group teachers was conducted from October 2021 to January 2022 in the format of learning communities, with emphasis on the immediate implementation in a mentoring context of the skills acquired during the training.
Target group teachers were provided with a set of specific skills by going through the module topics (Table no.1).

3. Selection criteria

The selection of participants in the training programme "PROF I - Teaching Career Mentorship ", was based on the following criteria established by experts of the Ministry of Education (ME address no. 51/POCU_146587/09.09.2021):

- trainee teachers have not benefited from a training programme with the same objectives and funded from the Structural Funds, during the reference period for the POCU programme
- trainee teachers have benefited from only one training programme within the project
- trainee teachers either are part of teacher's training bases, or can demonstrate their qualification as mentor teachers. The proof must be issued by the County School Inspectorate or must be a certificate obtained after graduation of a national training programme focused on mentorship and on the establishment of the national body of mentor teachers or the trainee teachers have at least two-year certified teaching experience and methodological activity;
- trainee teachers own skills according to job position held

- trainee teachers hold full-time positions in pre-academic education system
- trainee teachers own at least *Grad Didactic II* (Second Teaching Degree) or the scientific title of Doctor
- trainee teachers obtained the annual grade *Very well*, for each of the last four school years.

In the selection process (minimum 611 people, mainly attendees of the teacher's training bases - BPP), the principal criterion utilised for trainee teachers' distribution was that of maintaining homogeneity within the training groups and of including trainees from all levels of education (i.e pre-school teachers, primary teachers, secondary school teachers, and high school teachers). The criteria taken into account in the selection of participants are valuable indicators in identifying trainee teachers' prerequisites. In the design and implementation of the training programme, the experts aimed at correlating trainee teachers' prerequisites with the competencies targeted by the training program and the methodology for evaluating these acquired competencies (Table no. 1).

Table no. 1 Correlation of trainee teachers' prerequisites - competencies targeted by the PROF I and the methodology utilised for assessment

Trainee teachers' prerequisites	Specific competencies targeted	Assessment methodology
Teaching competencies acquired through teaching practice by teaching the specialised discipline and by the evolution in the teaching career (acquiring at least the Second teaching degree / Gradul Didactic II); - Methodical skills acquired in methodical or school inspection activities; - Competences to coordinate activities within Erasmus-type mobility programmes; - Counselling / mentoring skills and digital skills acquired as a mentor teacher or in teaching support activities for teaching, learning, and assessment carried out in a blended learning / online system.	Planning and implementation of teaching career mentoring activities from the perspective of management by objectives; - Efficient management of teaching time; - The use of assertive communication strategies, in the perspective of ensuring well-being; - Cooperation with colleagues for the exchange of training experiences; - Applying strategies for developing leadership skills; - Exploring opportunities for personal and professional development, capitalising on the sources of motivational dynamics among teachers; - Coordination and management of complex teams	Initial assessment: oral questionnaires, encouragement of trainee teachers' personal opinions and self-assessment; - Continuous assessment by training experts through systematic observation of trainee teachers' activity and professional behaviours adopted during training, utilising assessment tools created and applied in the interval especially planned for assessment (reflection journals / self-assessment grids / assessment using computer, etc.); - Final assessment: final portfolio that brings together case studies, reflections on one's own teaching / training practices, sequences of mentoring activities planning, observation sheets of teaching methodology behaviour, worksheets that highlight the acquired competencies, a free style essay of critical - reflective analysis on the training experience.

Profesionalizarea carierei didactice - PROF – ID 146587
Proiect cofinanţat din Fondul Social European prin Programul Operaţional Capital Uman 2014-2020

163

4. Premises of becoming involved in mentors' training

The partnership realised within the project "Professionalization of the teaching career - PROF" is led by the Ministry of Education (beneficiary of the project) and brings together 4 universities from Romania (Lucian Blaga University from Sibiu, Transilvania University from Brașov, Dunărea de Jos University from Galați, University of Medicine, Pharmacy, Science and Technology George Emil Palade from Târgu Mureș) and 11 Departments of the teaching staff with national coverage.

The training programme "PROF I - Teaching career mentorship" was implemented in stages, by the 4 partner universities in the project, as providers of continuing education, with the help of 40 selected training experts, teachers with recognized professional expertise in the field of educational mentoring, both in the university and pre-academic environment. The training experts benefited from training sessions organised in a webinar system, focused on the mentoring of the teaching career. These were supported by prestigious European trainers from the Czech Republic, Spain, Great Britain, Canada, Israel and the USA. By doing this, the premise of linking training activities to the context of validated international practices was ensured.

Furthermore, after the implementation of the "PROF I-Teaching Career Mentorship" programme and the certification of trainers in the field of teaching mentorship, a national body of trainers in the field of teaching mentorship will be established in each county and in Bucharest, totalling at least 564 people, mainly from BPP. The members of this body will be able to have the quality of trainers (selected / nominated by each partner university) in the programmes that will be implemented within the PROF project if they are recognised as trainers by the Ministry of Education. Therefore, the premise of establishing unitary and coherent training practices at national level can be ensured.

Experts in the training of teaching career trainers have shown their willingness to contribute even after the actual completion of the training to the evolution of future teacher trainers, through continuous professional counselling and monitoring activities, which ensure long-term coherence and consistency of mentors' training activities.

5. Expectations of future trainers of teaching career mentors

5.1. Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study was to identify the expectations the participants had when enrolling for the mentor's training programme. The expectations of the participants were studied in relation to their vision regarding the present and the future of the teaching career mentorship. The aims were as follows:
- to detect the main professional preoccupations and of the relevant aspects with which the participants associate the role of mentor and the teaching career mentorship;

- to identify participants' opinions regarding the main problems of the professional training and of the insertion in the teaching career, for which efficient solutions will be expected;
- outlining participants' vision regarding the mentoring activity for the teaching career and regarding the professional roles that the mentor should assume.

5.2. Material and methods

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, the study involved a number of 205 trainee teachers who attended and completed the training program "PROF I - Teaching Career Mentorship". The data utilised in the study were collected in two stages of the training programme. Thus, during the training programme, the participants were asked to elaborate answers to the open-ended question: "**Why do we need an innovative approach in the field of teaching career mentorship in Romania**? **Make a list of possible arguments**. Moreover, at the end of the training programme, very useful data were collected by the researchers' critical reflections on the content of an essay that the participants developed and that required a critical-reflective analysis on the following points:
- analysis of the role of the teaching career mentorship for ensuring the quality of the mentored teacher's activity (examples, benchmarks);
- analysis and interpretation of the competencies and qualities necessary for a mentor teacher of teaching career;
- presentation of relevant examples from the teaching experience;
- presentation of the personal conception regarding the teaching career mentorship.

5.3. Results and discussion

The answers collected were utilised to extract favourite topics, aspirations, and professional concerns existing among the participants. Moreover, the data were aggregated and interpreted in relation to the identified topics.

The first topic identified in the reflections offered by the participants was that of the problems existing in the system of initial training and professional insertion for the teaching career. These are shortcomings, limitations or syncopes that, in the vision of future mentors, need to be taken into account and for which relevant solutions are expected. Two categories of interrelated issues were mentioned. Thus, according to the participants' understanding, an innovative approach to teaching career mentorship would mean solving some systemic problems, which will be summarised underneath, using participants' words for illustration:

a. **The need to optimise the status of the teaching profession:**

The need to overcome a traditional paradigm related to the fact that "one steals a craft, not just learns it"

Profesionalizarea carierei didactice - PROF – ID 146587
Proiect cofinanțat din Fondul Social European prin Programul Operațional Capital Uman 2014-2020

165

- *[the need for - our note] a change of perspective on the teaching profession, which should occupy a much more important place in society;*
- *the unattractiveness of the educational field and the tendency of young teachers to abandon, for various reasons, their profession;*
- *a change of vision, of paradigm, on the role that the teacher has in the current society;*
- *the acute need for career landmarks, especially in the teaching career;*
- *formalised mentorship in the education system should coexist with a change of perspective on the teaching profession, which should occupy a much more important place in society.*

b. The need to correlate with societal and curricular changes and updates:
- *[the need - our note] to be up-to-date with legislative and curricular changes;*
- *connecting the education system to European educational requirements;*
- *in the dynamism of today's world, opportunities, needs, learning contexts are redefined*
- *the approach needs to be radically changed due to methodological and curricular changes as well as trainees' needs and labour market;*
- *an innovative approach to mentorship is needed because the paradigms of education in Romania have changed recently, educational policies have aligned with those of Europe, and pedagogy is a science in continuous development and renewal;*
- *there have been many changes, both in legislation and in terms of curricula, content, methods, means, etc.;*
- *For early-career teachers, establishing a list of the challenges they face at the beginning of their teaching career would be extremely useful, leading to specialised intervention, by field, from an entire team at the school level (mentor, principal, colleagues, senior colleagues, etc.). In conclusion, an innovative approach to the mentoring process would ensure that early-career teachers are attracted to continue their teaching career.*

Furthermore, the answers of the participants in the study showed the concern for solving **specific problems** of the system, such as:

The need for shared professional practices in the practical professional context, directly in school:
- *A team approach is needed in order to be able to share experiences, for the personal and professional development of the two actors: mentor-mentorship;*
- *[the need for - our note] stabilisation and professional loyalty of those young people who prove their vocation as teachers and scientific and psycho-pedagogical training;*

The second topic that stood out was that of a series of predictable outcomes of the mentoring relationship. Unprecedented and complex results were mentioned, which reflect the high extent to which trainee teachers value the professional role of the mentor: a systemic approach, focusing not only on facilitating professional training in the workplace, but also on continuing the personal

development of young teachers. In order to provide an image of the complexity of the impact expected by exercising the role of mentor, we grouped the results mentioned by the participants into two categories: the impact on the mentored person (mentee), respectively benefits gained by the mentor.

The answers included in the first category are consistent with the vision adopted in the training programme, that of setting up vocational learning communities in schools and a system of benchmarking exchange, in the workplace, under the guidance of experienced and high-level expertise professionals, vision recommended in the speciality literature (Senge. coord., 2016; Stolovitch, Keeps & Rosenberg, 2017). In the words of the participants, the ideas are presented as follows:

• *Mentorship is a special form of professional cooperation. Beyond any regulations or norms, valid in the case of the mentorship, the foundation of this activity is the relationship of mutual trust between mentor and apprentice;*

• *It is necessary to adopt a self-reflective and reflective behaviour on one's own teaching / pedagogical activities and that of the disciples.*

• *It is necessary to form a professional culture based on mastering modern communication techniques, openings to transdisciplinarity and interdisciplinarity, following the model of developed countries.*

The ideas included in the second category reflect the understanding of mentorship as a relationship of mutual learning and professional development, in which the mentor exercises new professional roles and behaviours and diversifies his or her repertoire, in an effort to identify effective mentoring solutions for early-career teachers. We present a series of statements made by trainee teachers in this regard:

• *Both the mentor and the early-career teacher 'grow up' together in the mentoring process, through the experiences created and lived together, through the common and individual reflections on these experiences, by exploring problem situations and finding optimal solutions to solve them;*

• *adopting effective behaviour to overcome crisis situations, such as the one caused by the pandemic;*

• *the formation of a professional culture based on the expertise in modern communication techniques, openings to transdisciplinarity and interdisciplinarity;*

• *understand mentorship as guidance, not control;*

• *understand the complexity of the human personality, the dynamics that govern our thoughts and emotions, and how they are set in motion when we communicate and learn;*

• *focusing on the whole being, not just on the career, hence the need for a holistic approach to the concept and process of mentorship.*

The categories of **roles that the mentor** has to take on make up the third central theme of the participants' reflections and expectations. Generally, the answers that fall into this area reflect the understanding, evident from the beginning of the training programme, of the fact that mentorship is a role that should be assumed with great responsibility. Therefore, in the words of the participants, mentorship is seen as:

A professional partnership mentor - early-career teacher:

• *Mentorship is a special form of professional cooperation. Beyond any regulations or norms, the foundation of this activity is the relationship of mutual trust between mentor and apprentice.*

• *Mentorship tries to give maximum value to a person. An empathetic mentor, attentive to the individual needs and interests of the mentored person (mentee) can play a significant role in the holistic development of the latter if he or she considers certain values such as measurable outcomes, individual needs of the teacher (personalisation), consistency, practice and personalised follow - up, ensuring relevance for each mentee, credibility.*

A relationship of mutual development:

• *intrinsic motivation for the role that each one assumes (mentor and disciple);*

• *mutual emotion between mentor and early-career teacher;*

• *At the present time, when information is available to anyone, and behaviours can be learnt from tutorials on the Internet, the mentor becomes a facilitator.*

A relationship in which the trainee is actively involved in his or her own professional and personal development:

• *The mentor teacher is a model of professionalism and a facilitator, not a supervisor or assessor. He or she should inspire confidence and demonstrate assertive communication skills, which facilitate the development of his / her collaborator and collaborators and which easily adapts to his / her emotional, social, and cognitive needs.*

• *utilise coaching processes that promote self-direction and personal responsibility of early-career teachers.*

A series of answers regarding the roles that the mentor should assume in order to prepare the trainee teacher for the training refer to some specific training dimensions, consonant with the realities of the contemporary school. The mentor has the obligation to develop in the sense of supporting the early-career teacher for the management of current school issues, of which the most obvious are (in summary, in the words of the trainee teachers):

• *integration in teaching practices of new information and communication technologies and digital applications: application of new methods in the classroom and use of new technologies;*

• *Exercising teamwork skills, relationships and professional cooperation, creative approach to professional responsibilities: forming team spirit and continuous promotion of the quality of the educational act; to be a resource / facilitator / generator of ideas, a stimulator of creative processes*

for teachers with less experience; provide support related to other related skills such as: communication, interrelationship, teamwork, leadership, etc.;

The unified and systemic approach of all professional duties, not only of those related to the exercise of the teaching act: a better understanding of the teaching profession; accompanying the mentored person (mentee) for the integration and understanding of the organisational culture;

• Preparing for the efficient management of the class, in the conditions of a new generation of students: The challenges of approaching the relationship with the class, in the context in which the new profile of the students is dynamic and influenced by the general social context; Rapid adaptation to: digitisation, working with children with SEN, with children from vulnerable groups, children at medical risk / hospitalised, children from socio-economically disadvantaged communities;

• Preparing early-career teachers to manage a wide range of educational resources: organising and managing the learning environment in collaboration with parents and the community, in order to achieve a genuine educational partnership, in which the role of parents and the community is completely changed, which should be translated into the mentoring activity.

• Practising the transposition into school practice and teaching the assimilated theory during the initial training period: [the mentor] supports the transposition into practice of the pedagogical theory, the pedagogical practice being insufficient for the successful approach of all professional aspects;

• We want to consider the whole personality and individual values, and on the other hand, there are some areas, such as new education, inclusion, curriculum, assessment, TV school, combating bullying, transdisciplinarity, which are still insufficiently put into practice.

These new roles are in line with the continuing education needs highlighted by most recent international reports and studies, which have analysed the evolution of the teaching profession (EC Communication on the European Education Area by 2025, 2017; Euridyce Report, 2021; TALIS Report 2018).

6. Conclusions and directions for the development of trainers' training programmes

The PROF 1 project offered us the opportunity to question the vision of an extended group of experienced teachers and a rich professional expertise on the mentoring of professional insertion. The context in which the study was initiated is a unique one, given the special status that the trainee teachers assumed, that of future trainers of teaching career mentors in Romania. The collected ideas allow us to outline a vision, respectively of a set of expectations that the trainee teachers formed regarding the new institution of the teaching career. This vision can be defined in terms of the expectations of the participants that the training activities will lead to:

- some functional solutions to systemic and specific problems related to initial and in-service teacher training. The participants propose a reconsideration of the training through a better relation of the psycho-pedagogical theory with the practice and the reality of the school, respectively by the

increased responsibility of the early-career teachers for the professional integration, under the assistance and advice of dedicated mentors, in the school environment;

- motivating future teaching career mentors to take on new professional roles, related to the preparation of early-career teachers for the management of current issues of the school and society;

- pursuing the obtaining and the capitalisation of complex professional outcomes of the exercise of the mentoring relationship, visible benefits both in terms of the professional development of early-career teachers and in terms of the evolution of the mentor.

The conclusions of our study are relevant for the development of the theme of the training programme in the sense of adequately meeting the needs and expectations of the participants.

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Profesionalizarea carierei didactice - PROF – ID 146587
Proiect cofinanțat din Fondul Social European prin Programul Operațional Capital Uman 2014-2020

171

THROUGH GAMIFICATION, A VIEW OF ONLINE MENTORSHIP FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF TOP SPORT

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Abstract: *The Online Teacher Training Center (CEFODO), which is part of the Secretary of State for Education, is the entity of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training responsible for teacher training in non-university stages. CEFODO's responsibilities include the implementation of specific teacher training programs for the development of digital competence through the application of information and communication technologies in non-university education, in collaboration with the Autonomous Communities, and without prejudice to the powers vested in the General Secretariat for Vocational Training. The relevance of customization of online education in the themes of teaching physical activities, assigning it to elite athletes, is pursued in this study.*

Key words: *mentoring, inclusivity, technology*

Introduction

The goal of education is to help each individual develop their personality in accordance with the international normative framework set forth in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Human Rights Act 1948). As a result, it can be assumed that when a person is able to feel content in their life, they have fully developed their personality, which need the assistance and monitoring of specialists.

According to Garcia et al. (2005), the current study examines the possibility of increasing mentorship in physical exercise using gamification, personalizing the top athlete's competency learning:

The teacher who, at the same time and in convergence with the functions of teaching, carries out a set of guiding and training activities, ensuring that the student reaches the maximum development in the cognitive, the personal, the academic and the professional (García et al., 2005, p.191).

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The goal of the project is to provide training to PE teachers so that they can gain the knowledge and tools they need to improve their students' performance and attention. To do so, they must first understand the concept of gamification, the elements that make it up, and how to apply them in the real world, so that a mentoring process can be started through digital learning.

The goal of the plan is for instructors to learn how to implement Gamification on their own. Because of its potential to customize, gamification is nothing more than a new inventive and stimulating learning technique for the student, who is acquiring increasing relevance and prominence in the classroom every day.

The project will last two months (200 hours) and be divided into four training modules, each of which will develop all of the necessary elements to assist them in creating their own gamified proposals, with the clear goal of motivating their students and making learning as enjoyable as it is meaningful. The project will be developed using the Classgame concept, which is a gamified role-playing game. This initiative also helps to develop and strengthen the Digital Teaching Competence Areas of Information and Information Literacy, Communication and Collaboration, and Problem Solving. (2017, National Institute of Educational Technologies and Teacher Education).

The following are the project's overall goals:

• Have a thorough understanding of the notion of gamification and the many components that make it up.
• Be familiar with a variety of tools and instructional materials for implementing a gamified project in the classroom that promotes personalisation.
• Create projects that allow students to participate in their own unique learning experience.

The growth of ICT in Physical Education as individualized learning

Grupo Activa2, which provides online training in the field of Physical Education, is an example of the emergence of gamification as an agenda for the personalization of instruction. More than 5,000 instructors from all around the world have completed various courses as part of the program. Offices may be found in Madrid, Valencia, and Barcelona.

To assure the quality of the courses, they are all equipped with the most relevant teaching equipment. Using technology as a resource in a PE lesson, on the other hand, may be engaging for both teachers and students. Teachers, on the other hand, must pay particular attention to how they will manage and provide instructions so that their students may use these resources in their classrooms (Nye, 2008)

According to a research conducted by Daz, J, Molina, J, and Monfort, M (2019) with teachers from the Valencian Community, physical educators have a good attitude toward ICT and personalisation.

The majority of teachers feel that ICT can help their students study more independently (90.4 percent), and that they would want to have more ICT resources at work (88.9%). They also believe that technology can help students learn more independently. their pupils (95.9 percent). Teachers believe they do not dehumanize teaching (91.7%), although a few are concerned about needing to utilize ICT in their jobs (12.4 percent). As a result, gamification is having an increasing influence on mentoring.

The work of Díaz and Aguado (2012) clarifies their position on the ICT and Physical Education binomial by introducing the concept of "multiple literacies," with which it is intended that teaching-learning go beyond, through a more audiovisual, computer, or technological literacy, because contemporary knowledge is multimodal, and the goal is to personalize teaching, is of particular interest.

"Why incorporate ICT in Physical Education?" Diaz (2012) poses an intriguing topic. and lists and justifies the benefits they can bring to the area, including the educational potential for teachers and students, the development of digital competence, assisting students in becoming knowledge producers (through a mentoring process), rapid access to much broader information, adaptation to different learning rhythms, and, perhaps most importantly, overcoming space and time barriers.

On the other hand, there are challenges in implementing ICTs in Physical Education, such as a lack of technological training for teachers at the university level, a lack of tool knowledge, a lack of infrastructure, a lack of time in the curriculum, or the myth that technology and physical practice are incompatible.

The importance of gamification as a component of self-motivation

Technologies have long been regarded as the most important tool for looking for information on the Internet. However, according to Parra (2012; referenced in Hernández, 2017), "one of the locations where technology has had the most impact is in the classroom, and this, in turn, in the teacher's craft, reaching to become part of regular school life" (p.329). As a result, ICTs play a critical role in the growth of the teaching process, facilitating the transfer of material and transforming into instruments capable of boosting the quality of student learning, altering the way information is accessed, processed, and comprehended.

From this perspective, gamification may be used to provide investigative experiences for both instructors and students that emphasize the research and search for information in order to solve issues while also working on various areas of autonomous and individualized knowledge at the same time. The following are aspects that pertain to benefits and disadvantages:

Table 1. Advantages and disadvantages of gamification and ICT in physical activity

Advantages	Disadvantages
Gamification boosts motivation by making academic activities more appealing.	High cost: obtaining high-quality video games is costly.
Technological literacy is a term that refers to a student's ability to use technology.	Distraction and time loss can be a source of distraction for students.
Mentality of multitasking: capacity to work independently with the help of the trainer.	Inadequate value training: kids become more competitive, which might have negative implications.
Mentored work: allows for easier communication and idea exchange with the trainer.	Finding a happy medium between entertaining and instructional is tough.
Individualized education means that each student learns at his or her own pace.	Continuous gamification and autonomous incentive are essential for ephemeral motivation.

Díaz and Aguado (2012) investigated teacher training in relation to ICTs and how they employed them in the classroom. They used a sample of 19 teachers from ten different centers to conduct this. The concept that students live immersed in a technological environment that impacts the way they operate (Cantillo et al., 2012) autonomously is one of the motives that motivated them to conduct the study. They concentrated on the following instruments:

• A quest on the internet. "This is the use of a discovery learning technique in conjunction with a work process created by students utilizing web resources."

• Wikimedia Commons. They encourage user interaction and can be utilized by PE teachers. A Wiki is a collection of linked web pages that may be freely expanded in a hypertext system to store and amend information, a database in which each page is easily modifiable by any user with a Web browser.

• Geocaching (Pérez and Pérez, 2012) is an "orientation sport modality that entails hunting for a hidden prize in a natural or urban area using a GPS". This didactic resource allows students to work tasks in the natural environment using their smartphone and the embedded GPS, which inspires them.

Development of a gamified project for teaching customizing

The ADDIE instructional design paradigm was adopted for the project's development. The reason for this decision is that its application is particularly useful in the creation of courses, and it also allows

Profesionalizarea carierei didactice - PROF – ID 146587
Proiect cofinanțat din Fondul Social European prin Programul Operațional Capital Uman 2014-2020

175

for the focus of curricular support material development through its five-step structure and the integration of Web 2.0 technologies as part of the contents (Centeno Alayón, 2017).

It's also a model that can be tailored to any scenario, topic, audience, or training method. As a result, we can say that it is a flexible model that can be applied to a variety of instructional situations, providing a framework that includes all of the critical elements that make it effective, given that the stages can occur simultaneously, ascending, or concurrently with time.

It may also be used to provide web-based training, which is the focus of the project. However, it should be mentioned that it is a model that is recommended as an alternative to organizing activities that assist students toward independent learning via ICT , which facilitates the mentoring process. Finally, another reason to choose the ADDIE model is that it allows instructors to invent and acquire a new active educational methodology, which is distinguished by having a systematic methodology with a purpose in mind (Centeno Alayón, 2017).

Analysis of Expected Effects

All participants will benefit from a wealth of knowledge, tools, exercises, and fresh and unique content provided by the Gamification teacher training course.

In addition, we will have topic specialists who will bring value to the course, enhancing its quality and significance. Similarly, we will employ many novel approaches and new technologies to provide a fully updated course in which we will teach the usage of various digital media that are unfamiliar to instructors.

As a result, we will be able to supply CEFODO with a broad, comprehensive, innovative, and well-founded course that will bring various advantages owing to the increased interest it will generate among PE instructors in Spain, who require ongoing training in new approaches and technology. As a result of this initiative, our organization will reap several financial benefits, allowing it to continue developing and offering a diverse range of courses in various subjects and modalities.

Following Valdéz (2021), several benefits of working with gamification from the standpoint of learning personalization are offered.
• Enhancement of abilities. It raises the degree of knowledge and abilities in a field or a specific area for pupils.
• Enhances research abilities. Students' research skills are reportedly improved by the project.
• Improves analytical and synthesis skills, particularly when the project is aimed at helping students improve these abilities.
• Assists pupils in expanding their knowledge and abilities. A difficult work is planned and performed, requiring persistent effort over a period of time.

• Developing ICT skills. The initiative might be centered on encouraging pupils to learn new information technology skills and knowledge.

• Getting a better understanding of how to assess and co-evaluate. While evaluating the work of their classmates, students improve this capacity and take responsibility for their own work and performance.

Dedication to a project. The students are inwardly driven since they are actively and adequately dedicated to completing the project task. In brief, the execution of an ICT-supported project that facilitates the growth of cooperative learning as well as interdisciplinarity of sectors would be perfect.

The project's general phases and tasks

As previously stated, the model chosen for the project's development is the ADDIE model, with the following phases and activities to be completed:

• Analyze: determine the pupils' profiles. Because this is a course for PE teachers, we need to know their qualities and prior knowledge to tailor the content to their needs. It will also be crucial to examine the setting in which the course will be held. To do so, we'll undertake a requirements analysis to identify and define the issue. This assessment will be carried out through data collecting, written surveys, and questionnaires. We will learn a lot about the organization's environment, the specific problem, alternative remedies, if the training is suitable, the target audience's profile, the content's essential breadth, and the resources available to implement it thanks to the findings. The intervention was made.

Determine the qualities of the learning material in order to improve the proposal's design.

Understand the human, material, technological, and pedagogical constraints, as well as the financial constraints.

• Design: identify the exact objectives such that they are a challenge for the students while also ensuring that they understand what is expected of them and what they will learn. We shall always do so while taking into consideration the kids' individual qualities.

Define the resources available. This almost solves the question of how each concept should be presented. We will guarantee that the content is both clear and motivating and interesting for the learners in this manner. The goal isn't to overwhelm students with a plethora of materials (videos, infographics, concept maps, etc.), but to be clear and effective, choosing the ideal manner to communicate each piece of information so that they may be introspective and create their own knowledge. In addition, we'll estimate how much money we'll need for all of these resources and supplies.

Decide on the evaluation. The assessment criteria, as well as the evaluation instruments that will be followed and utilized to ensure that the students pass the course, will be designed via the specified objectives. In addition, we will construct evaluation points throughout the course. Within this evaluation, feedback will be defined. One of the most significant disadvantages of e-learning is the lack of teacher-student interaction, which is why contact via Classgame chat is offered.

Decide on a didactic strategy. We'll choose the best approach for carrying out the training and presenting the information and resources in the most effective way feasible.

Make a training schedule. We'll select how the course will be separated and arranged, as well as the information that will be delivered in each section, in order to create a logical and orderly progression.

Create activities for the students. After we've arranged the course's many portions and materials, we'll determine the numerous exercises that must be completed in each one to ensure that all the knowledge is correctly acquired.

Create a platform for Classgame. We will design the platform where the course will take place once we have structured the course, the portions, the materials, and the many activities that will be carried out.

Create a website. We will choose the information, topics, sections, structure, and audiovisual elements that will be included.

• Create: create the didactic medium via which we will deliver the pre-determined and prepared knowledge to the pupils. We will provide some information and material to test the correct operation of the Classgame platform after it has been prepared for the deployment of the course.

Create and test teaching materials and activities for both the instructor and the students. We will use drafts, quality assurance tests, and pilot tests to do this, which will be followed by some modifications.

Create a user manual and a student guide to help students see and understand the course's structure, organization, components, development, and contents.

Create assessment measures to ensure that student performance and course growth are properly monitored.

Get the website ready. After it has been developed, we will establish and add information about the course in it, using everything that we have already determined and picked to ensure that everything is in order. Disseminate the training using various social media platforms.

• Implement: in the Classgame platform, publish and incorporate all of the course's material, contents, activities, and elements for proper usage by participants in the course's development.

Complete the missing information on the web page and post it on the internet, along with everything connected to the course, including how to register and access it. Assist all course participants, trainers, and other staff members with technical issues.

Maintain a high level of cleanliness. Train the course's teaching team for it to develop and operate properly, as well as for the participants' learning.

Prepare and have backup plans in case of technological difficulties, which you may share with the attendees.

Enter the project in the competition. We will demonstrate the platform and web page created to present all of the course's contents, activities, resources, elements, and information, as well as how it will be carried out, what methodology will be used, when it will be carried out, where it will be carried out, and who will be involved in its development.

• Evaluate: Review and evaluate the phases of analysis, design, development, and implementation. Formative assessments should be used to monitor the course's progress and to address any potential shortcomings.

Conduct student performance evaluations to ensure that they are learning and working correctly as the course progresses, making any required adjustments or revisions. Conduct reviews of the course's approach, activities, and instructional resources.

Conduct summative assessments to acquire information on the course's impact, proper operation, and economic impact. Collect student feedback to learn about the course's strengths and faults, as well as potential areas for improvement.

The project's didactic design

This training is designed for PE instructors from all autonomous communities, including elementary and secondary. Its major purpose is to offer this group with the materials they need to use gamification in the classroom with the goal of enhancing student enthusiasm. The demand for teacher training in innovative techniques and the use of ICT in the educational setting, particularly in the area of Physical Education, is fulfilled in this way. The project's pedagogical model Our working technique emphasizes the student's leadership position, allowing them to participate actively in the teaching-learning process.

According to a constructivist approach, students will construct their own knowledge based on the material offered by the professors, whether in the form of books, a forum, or a webinar. ICTs are used extensively throughout the course to stimulate student engagement and interaction, whether

to trade ideas, contribute information, or build resources. By using them, students will be able to link all the information collected with real situations, and in this way they will be aware of the applicability of the tools and elements worked on during the course in the Physical Education classroom. Competencies and learning objectives:

- Identify the key elements of gamification.
- Differentiate and recognize extrinsic and intrinsic gamification.
- Know the main dynamics, mechanics, and components of gamification.
- Use the different tools aimed at creating a gamified project.
- Use online platforms to create activities or projects related to gamification.
- Develop a gamified project according to its phases and key elements.
- Create teaching materials aimed at their use in a gamified context.

Conclusions

Technology is given a position in the Physical Education curriculum through the objectives to be met, the subject to be addressed, and the abilities to be developed in students, according to this work. However, in case studies of athletes who require time and space, an integration of ICT is advocated not from the perspective of mentoring, but rather from the standpoint of infusing technology into all topics taught without exception.

The CRUE itself emphasizes the importance of legislation that responds to the specific needs of athletes using technology and gamification elements, thereby facilitating their integration into various higher education programs, reminding us that "our responsibility to athletes extends beyond the competition; we must prepare them for life after sport and for their integration after the competition. As a result, education is the key to a prosperous future (Meller, 2018).

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IMPERATIVES OF EDUCATIONAL CHANGE AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT IN THE PRE-UNIVERSITY EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract: *Although it is a very topical field, dominated by challenges and transformations, the change in education proves to be a difficult process to operationalize due to the deep psychological implications at the level of individuals, but also of the school organization. The studies developed in this regard are far from sufficient, there is a growing need for new justifications to get in touch with accelerated changes in education. At the educational level, the principle of change through action proves to be the most effective for the real production of change, because it capitalizes on the motivational factor, the attitudinal factor and develops skills, creativity, innovation. Moreover, in order to support change through action, the development of communication strategies, cooperative relations, competitive relations determine the overcoming of resistances and / or the correction of certain disfunctions.*

Key words: *reform, continuous training, professionalize, motivation.*

1. Introduction

In the current context regarding the dynamics of change, the development of the teaching staff is the main engine of the reform in education. The modern educational system in Romania has become aware of the existence of a direct relationship between organizational development and staff development, organizational existence is dependent on the quality of educational actors. Analysing the professional dynamics, it is important to emphasize the importance of professionalization, achievement in modern institutional structures.

In recent years, the educational reform has promoted effective professional development policies for the teaching staff, focusing on techniques for the ongoing review of the training model for the teaching staff and the development of an educational market for continuing education programs.

Studies and statistics on the orientation of the teaching staff towards school development through the professionalization of the teaching career found that, the Romanian school has the capacity to adapt and has always managed to meet new demands, and to take responsibility for change at all

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levels. That is why the organizational development and the development of the personnel from the education system are the most important preoccupations of the current Romanian school, meant to facilitate the promotion of the change and the quality of the educational act. The most important argument in favour of these directions is given by the very need of the school to respond favourably to the new imperatives of modern society.

Moreover, teaching staff development strategies must be in line with organizational and individual development requirements. In this respect, there is a tendency in Romania to promote school-centred training programs (E. Păun, 1999, p.65), based on "staff development policies". Analysing this aspect at the educational level, we are talking here about the professionalization of the teaching career through continuous development and self-management (career self-management), which implies the transition from the efforts of the institution to the assumption of professional development at the individual level. We can say that, the process of continuous training is constantly changing, being in line with the policy of education development, with the national strategy for the development of the system of continuous training of teaching staff.

Thus, in the Romanian educational system, there is a need for a permanent revision of the training model, a revision that should be a priority both for the school and at the individual level, for each teacher. The development strategies of the "continuing education programs" must respond equally to the requirements of the school, but also to the individual training requirements. (Păun E., 1999, p.165). Thus, we can speak about the presence of two meanings both for staff development and professional development.

The perspectives of analysing the professionalization of teaching staff are multiple because, this process is a complex phenomenon, with multiple determinations and influences.

According to LEN 1/2011, Art. 245. - (1), "for the […] continuous training is a right and an obligation."

Following the comparative analysis of the national reports on continuous training, there is an increase in the participation of teaching staff in the training offer, which has determined that this objective should be a priority in educational policies. This implies the need to diversify the offer of continuous development and the flexibility of the training programs, as well as the continuous maintenance of the close relationship between the training needs, access, valorisation, the impact of the training courses and the training offer. There have been some gaps in this training process, a neglected aspect is the harmonization of initial training with the continuing one. It is necessary to articulate the two components of training so that they should complement and register an increase in quality and an improvement in the relations between the institutions that provide in-service training for the teaching staff.

2. Objectives

We can emphasize that, for the implementation and a good functioning of the educational change, we always need an X-ray of all the efficient and less efficient aspects at the level of professional training, aspects such as: the way teaching staff relate to professional training, identification new needs, the motivation to participate in vocational training, the opinion of teaching staff to the quality of training programs, about their level of training from this point of view, etc.

Following the analysis carried out by the research that was carried out over a period of 5 years, this highlighted the following:

- the real needs for change in the pre-university education system;

- the levels of satisfaction / dissatisfaction felt by teaching staff following initial, continuous training, vocational retraining, quality of education in pre-university education system;

- the categories of reasons that determined the teaching staff to accept or reject the professionalization programs at the level of Teaching Staff Resource Centres and County Boards of Education (commitment to carry on the continuous training);

- current restructuring of the Romanian education system and ways to optimize the attitude of the teaching staff towards this system in order to better balance the relationship between expectations and teaching offer.

This study aims to provide an insight into the attitude of teaching staff towards initial, continuing education and vocational retraining and to ensure the quality of education in pre-university education system, and ways to optimize the attitude of teaching staff towards this system in order to balance better relations between expectations and teaching offer, as well.

3. Material and Methods

This research was based on a formative approach proposed following the findings made previously in the relationship and training of teaching staff in the Educational Staff Training Department. The research studies respect the ethical principles of the research as well as aspects of confidentiality and anonymity of the participants in the investigative study. The methods and procedures were used constructively, without inducing frustrating situations for the respondents, the interpretation of the results being made so as not to stigmatize or discriminate against the teaching staff participating in this study.

The sample used to measure the attitudes of teaching staff towards professionalization of careers and towards quality assurance in the education system was made up of 800 teaching staff, full-time in pre-university education system.

The investigation undertaken in order to investigate the above-mentioned issues was based on the use of action research. The research methodology used in our study was much broader, using mainly specific methods and techniques for measuring attitude. Direct attitude measurement methods (Likert scale, semantic differentiator) and indirect attitude measurement methods (disguised self-assessments, misinformation test) were used. In order to find out as many arguments as possible regarding the acceptance of training or resistance to training, we used the focus-group method. We applied this method in order to qualitatively analyse the teaching staff' perceptions of the teaching profession as well as attitudes towards initial, continuous training and professional retraining; ensuring the quality of education in pre-university education system. We opted for this method to face a wide range of experiences and opinions related to the issues proposed for discussion. The group interview was structured and used in the pre-survey phase in order to build the questionnaires. The interviews were conducted based on the interview guidelines developed in relation to the dimensions and relevant indicators for identifying attitudes towards the 2 educational reforms in the pre-university education system. The group interview allowed us to analyse how the questions work and what answers the subjects give, subsequently carrying out reformulations, then establishing factors and final questionnaires.

We also used the method of debate with pros and cons, organized in groups of 6 teaching staff each, in which the analysis of the educational reform at the level of the pre-university education system was followed, from all points of view. The use of this method revealed the attitude and the level of satisfaction that the teaching staff have in the system.

The data obtained was processed using the SPSS for Windows program. The statistical operations used were: frequency analysis to illustrate the composition of the group of subjects, calculation of Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the scales used, exploratory factor analysis to establish the factorial validity of the questionnaires applied, T test for independent samples.

Since the beginning of the study it was important to know what the representations, attitudes, expectations of the teaching staff are, because they can illustrate how they cope with change and can opt for a change in mentality so as to achieve effective fulfilment and satisfaction of their own needs.

In order to achieve this goal, it was necessary to understand, perceive and relate to a value grid both at individual and organizational level, the requirements, principles and mechanisms underlying the phenomenon of change, as well as the change and formation of a prospective attitude and proactive to overcome psychological barriers and direct them to motivation, cooperation, personal development and effective involvement in promoting change at this level.

In some situations, at the attitudinal level of 30% of teaching staff, it was important to resolve the socio-cognitive conflict they faced, so that involvement in continuing education is the expression of voluntary behaviour and not the expression of an aspect or condition imposed from the outside. In

order to achieve this purpose, it was necessary to cultivate in the teaching staff not only capacities of adaptation, development, acquisition of knowledge, skills, but also the formation of favourable attitudes for the implementation of the new one. In our case, these pro-change attitudes of teaching staff were achieved through a 240-hour training program, in which the experimental sample participated.

According to the observations from the study carried out, it was found in the first phase, that the attitudes expressed towards professionalization of careers and quality assurance in education were ambivalent. This ambivalence was present due to prejudices, beliefs, expectations, which were not analysed, mediated, becoming dangerous. In order to overcome this imbalance, first of all, in order to develop an assertive attitude towards change, we determined the teaching staff to be aware of the need for change and to form motivational strategies to facilitate the implementation of change. Then, we carried out a process of comparative analysis of change in relation to old practices so as to elucidate whether the new changes are superior to those already established in conduct. All these aspects allowed the evaluation of the changes in relation to the performance and efficiency criteria.

Analysing the availability of teaching staff in promoting vocational training, we observed the attitude, the value it attributes to change, and we can make predictions about involvement in promoting continuing education and quality in education. The basic condition of motivational strategies for involvement in promoting educational reform is the extent to which teaching staff perceive change as a potential for personal and professional development.

The solution to these fears lies in prior preparation, in which change must be approached pragmatically, realistically and prospectively, so that teaching staff give up routine, conservative behaviours and become aware of the need for change, understand the concept and implications of change personally and even more, to be involved in anticipating educational change so that change becomes a factor that determines progress. In order to achieve this goal, it is necessary to cultivate attitudes and skills to adapt to both educational changes and the transformations of contemporary society.

Improving the gap between the real competencies of the teacher and the competencies required by educational reforms can be achieved through professional development, through training programs that meet both individual needs (professional development) and the needs and requirements, objectives of the school organization (staff development).

4. Results

According to the results of this study, we can argue that there are no significant differences between the subjects in the experimental group and those in the control group in terms of motivation for individual and organizational development. We also find that following the active-participatory

involvement of the in activities of debate, analysis and implementation of reforms, in the post-test the subjects from the experimental group have a higher motivation for organizational development than those from the control group. On the other hand, with the transition from pre-test to post-test, the motivation for individual and organizational development increases only in the subjects in the experimental group (not the control), i.e. those who participated in the intervention program. In other words, the teaching staff included in the experimental group, in addition to the fact that they want personal and professional development, accept the changes of the educational reform in the pre-university education system, considering as a priority the dimensions of the school organization in which they operate. Respondents are intensely concerned about the needs of the school organization both structurally and functionally, with particular emphasis on the organizational ethos.

In this respect, I will summarize to what extent there are significant correlations among satisfaction with continuing education, satisfaction with quality.

The results that were obtained are presented in the table below.

Pearson correlation coefficients between satisfaction with continuing education, satisfaction with quality in education and satisfaction with decentralization, and between their dimensions, as well.

Table 1.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Satisfaction with vocational training	-	-	-	-	-	-
2. Satisfaction with quality in education	.528	-	-	-	-	-
1. Modern methodologies	.550	.944	-	-	-	-
2. Efficient management, professionalism	.524	.956	.892	-	-	-
3. Customized policies and programs	.453	.936	.821	.850	-	-
4. Security, integration, adaptation	.480	.959	.874	.893	.871	-

Note: all correlations are statistically significant at the significance threshold p < 0.001

Analysing the obtained correlations, it was found that:

• Satisfaction with continuing education correlates positively and moderately with satisfaction with quality in education (r = .528) and the dimensions of these modern methodologies (r = .550) and efficient management, professionalism (r = .524).There are also positive, mid-level correlations with the dimensions of customized policies and programs (r = .453) and security, integration, adaptation (r = .480) (Annex 129);

. Correlation diagram between the variable satisfaction with vocational training and the variable satisfaction with quality assurance in education.

Graph 1

Satisfaction with quality in education
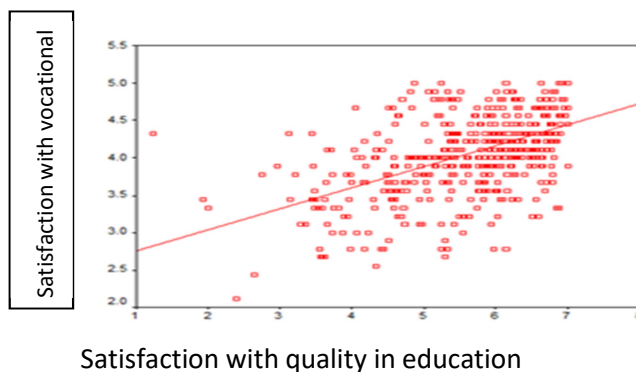
According to the results in the table and the graphical representation, we can say that between the variable satisfaction with vocational training and the variable satisfaction with quality assurance in education, there is a positive, moderate and significant correlation. We notice that the point cloud is more condensed in the area of high scores and less condensed in the area of low scores. In other words, the vast majority of respondents tend to report high scores on both the variable satisfaction with vocational training and the variable satisfaction with quality assurance in education.

5. Conclusions and discussion

The interpretation of the obtained results gives us an overview of the way in which the teaching profession is perceived at a concrete level, as well as the attitude towards the main dimensions of the reform in the pre-university education system. The research emphasizes that the change in education is achieved if the teaching staff in the system, regardless of age, are prepared to perceive, understand and respond favourably to change. The participation of teaching staff in training programs, which develop at least three directions (cognitive, attitudinal-motivational and behavioural) determines how to assume consciously change as a fundamental principle of action, by adopting behaviours in accordance with their own interest and interest of the school organization where it operates. There is also an increase in general satisfaction with the profession, as well as a positive attitude towards educational change.

The point that we bring through this study on attitude towards educational changes is that we could rally to the standards of contemporary education, developing in a very short time through the education program for change the proactive and prospective attitude through motivational-volitional dimensions that energize human resource personalities in the pre-university education system.

The imperatives of educational change, outlined in this formative study, should illustrate today's preparation for tomorrow's demands. The perspective of modern social demands challenges the Romanian school to put much effort in developing and making compatible the performance criteria

compatible with the European educational requirements. The analysis of educational change allows us to outline the belief that change in education is related to the basic links of this approach, namely the attitude, motivation, training, communication and involvement both of the education officials and human resources at the school level.

Knowing and being aware of the importance of all aspects presented in this study could be, in our view, a diagnosis of the school reality and a way to streamline the practices of implementation and promotion of the new.

This paper provides other training centres both within the universities and within the school inspectorate interested in the continuous training of the teaching staff, a training approach in any program both initial training and continuing education. This educational offer, this outlined content deserves to be validated and then to be useful in the training of skills regardless of the age of teaching staff in the system, regardless of the type of initial or continuing training, to illustrate flexibility in thinking, receptivity, efficiency and management of the multiple facets of change.

It is found that at the educational level, the principle of change through action proves to be the most effective for the real production of change, because it capitalizes the motivational factor, the attitudinal factor and develops skills for planning and designing change, which require creativity, innovation. In addition to this, in order to support change through action, the development of communication strategies, cooperative relations, competitive relations determine the overcoming of resistances and / or the correction of certain dysfunctions. Promoting change from the inside out is meant to ensure real change that achieves the imperative "change through and for action" (UNESCO, 2006), which boosts self-development in education. This imperative is associated with the need to promote the quality of education and the strategic approach to change, being the basic responsibility of the teaching staff. Among the most effective strategies to be promoted in the current conditions of permanent change, innovative, proactive, participatory strategies are those that engage individuals and the organization in transposing reform into concrete actions and effectively promoting reform measures. These strategies need to be updated and adapted to the needs of the school organization and the individual needs of the members of the organization, but also to the specifics of the school as an organization.

Knowing the attitude, the "motivation determines the loyalty and the commitment of the teaching staff towards the school organization of which they are part" (Davis, J., Wilson, S. 2000, Vol 73, Iss. 6, pp. 349-353). The investment in human resources of the organization affects its efficiency, so it is necessary to improve the professional skills of teaching staff, so that the school to seize opportunities, to "learn" in advance, to prepare the evolution of the educational community.

Knowing the strategies and effective dimensions is very important for the Romanian school, which is in the phase of experimenting with new practices, practices that have a major impact on

the evolution of the school organization. So, the school organization must not lose the rhythm and direction of social change.

The most common are continuing education programs and mentoring.

In order to achieve as effectively as possible the mentoring strategy that aims to integrate the trainee in the life of the school, specific objectives, stages, actions, roles and responsibilities must be observed, on the part of the mentor but also of the trainee. The educational reform also proposes self-management strategies such as: self-knowledge and self-assessment, development of one's own skills, individual career planning.

The success of these programs is due to the awareness of the need for training and motivation to accept the change of professional routines and the development of new skills.

The professionalization of the teaching career should remain a concern for both the school organization and its members, so that the trained human resources must be able to cope with the requirements of the position and the status they hold.

In order to facilitate the promotion of change and the quality of the educational act, the current preoccupations of the Romanian school must be oriented towards the two key elements that are in interdependence, that are the school organization and its staff.

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MOTIVATION AND SATISFACTION AT WORK FOR EMPLOYEES IN EDUCATION

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Summary: *Increasingly, in recent years, there has been a growing interest of organizations in investing in human resources, respectively in increasing the level of motivation and job satisfaction of employees. This is due to the fact that employers have begun to understand that a motivated subordinate is much more efficient than one for whom the job is a simple source of income. The competition for superior results and for adapting to social change is due to the existence of an increasingly diversified competitive market, which requires improvement and innovation in any field.*

Keywords: *motivation, satisfaction, education, education, employees*

1. Introduction

The education system did not stay away from this approach, considering that, in accordance with the provisions of the National Education Law no. 1/2011, the educational units are considered providers of educational services, concluding with each beneficiary, directly or indirectly, an educational contract. The educational field is complex and delicate at the same time due to the fact that it offers services to a large flow of clients from various categories and requires a great availability from the employees to the beneficiaries, thus needing to turn their attention to employees to stimulate their interest in work. filed.

The study was conducted in three schools that have been providing educational services for over 4 decades.

So far no studies have been conducted within these institutions, this being a project that will be followed by an internal development of human resources policy. Staff turnover was a reported issue and so the decision was made to conduct a study to determine the level of job satisfaction and motivation. In this study, questionnaires were used to measure motivational dominance and job satisfaction. Determining these motivational and satisfaction factors can lead to the establishment of

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191

a strategy to increase employee job satisfaction and reduce staff turnover.

The research is an applied research, answering a concrete problem, respectively the identification of the factors that determine the level of job satisfaction of the employees of the educational units.

From the studies done so far, it seems that the predominant factors in the field of education that attract the attention of HR specialists are the following: work environment, stimulating work, job security, income, advancement opportunities, personal development opportunities, managerial style.

2. The research comprises five chapters structured as follows

Chapter 1 The theoretical framework of the studied problem will present the main theories regarding the chosen topic, as well as the fundamental concepts that will be used and the discussions on them. A special space will be given to the review of research on motivation and job satisfaction.

Chapter 2 Theoretical references on the general aspects of motivation and job satisfaction in the field of education.

Chapter 3 The research methodology will include the formulation of objectives, the formulation of hypotheses and the description of the research design. The research results will include the presentation and analysis of the obtained data and their interpretation. At the same time, they will contribute with a strategy to improve the motivational support and the organizational climate offered to the employees in order to increase the job satisfaction.

Chapter 4 The analysis and interpretation of the results will highlight the specific aspects of the field of education found as a result of the study

Chapter 5 The conclusions will discuss the hypotheses and will mention the contributions that the paper makes from a theoretical and practical point of view.

CHAPTER I: Theoretical framework

1. The nature of motivation

Speaking about the nature of work motivation, organizations began to consider the 3 elements that shape this aspect: effort, organizational goals and needs. These are found in the definition of motivation (Robins 1998, quoted in Bogathy 2004, p. 64), identified as the sum of internal and external energies that initiates, directs and sustains a goal-oriented effort of the organization that simultaneously meets individual needs. ".

Effort is a quantitative measure of intensity. Thus, a highly motivated employee performs a sustained activity at work. However, not every intense effort leads to job performance. The employee must

channel his efforts to meet the organizational objectives, which form the qualitative component of the effort, which gives it value. The closer the personal goals are to the organizational ones, the more the effort will contribute to the expected results of the organization, as the non-alignment of these objectives will result in poor performance at work and implicitly a low job satisfaction.

Motivation must also be analyzed as a process of satisfying needs. "Necessity is an internal state of necessity that makes certain goals attractive. As long as it is unsatisfied, it creates an internal tension that stimulates the individual, training him in a behavior through which he seeks to satisfy the need and reduce stress. (Zlate 2004, p. 26).

In order for an individual to be motivated at work, he must have the certainty that, by performing a certain activity, it will satisfy his own needs.

An individual's motivation for work is determined by a number of motivational factors: intrinsic (individual) and extrinsic (organizational). Among the individual factors we find factors such as: needs, attitudes, interests, value system, perception of tasks. Organizational factors include factors such as: salary, specification of tasks, working group, communication, control systems.

Thus, the combination of these factors will lead to obtaining a motivated behavior or not in order to obtain the expected performances and job satisfaction.

1.2 The nature of job satisfaction and its importance

Job satisfaction can be influenced by several factors such as motivation, organizational climate factors (how to define tasks and objectives at personal and organizational level, how to organize work, the quality of employee relationships, leadership style, overall performance) as well as the level of skills, abilities or remuneration. People bring their own mental and physical abilities and time into their work. Many try to make a difference between their lives and the lives of others through work. The reason for wanting a job is often considered more than the pay you get. The service can be seen as a way to achieve your own goals. When work reaches or even exceeds individual expectations, the individual often experiences positive emotions. Positive emotions represent job satisfaction. Job satisfaction is a major contributor to life satisfaction. (Smith, 1992, cited in http://scholar.lib.vt.edu/theses/available/etd-12072000-130914/unrestricted/JGreen.pdf)

Job satisfaction is conceptualized as a general attitude towards work. Locke (1967, p. 24) defined job satisfaction as "a positive emotional state resulting from the appreciation of work experience." Spector (1997, p. 47) presented three reasons to clarify the importance of job satisfaction. The first is that organizations can be guided by human values. Based on these values, organizations will try to treat their employees with honor and respect. The second refers to the fact that organizations can take appropriate measures in accordance with the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction of

workers. Job satisfaction can be expressed through positive behavior and dissatisfaction through negative behavior. A third reason is that job satisfaction can be an indicator of how the organization works. Measuring job satisfaction can identify its various levels between the departments of an organization and then propose the implementation of a strategy.

1.3. Approaches to work motivation

The concept of work motivation has changed over time, with the development of different approaches to management and organizations. A brief foray into the history of the concept can help us to understand the vision of motivation at work (Druta, 1999; Mullins, 1989 as in Boghaty 2004, p. 73)

- the conception of rational-economic motivation; its main representative, F. Taylor, considered that employees will work harder if they get higher salaries, and their performance will be limited only by fatigue;

- the social conception of motivation; human relations researchers, through Harthorne studies, have shown that people work to meet a wider range of needs, with important social and recognition needs;

- the concept of self-updating motivation; focused on the content and significance of tasks, emphasizing the importance of intrinsic factors;

- the conception of the person's complexity; it is based on adapting managers to the particular situations and different needs of employees.

The study of work motivation refers to the working conditions responsible for the objectives, quality and intensity of work behavior. Four groups of models have been proposed to explain these determinants and their mode of action. Theories of need explain motivation by the existence of needs that the individual tries to satisfy. Cognitive theories, often called instrumentality, analyze the motivational process by elaborating, each one's own, a representation of the connections between effort and its results. Goal theories emphasize the motivational role of goals. Equity theories, based on the concept of balance, emphasize the search for a fair balance between the work done and the reward received. Finally, reinforcement theories apply to work situations a contingency-based reward-response scheme.

CHAPTER II: Motivation and job satisfaction in education

In recent years, the issue of motivation for teaching has become a prerequisite not only for the development of the education system as such, but we can say that the very evolution of society in a positive direction can be understood in terms of this field of research.

It is statistically significant to conclude that there is a positive link between student motivation and

teacher motivation. Thus, motivated teachers mean motivated students. Obviously, the reciprocity of this sentence is worrying: unmotivated teachers can quite easily lead to a lack of motivation and the students they work with.

This is why we need to investigate in more depth the aspects of motivation for teaching career: more precisely, what tools can we use to increase the attractiveness of this profession among young graduates and how can we increase the motivation base for teachers already attracted to the system? who do not even have the option of leaving the teaching career) so that the activity carried out by them is maximum, fulfilling the full potential of the respective persons.

In the UNESCO study entitled Teacher Motivation, Compensation and Working Conditions, International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris, 2006, the following reasons are satisfactory for the teacher, as elements of balancing and supporting career development:

(1) dedication to the profession and to work with children;

(2) the success achieved in the classroom - the professional rewards that the teacher receives by observing the students' achievements;

(3) the status obtained in the community, by exercising a respected profession;

(4) training obtained through initial and continuing training in the field;

(5) working conditions favorable to the exercise of the profession in good conditions (which includes both the availability of the necessary teaching materials and the support provided by the school management, the involvement of parents, etc.);

(6) the possibility of career promotion and advancement.

People who have decided not to choose a teaching career, notice among the main reasons for this option the low salary and the low status of the profession. Thus, people who choose to enter the teaching career are motivated by intrinsic reasons rather than extrinsic reasons. The main intrinsic motivation present in the literature is the importance of working with children and helping them to learn.

Regarding the dissatisfactions that lead to a demotivation for the teaching career, five such indicators can be named:

(1) assigning too many students to a teacher;

(2) problems generated by school infrastructure;

(3) salary issues;

(4) the activity with the students coming from the communities considered inferior from the educational point of view;

(5) the fact that the teacher has to carry out an additional activity due to the fact that students do not attend school permanently (among reasons, labor mobility, which leads to "migrations" of parents with their children or disregard for school activities by parents and students).

In conclusion, there are four levels at which we can talk about motivation and non-motivation for educational activity:

(1) emotional level (self-esteem, appreciation from others, etc.);

(2) financial level;

(3) physical level (infrastructure, working conditions);

(4) academic level (career development, access to information sources, etc.).

CHAPTER III: Methodology of the paper

3.1 Research objectives

The general objective: to measure the level of job satisfaction and motivation in education employees.

Theoretical objectives:

- in-depth knowledge of the dominant motivational and sources of job satisfaction;
- identifying specific differences related to the dominant motivational and job satisfaction between categories of education staff, by age groups and studies;
- analysis of motivational dominants and sources of job satisfaction.

Practical objectives:

• capitalizing on research data in advising school managers on the differentiation of motivational dominants and sources of job satisfaction, as well as their influence on employees in education;

• advising managers on various strategies to increase motivation and job satisfaction in education employees.

3.2 Research hypotheses

1. The fulfillment needs are more important for the teaching staff than for the non-teaching staff.

2. High school subjects are more concerned with basic living needs than those with a university degree.

3. People aged 50-60 have a lower level of overall satisfaction than people aged 40-49.

4. The "remuneration and promotion" factor is a source of satisfaction more for teaching staff than for non-teaching staff.

3.3 Research methods

For the evaluation of the motivational dominance we used the questionnaire "Motivational dominance" (Ticu Constantin, 2004).

For the evaluation of job satisfaction we used the questionnaire "Job satisfaction" (Ticu Constantin, 2004).

3.4 Group of subjects

Data were collected from 77 employees of the kindergarten included in the study. Of the participants, 36 (46.75%) belong to the category of non-teaching staff (they have the job of cook and assistant cook, caretaker, laundress), and 41 (53.24%) are part of the category of teaching staff (educators).

• advising managers on various strategies to increase motivation and job satisfaction in education employees.

PERSONAL
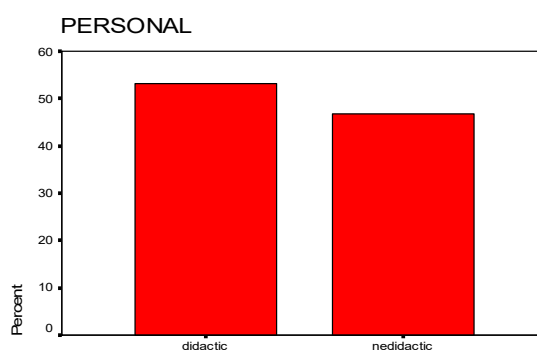
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Teaching	41	53.2	53.2	53.2
	Non-teaching	36	46.8	46.8	100.0
	Total	77	100.0	100.0	

The respondents are female - 77 people (100%).

As a level of education, 6 (7.8%) have high school education, 36 (46.8%) have high school education and 35 (45.5%) have university education.

STUDII

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	gimnaziale	6	7.8	7.8	7.8
	liceale	36	46.8	46.8	54.5
	universitare	35	45.5	45.5	100.0
	Total	77	100.0	100.0	

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197

STUDII
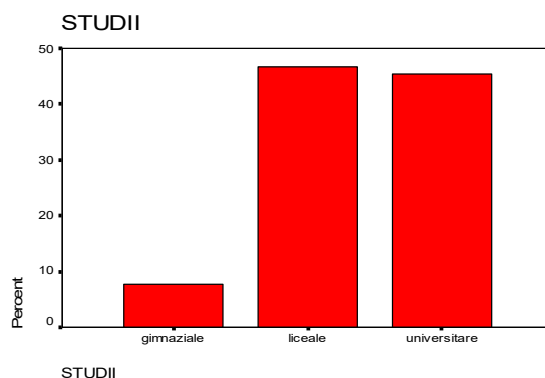
Regarding the age groups 26 (33.76%) they are part of the age group 20-39 years; 21 (27.27%) are part of the 40-49 age group; 30 (38.96%) are in the 50-60 age group.

VÂRSTA

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	20-39 years	26	33.8	33.8	33.8
	40-49 years	21	27.3	27.3	61.0
	50-60 years	30	39.0	39.0	100.0
	Total	77	100.0	100.0	

VARSTA

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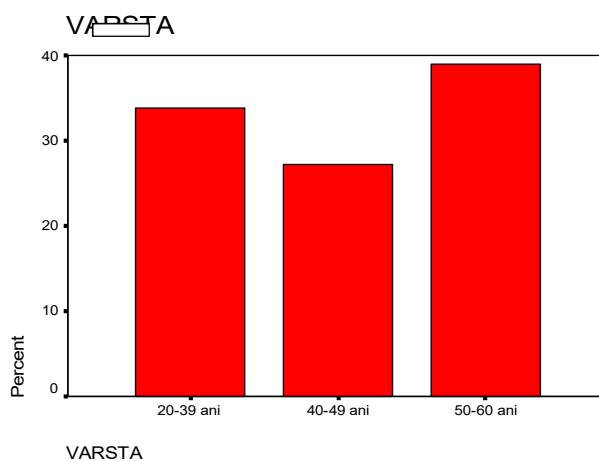
CHAPTER IV: Analysis and interpretation of results

The processing and interpretation of the results were performed on each questionnaire separately and according to age groups, studies and professional categories.

4.1. The results of the job satisfaction questionnaire (SP) in general and on the chosen criteria:

4.1.1. the way of **remuneration and promotion** are perceived as satisfactory, the highest percentage being at medium and intense level.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very weak	5	6.5	6.5	6.5
	Weak	18	23.4	23.4	29.9
	Medium	20	26.0	26.0	55.8
	Intensive	25	32.5	32.5	88.3
	Very intensive	9	11.7	11.7	100.0
	Total	77	100.0	100.0	
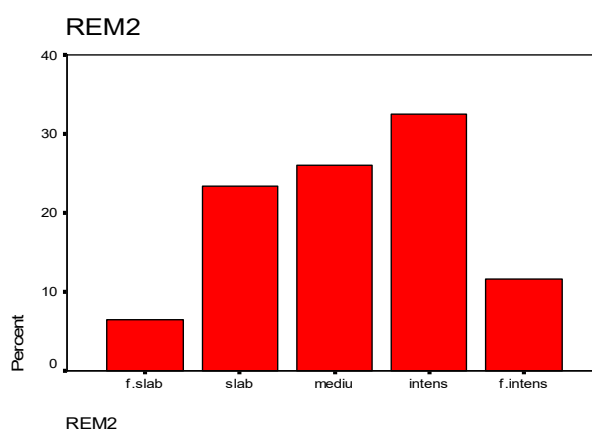
4.1.2. the relations between the employees regarding **the communication**, the relationship, as well as their relationship with the direct boss, the way of management are perceived as positive, non-conflicting to the greatest extent. This factor is manifested at an intense and very intense level.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Medium	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Intensive	1	1.3	1.3	3.9
	Very intensive	74	96.1	96.1	100.0
	Total	77	100.0	100.0	

CONDREL2

CONDREL2
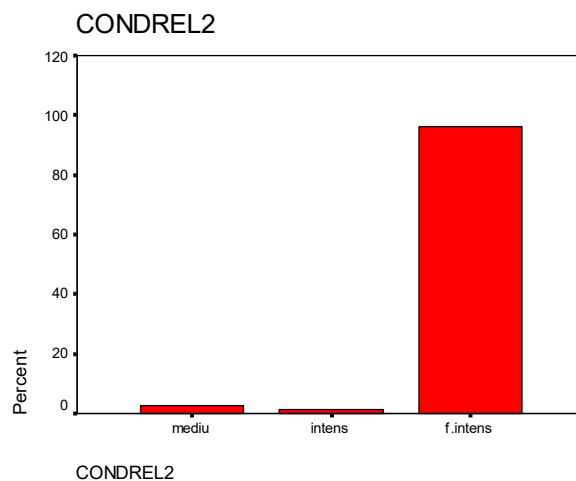
4.1.3. **the organization and communication factor** is a source of employee satisfaction regarding the way the work is organized and performed: clear definition of tasks, appreciation of the effort made by employees, division of workload, the type of work performed, the presence of feedback from superiors .

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very weak	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Weak	3	3.9	3.9	6.5
	Medium	11	14.3	14.3	20.8
	Intensive	30	39.0	39.0	59.7
	Very intensive	31	40.3	40.3	100.0
	Total	77	100.0	100.0	

ORGCOM2

ORGCOM2
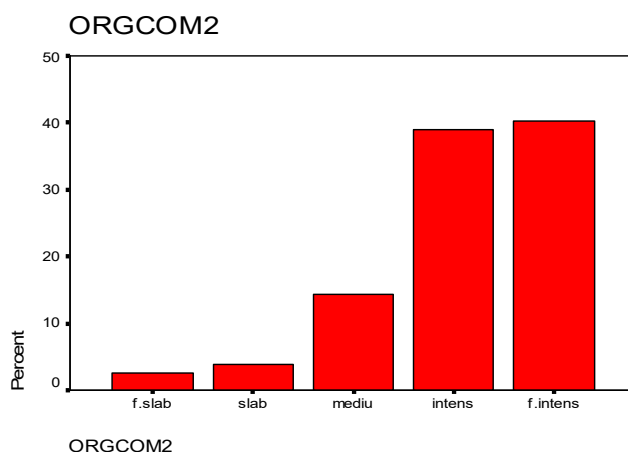
4.1.4. In general, the employees show satisfaction, being satisfied with the work they carry out both in terms of organization, material and moral rewards, chances of promotion, and the interpersonal climate.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very weak	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Weak	6	7.8	7.8	10.4
	Medium	37	48.1	48.1	58.4
	Intensive	23	29.9	29.9	88.3
	Very intensive	9	11.7	11.7	100.0
	Total	77	100.0	100.0	

SG2
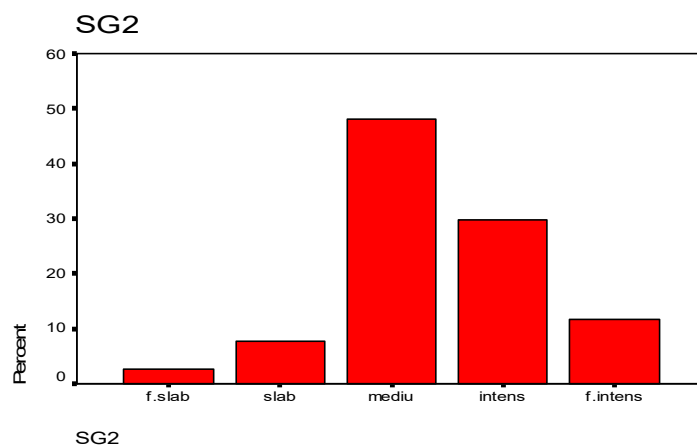
REMUNERA CONDREL ORGCOM SG * AGE

AGE		REMUNERA	CONDREL	ORGCOM	SG
20-39 years	Mean	55.35	40.38	49.35	145.0769
	N	26	26	26	26
	Std. Deviation	7.838	4.850	5.607	16.64433
40-49 years	Mean	52.62	39.24	48.86	140.7143
	N	21	21	21	21
	Std. Deviation	5.731	3.727	5.552	12.65758
50-60 years	Mean	52.33	39.37	47.97	139.6667
	N	30	30	30	30
	Std. Deviation	6.930	5.136	5.887	15.08672
Total	Mean	53.43	39.68	48.68	141.7792
	N	77	77	77	77
	Std. Deviation	7.006	4.661	5.660	15.03122

REMUNERA CONDREL ORGCOM SG * STUDIES

STUDII		REMUNERA	CONDREL	ORGCOM	SG
gimnaziale	Mean	51.17	39.67	51.67	142.5000
	N	6	6	6	6
	Std. Deviation	5.947	2.582	2.160	6.89202
liceale	Mean	53.14	39.25	48.14	140.5278
	N	36	36	36	36
	Std. Deviation	7.043	4.699	5.653	14.69788
universitare	Mean	54.11	40.11	48.71	142.9429
	N	35	35	35	35
	Std. Deviation	7.210	4.945	6.013	16.50836
Total	Mean	53.43	39.68	48.68	141.7792
	N	77	77	77	77
	Std. Deviation	7.006	4.661	5.660	15.03122

REMUNERA CONDREL ORGCOM SG * EMPLOYEES

PERSONAL		REMUNERA	CONDREL	ORGCOM	SG
didactic	Mean	54.39	39.88	48.78	143.0488
	N	41	41	41	41
	Std. Deviation	7.010	4.925	5.977	16.20486
nedidactic	Mean	52.33	39.44	48.56	140.3333
	N	36	36	36	36
	Std. Deviation	6.936	4.398	5.358	13.65493
Total	Mean	53.43	39.68	48.68	141.7792
	N	77	77	77	77
	Std. Deviation	7.006	4.661	5.660	15.03122

4.2. Results on the general motivational questionnaire (DM) on a general level as well as on the chosen criteria:

4.2.1. the leadership factor (power needs) is manifested at an intense and very intense level, which means that the desire to influence others is strong and decision-making independence is desired.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very weak	6	7.8	7.8	7.8
	Weak	18	23.4	23.4	31.2
	Medium	15	19.5	19.5	50.6
	Intensive	22	28.6	28.6	79.2
	Very intensive	16	20.8	20.8	100.0
	Total	77	100.0	100.0	

COND2

COND2
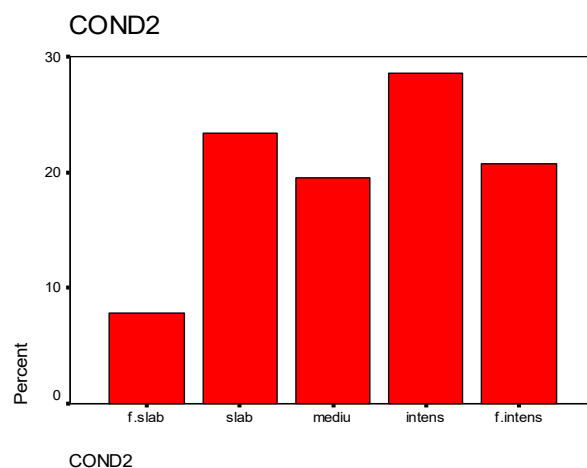
4.2.2. the expertise factor (achievement needs) is manifested at an intense and very intense level, which indicates that employees show a tendency or desire to excel in the activities in which they are engaged, to be and to consider themselves professionals.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very weak	2	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Weak	3	3.9	3.9	6.5
	Medium	11	14.3	14.3	20.8
	Intensive	19	24.7	24.7	45.5
	Very intensive	42	54.5	54.5	100.0
	Total	77	100.0	100.0	

EXPERT2

EXPERT2

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203
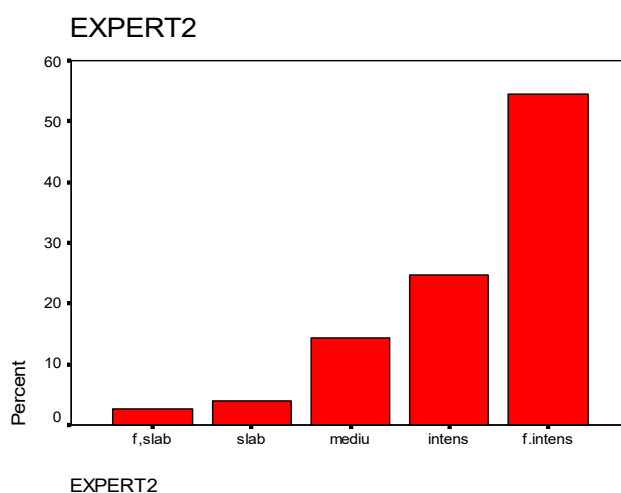
4.2.3. the relationship factor (affiliation needs) is manifested at a very intense level, which indicates that employees show interest in establishing harmonious relationships with colleagues and to strengthen a team.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Weak	3	3.9	3.9	3.9
	Medium	9	11.7	11.7	15.6
	Intensive	25	32.5	32.5	48.1
	Very intensive	40	51.9	51.9	100.0
	Total	77	100.0	100.0	

REL2

REL2
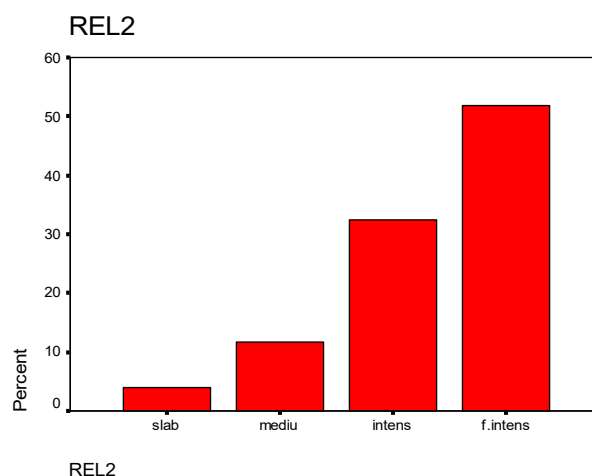
4.2.4. the subsistence factor (necessities of existence) manifests itself at a very intense level. In a constantly changing society, which does not offer security and certainty in terms of employment, as well as the level of remuneration, this factor is accentuated.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very weak	4	5.2	5.2	5.2
	Weak	11	14.3	14.3	19.5
	Medium	4	5.2	5.2	24.7
	Intensive	21	27.3	27.3	51.9
	Very intensive	37	48.1	48.1	100.0
	Total	77	100.0	100.0	
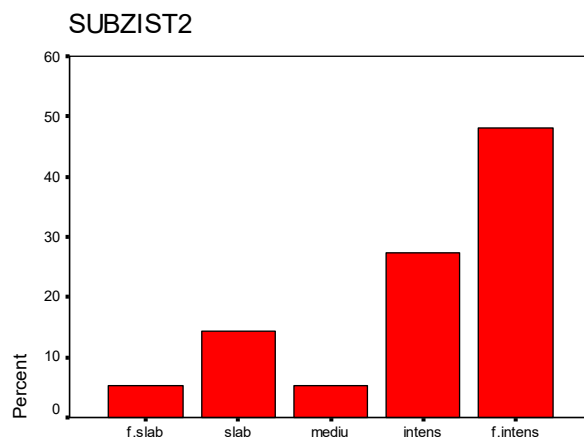
SUBZIST2

SUBZIST2

LEADING EXPERTIZ RELATION SUBZISTE * AGE

AGE		LEADING	EXPERTIZ	RELATION	SUBZISTE
20-39 years	Mean	43.92	51.81	51.42	47.31
	N	26	26	26	26
	Std. Deviation	5.628	4.733	4.254	8.840
40-49 years	Mean	43.14	52.29	53.19	50.62
	N	21	21	21	21
	Std. Deviation	6.002	4.734	2.542	5.554
50-60 years	Mean	46.13	53.73	53.57	50.60
	N	30	30	30	30
	Std. Deviation	5.563	2.766	3.070	5.392
Total	Mean	44.57	52.69	52.74	49.49
	N	77	77	77	77
	Std. Deviation	5.778	4.114	3.488	6.884

LEADING EXPERTIZ RELATION SUBZISTE * STUDII

STUDIES		LEADING	EXPERTIZ	RELATION	SUBZISTE
gimnaziale	Mean	43.83	51.33	54.00	54.83
	N	6	6	6	6
	Std. Deviation	6.616	6.683	3.347	1.472
liceale	Mean	44.61	53.31	53.33	49.78
	N	36	36	36	36
	Std. Deviation	6.077	4.160	3.481	7.627
universitare	Mean	44.66	52.29	51.91	48.29
	N	35	35	35	35
	Std. Deviation	5.482	3.544	3.425	6.252
Total	Mean	44.57	52.69	52.74	49.49
	N	77	77	77	77
	Std. Deviation	5.778	4.114	3.488	6.884

LEADING EXPERTIZ RELATION SUBZISTE * EMPLOYEES

EMPLOYEES		LEADING	EXPERTIZ	RELATION	SUBZISTE
Teaching	Mean	44.10	52.00	51.76	48.51
	N	41	41	41	41
	Std. Deviation	5.234	4.141	3.666	6.656
Non-teaching	Mean	45.11	53.47	53.86	50.61
	N	36	36	36	36
	Std. Deviation	6.373	3.996	2.939	7.060
Total	Mean	44.57	52.69	52.74	49.49
	N	77	77	77	77
	Std. Deviation	5.778	4.114	3.488	6.884

The statistical analysis showed significant differences as follows:

- between the three age groups in terms of the expertise factor:

In the 50-60 age group this factor is more pronounced, possibly due to the fact that there is a competition and a need for further assertion in the teams they are part of to have job security (to have a positive assessment in case of restriction of activity or the abolition of the post), to prove the skills possessed as a result of the experience gained over time, to keep up to date with all the methodological and logistical changes that come into contact with the evolution of society.

In the 20-39 age group this factor is lower, as there is job security due to more up-to-date studies and training, as well as the ability to cope with exams, superior to those of the 50-60 age group.

Group Statistics

	AGE	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
LEADING	40-49 years	21	43.14	6.002	1.310
	50-60 years	30	46.13	5.563	1.016
EXPERTIZ	40-49 years	21	52.29	4.734	1.033
	50-60 years	30	53.73	2.766	.505
RELATION	40-49 years	21	53.19	2.542	.555
	50-60 years	30	53.57	3.070	.561
SUBZISTE	40-49 years	21	50.62	5.554	1.212
	50-60 years	30	50.60	5.392	.984
REMUNERA	40-49 years	21	52.62	5.731	1.251
	50-60 years	30	52.33	6.930	1.265
CONDREL	40-49 years	21	39.24	3.727	.813
	50-60 years	30	39.37	5.136	.938
ORGCOM	40-49 years	21	48.86	5.552	1.212
	50-60 years	30	47.97	5.887	1.075

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
CONDUCER	Equal variances assumed	.170	.682	-1.829	49	.073	-2.99	1.635	-6.276	.295
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.804	41.047	.079	-2.99	1.657	-6.338	.357
EXPERTIZ	Equal variances assumed	5.207	.027	-1.376	49	.175	-1.45	1.052	-3.562	.667
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.259	29.536	.218	-1.45	1.150	-3.798	.902
RELATION	Equal variances assumed	.944	.336	-.461	49	.647	-.38	.816	-2.015	1.263
	Equal variances not assumed			-.477	47.524	.636	-.38	.789	-1.962	1.210
SUBZISTE	Equal variances assumed	.169	.683	.012	49	.990	.02	1.553	-3.102	3.140
	Equal variances not assumed			.012	42.376	.990	.02	1.561	-3.131	3.169
REMUNERA	Equal variances assumed	.623	.434	.155	49	.877	.29	1.840	-3.412	3.984
	Equal variances not assumed			.161	47.543	.873	.29	1.779	-3.292	3.864
CONDREL	Equal variances assumed	.367	.547	-.098	49	.922	-.13	1.313	-2.766	2.509
	Equal variances not assumed			-.104	48.909	.918	-.13	1.241	-2.623	2.366
ORGCOM	Equal variances assumed	.004	.948	.544	49	.589	.89	1.637	-2.399	4.180
	Equal variances not assumed			.550	44.749	.585	.89	1.620	-2.372	4.153

Group Statistics

	AGE	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
CONDUCER	20-39 years	26	43.92	5.628	1.104
	50-60 years	30	46.13	5.563	1.016
EXPERTIZ	20-39 years	26	51.81	4.733	.928
	50-60 years	30	53.73	2.766	.505
RELATION	20-39 years	26	51.42	4.254	.834
	50-60 years	30	53.57	3.070	.561
SUBZISTE	20-39 years	26	47.31	8.840	1.734
	50-60 years	30	50.60	5.392	.984
REMUNERA	20-39 years	26	55.35	7.838	1.537
	50-60 years	30	52.33	6.930	1.265
CONDREL	20-39 years	26	40.38	4.850	.951
	50-60 years	30	39.37	5.136	.938
ORGCOM	20-39 years	26	49.35	5.607	1.100
	50-60 years	30	47.97	5.887	1.075

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
CONDUCER	Equal variances assumed	.002	.965	-1.475	54	.146	-2.21	1.499	-5.215	.794
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.474	52.693	.147	-2.21	1.500	-5.219	.799
EXPERTIZ	Equal variances assumed	3.856	.055	-1.889	54	.064	-1.93	1.020	-3.970	.119

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
RELATION	Equal variances not assumed			-1.822	39.041	.076	-1.93	1.057	-4.063	.212
	Equal variances assumed	3.449	.069	-2.182	54	.033	-2.14	.982	-4.113	-.174
SUBZISTE	Equal variances not assumed			-2.133	44.799	.038	-2.14	1.005	-4.168	-.119
	Equal variances assumed	4.134	.047	-1.707	54	.093	-3.29	1.928	-7.158	.574
REMUNERA	Equal variances not assumed			-1.651	40.127	.106	-3.29	1.994	-7.321	.737
	Equal variances assumed	.710	.403	1.527	54	.133	3.01	1.973	-.943	6.969
CONDREL	Equal variances not assumed			1.513	50.404	.136	3.01	1.991	-.985	7.011
	Equal variances assumed	.193	.662	.759	54	.451	1.02	1.341	-1.671	3.707
ORGCOM	Equal variances not assumed			.762	53.579	.449	1.02	1.336	-1.660	3.696
	Equal variances assumed	.013	.908	.894	54	.375	1.38	1.543	-1.714	4.473
	Equal variances not assumed			.897	53.495	.374	1.38	1.538	-1.704	4.463

- between the three study groups in terms of expertise and organization - communication, it is noted that, for those with high school education, organization and communication is more important than for those with high school education, which demonstrates job stability, clarity the tasks they have to perform, as well as the high quality of the collaboration and communication relations within the

institution. The expertise factor is highlighted in the group with university studies compared to the group with high school studies, the former wanting to assert themselves more professionally, to obtain performance in the activity.

Group Statistics

	STUDII	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
CONDUCER	gimnaziale	6	43.83	6.616	2.701
	liceale	36	44.61	6.077	1.013
EXPERTIZ	gimnaziale	6	51.33	6.683	2.728
	liceale	36	53.31	4.160	.693
RELATION	gimnaziale	6	54.00	3.347	1.366
	liceale	36	53.33	3.481	.580
SUBZISTE	gimnaziale	6	54.83	1.472	.601
	liceale	36	49.78	7.627	1.271
REMUNERA	gimnaziale	6	51.17	5.947	2.428
	liceale	36	53.14	7.043	1.174
CONDREL	gimnaziale	6	39.67	2.582	1.054
	liceale	36	39.25	4.699	.783
ORGCOM	gimnaziale	6	51.67	2.160	.882
	liceale	36	48.14	5.653	.942

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
										95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
CONDUCER	Equal variances assumed	.237	.629	-.287	40	.776	-.78	2.711	-6.256	4.700
	Equal variances not assumed			-.270	6.487	.796	-.78	2.884	-7.709	6.154

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
EXPERTIZ	Equal variances assumed	1.996	.165	-.982	40	.332	-1.97	2.007	-6.029	2.085
	Equal variances not assumed			-.701	5.663	.511	-1.97	2.815	-8.961	5.017
RELATION	Equal variances assumed	.000	.985	.436	40	.665	.67	1.528	-2.421	3.754
	Equal variances not assumed			.449	6.933	.667	.67	1.484	-2.850	4.183
SUBZISTE	Equal variances assumed	3.147	.084	1.603	40	.117	5.06	3.155	-1.320	11.431
	Equal variances not assumed			3.595	38.821	.001	5.06	1.406	2.211	7.900
REMUNERA	Equal variances assumed	.173	.679	-.647	40	.522	-1.97	3.050	-8.136	4.191
	Equal variances not assumed			-.731	7.552	.487	-1.97	2.697	-8.256	4.311
CONDREL	Equal variances assumed	2.092	.156	.210	40	.834	.42	1.980	-3.584	4.417
	Equal variances not assumed			.317	11.541	.757	.42	1.313	-2.457	3.290
ORGCOM	Equal variances assumed	6.713	.013	1.498	40	.142	3.53	2.356	-1.233	8.289
	Equal variances not assumed			2.734	19.327	.013	3.53	1.290	.830	6.226

Group Statistics

	STUDII	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
CONDUCER	gimnaziale	6	43.83	6.616	2.701
	universitare	35	44.66	5.482	.927
EXPERTIZ	gimnaziale	6	51.33	6.683	2.728
	universitare	35	52.29	3.544	.599
RELATION	gimnaziale	6	54.00	3.347	1.366
	universitare	35	51.91	3.425	.579
SUBZISTE	gimnaziale	6	54.83	1.472	.601
	universitare	35	48.29	6.252	1.057
REMUNERA	gimnaziale	6	51.17	5.947	2.428
	universitare	35	54.11	7.210	1.219
CONDREL	gimnaziale	6	39.67	2.582	1.054
	universitare	35	40.11	4.945	.836
ORGCOM	gimnaziale	6	51.67	2.160	.882
	universitare	35	48.71	6.013	1.016

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
CONDUCER	Equal variances assumed	.170	.682	-1.829	49	.073	-2.99	1.635	-6.276	.295
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.804	41.047	.079	-2.99	1.657	-6.338	.357
EXPERTIZ	Equal variances assumed	5.207	.027	-1.376	49	.175	-1.45	1.052	-3.562	.667

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.259	29.536	.218	-1.45	1.150	-3.798	.902
RELATION	Equal variances assumed	.944	.336	-.461	49	.647	-.38	.816	-2.015	1.263
	Equal variances not assumed			-.477	47.524	.636	-.38	.789	-1.962	1.210
SUBZISTE	Equal variances assumed	.169	.683	.012	49	.990	.02	1.553	-3.102	3.140
	Equal variances not assumed			.012	42.376	.990	.02	1.561	-3.131	3.169
REMUNERA	Equal variances assumed	.623	.434	.155	49	.877	.29	1.840	-3.412	3.984
	Equal variances not assumed			.161	47.543	.873	.29	1.779	-3.292	3.864
CONDREL	Equal variances assumed	.367	.547	-.098	49	.922	-.13	1.313	-2.766	2.509
	Equal variances not assumed			-.104	48.909	.918	-.13	1.241	-2.623	2.366
ORGCOM	Equal variances assumed	.004	.948	.544	49	.589	.89	1.637	-2.399	4.180
	Equal variances not assumed			.550	44.749	.585	.89	1.620	-2.372	4.153

4.3. Correlation study

In order to reveal the way in which the motivational dominants interact and the factors that determine the level of professional satisfaction, the computerized calculation of the Pearson statistical correlation coefficients was performed.

Correlations

		LEA-DING	EXPERTISE	RELA-TIONS	SUBZIS-TENŢĂ	REMUN E RARE	CONDUCE RE/ RELAŢ.	ORG COM	SG
LEADING	Pearson Correlation	1	.496(**)	.380(**)	.010	-.287(*)	-.122	-.170	-.236(*)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.001	.929	.011	.290	.139	.039
	N	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	77
EXPERTIZ	Pearson Correlation	.496(**)	1	.576(**)	.278(*)	.073	.084	.027	.070
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.014	.527	.468	.814	.543
	N	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	77
RELATION	Pearson Correlation	.380(**)	.576(**)	1	.268(*)	.109	.112	-.012	.081
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	.	.018	.348	.332	.920	.484
	N	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	77
SUBZISTE	Pearson Correlation	.010	.278(*)	.268(*)	1	-.034	.089	-.033	-.001
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.929	.014	.018	.	.772	.443	.776	.996
	N	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	77
REMUNERA	Pearson Correlation	-.287(*)	.073	.109	-.034	1	.631(**)	.618(**)	.895(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	.527	.348	.772	.	.000	.000	.000
	N	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	77
CONDREL	Pearson Correlation	-.122	.084	.112	.089	.631(**)	1	.622(**)	.839(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.290	.468	.332	.443	.000	.	.000	.000
	N	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	77
ORGCOM	Pearson Correlation	-.170	.027	-.012	-.033	.618(**)	.622(**)	1	.858(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.139	.814	.920	.776	.000	.000	.	.000
	N	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	77
SG	Pearson Correlation	-.236(*)	.070	.081	-.001	.895(**)	.839(**)	.858(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.039	.543	.484	.996	.000	.000	.000	.
	N	77	77	77	77	77	77	77	77

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

For the subjects where the needs of expertise are manifested, the needs of relationships and those of leadership are also important.

The level of general satisfaction depends on all the factors investigated (organization, material and moral rewards, chances of promotion, interpersonal climate).

CHAPTER V: Conclusions

From the data obtained, it was found that there is an average level of general satisfaction in terms of remuneration and promotion, an above average level in terms of interpersonal relationships and leadership, as well as organization and communication.

It was found that the dominant motivational manifests itself at a higher level.

There are significant differences between the three study groups and age in terms of expertise, organization and communication.

When comparing the satisfaction and motivation on the criteria of professional categories (didactic and non-didactic), no differences were found, the groups presenting similarities.

The results do not confirm the research hypotheses, but give us a coherent and consistent picture of some benchmarks for improving job satisfaction and especially for building motivation.

For the motivational factor it is recommended to implement an employee counseling program to analyze on a personal level what is important for them to feel professionally motivated. It is known that a large part of the employees bring to work their personal problems which are reflected in their attitude towards work, in the way they relate to colleagues and clients, as well as in their work performance. An annual assessment must be designed to identify employee needs. It is possible to implement as a system of understanding the departments the rotation of the positions and last but not least the creation by the managers of a familiar organizational work climate for the psychic comfort of the employees, as well as for their retention.

Other recommendations refer to training programs that can develop skills and abilities necessary for the leadership process, such as those related to strategic thinking, team development, interpersonal communication, effective delegation, effective meetings. In order to make the current work more attractive, motivating, it is recommended to delegate responsibilities, enrich the positions, involve the employees in the decision-making process at the level of the position or department. For the promotion factor: the correct establishment of the job hierarchy, the elaboration of training programs for employees.

Through the results of this study, as well as the proposals made for some of the critical issues presented, the manager can begin a careful analysis within the institution and then develop directions for action to

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215

People are the ones who generate the value of an organization, all the other factors having only latent potential.

From this perspective, managers must focus their efforts on finding ways to increase job satisfaction, as well as the proper motivation of employees.

The present study makes direct contributions to the institution, and as future directions can be developed internal tools for employee evaluation, as well as the application of questionnaires that reflect the organizational climate and job satisfaction.

In order to improve the factors of dissatisfaction and motivation, some recommendations can be made based on the factors that are visible for job dissatisfaction. It is quite difficult for the remuneration factor to make changes in this regard, given that salaries in education are set at the national level.

For the organization and communication factor, it is recommended to clearly define the tasks of each one, the workload, the creation of a communication link with the employees both vertically and horizontally, the organization of thematic meetings every two weeks, the implementation of the feedback system. professional and moral from superiors. It is important for a manager to know how to organize and get employees to accomplish what the organization has set out to do.

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CARE, SUPPORT, AND MENTORING. THE TUTORING EXPERIENCE OF THE FLORENTINE STUDENTS FOR STUDENTS PROJECT

Rossella CERTINI[54]

Abstract: The focus of the paper is to present the educational tutoring activity carried out by the Students4Studentes association of Florence (Italy). The paper starts with a theoretical reflection on the importance of educational care and the concept of tutoring. After, it develops the topics related to the tutoring actions that are carried out in primary school. Students4Students is a tutoring project dedicated to primary school students and the tutoring activities are done by volunteer university students, who take care of the needs of the little ones. The paper shows the status of the project and the planned future actions about tutoring.

Key words: Care; Tutoring; Education; Primary School; S4S Project

1. To Take Care of ...

The tutoring action involves the problem of professional training and especially, as far as we are concerned, in the educational field.

Within a complex and articulated network of work, educational, political, economic, but also recreational activities, the figure of the tutor today is increasingly mentioned and requested. A kind of supporter (mentor), with specific professional skills concerning the disciplinary sphere, but also the communicative/relational dimension, that is so central in the support and care actions, both individually and collectively.

If we insert the term tutor as a keyword, in the various browsers, we find it declined in the most varied activities and situations: road tutor (electronic tool to monitor the speed of motor vehicles), banking and financial tutor, sports tutor and, finally, the school and educational tutor. Surely, in the first of the cases mentioned here, the emotional and communicative sphere is non-existent, since it involves a machine, but this confirms the current tendency to use the term tutor in the various and, sometimes, not very appropriate ways.

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217

Currently, in Italy, there is a philosophical tutoring platform called Socrates which, paradoxically, has transformed the Socratic action of Care (the maieutic form of being there; Heidegger and Sartre), into a "virtual" tool, a "non-being" which – in many sectors – is becoming the most important form of communication and training.

A brief immersion in the Greek-classical culture reminds us how the *paidagogos* had the task of accompanying the child to school, waited for him until the lessons were finished and was concerned that nothing serious would happen to his protege. He helped him with his schoolwork and taught him good manners, while maintaining a strict and controlling attitude. He was a real tutor who took care of the development of young people so that they could one day become citizens of the *Polis*.

To learn a method on how to approach knowledge and disciplines; to practice the act of thinking and going beyond the technical vision of the events; to develop moral, ethical and justice qualities, to live in moderation and harmony while learning how to be a good citizen; to improve one's life and for the good of others: each young man, accompanied by his tutor, had the task of aspiring to the achievement of "good political education".

The proxemic positioning is inherent in this idea of accompaniment, which has a theoretical and practical formulation marked by a particular way of being and acting of the subjects involved in the process of trans-formation and learning.

Even in its etymology the term tutor refers to actions such as defending and protecting, guarding, and helping, because it derives from the Latin verb *tutari*, or rather from its intensive form *tuéri*, and gives shape to a series of actions that place the person at the center of intentional and constructive experiences.

We provide specific educational and relational skills and competences to avoid the disappearance of "other human perspectives", within a social and economic landscape that is becoming increasingly competitive and selective every day. The functions of a tutor within a professional training and education process are obviously diversified and may concern organizational coordination, connection and integration between learning, evaluation, and monitoring of the same processes. He can also play the role of a consultant in synergy with experts from another sector (connection), developing activities as a mediator, to create an ethical/scientific network of exchange. It is also true that everyone could develop Care actions towards others and the world, using their own resources and abilities to facilitate the construction of a freer and more democratic community, according to the Morinian principles of planetary citizenship. Being a tutor and practicing tutoring does not mean carrying out exclusively professional actions: it means taking on civil and social responsibility, for the good of the individual and of the collective and is, therefore, an ontologically and radically pedagogical action.

In adult education, it is not enough to talk about a broad training offer, as if to indicate a deep analysis of needs: it is necessary to look above all at the quality of the proposals, methodologies and activities designed to retrain and relaunch the principle of lifelong learning.

It becomes essential to rethink the learning and training techniques with reference to a variegated and complex anthropological and cultural framework. Once again, the role of the tutor and the tutoring actions can be successful in making the educational activities carried out with adults, more usable and closer to their experiences. In cases involving the process of redefining one's professional, social, and civil identity, a peer tutoring could facilitate the construction of models related to active learning, which can offer adults adequate time and tools for their personal needs.

In this context, the tutor becomes a facilitator and a guide capable of motiving the adults during training and of creating an inter-experiential communication system. This can be an operational and reference model for other training systems, not least in the school world, where the figure of the tutor, in these first twenty years of the new millennium, has become a point of strength and reference.

2. Care, School, and Tutoring Actions During the Pandemic

According to the documents and laws of the Italian Ministry of Education, Universities and Research with reference to the Department for the education and training system, the figure of the tutor teacher is established to work alongside the newly hired colleagues, who have obtained the permanent role in the school. The tutor teacher has the task of facilitating all the activities of colleagues during the trial year and supervising the operations carried out based on professional dynamics.

The training and support activities will mainly be carried out in person, but there are also digital platforms offered by INDIRE (National Institute for Documentation, Innovation, Educational Research). These are useful for creating a virtual space where the information acquired can be shared and where it is possible to build places for dialogue and professional development.

This professional has the task of "strengthening" the skills of newly hired teachers, accompanying, and facilitating, with specific actions (at the didactic and educational levels), the communication processes within the school world (Channing, J; Okada, Naomi C., 2020). There are specific phases that characterize the activity of the tutor teacher (from the first insertion to the monitoring, up to the construction of shared practices for the improvement of the didactic and pedagogical action), but the common thread of this system is the relational dimension (not to mention empathy which is a term, today, very inflated and interpreted with superficiality). These activities, which have a ministerial matrix and concern school of every order and grade, are not applied only in Italy, but are

shared, at a European level, by many countries. This underlines the common intention of activating a "training pact" between teachers, not only to improve the reciprocal professional profile, but to improve the quality of school life, also and above all for students. Assuming positive and proactive attitudes, communicating through a common and shared emotional language, activating investigation and research processes, transforming students into scholars, and focusing on creativity inherent in the developmental age, could be "good practices" that have an effect on both the quality of school education and on specific learning.

The tutoring actions have a transversal objective that we can summarize with the term inclusion.

A teacher able to better manage the spaces and times of his own teaching, who knows how to acknowledge the class and the group as privileged tools and places for growth and development for all, who knows how to identify the potential of each student (without neglecting the frailties, but also individual skills), developing a constructive and permanent dialogue, could develop a strong professional motivation and authentically play his role in the school.

The tutoring action is certainly a Care action that characterizes the conscience of those who act towards "who" and, in any case, an emotional relationship arises. "Whoever takes care is, above all, attentive; that is, he listens and adopts an open and receptive attitude towards the recipient of the treatment "(Noddings, in Mortari, Camerella, 2014, p. 29).

This type of attention and listening gives value to reciprocal actions which, however, do not concern only the teachers, but should live in everyone's daily life, emphasizing the well-being of the person in all its spheres and with its many variables, not least the students.

If tutoring is envisaged for teachers aimed at improving their professional and human performance, why not think about it also for students who, especially in the last two years, have experienced moments of confinement and emotional distance from school and classmates? Why delegate their training path only to the DAD (online teaching), trying not to subtract time and resources from school annuities? Why not think about tutoring and emotional and pedagogical care also for the youngest?

This is a process that goes beyond traditional teaching, but which activates a series of communication and relational channels aimed at the well-being and self-esteem of the staff. Why not create a network between people and experts, which gives voice to their needs and is sensitive to the problems arising among young people, linked to the distancing due to the pandemic which has made them increasingly confused and disoriented by this virtual way of thinking about training? I am not referring to peer support, but to tutoring actions developed by university students (and others), who have made themselves available to carry out the function of motivating tutor during the difficult moments of distance learning. The Italian *Students for Students Project* (S4S) has this objective.

3. The Educational Project Students4Students (S4S)

Students4Students (S4S) was initiated in Florence and aims to deal with various school related problems that have developed since the lockdown periods due to the Covid19 pandemic.

Schools, but especially students and families, have had great difficulty in managing all distance learning, especially in those contexts with evident vulnerability. The DAD immediately turned out to be a tool that was not easy to manage and not at all democratic, because not all students, and their families, had the possibility to access an internet network or to have a device to work with. Schools have taken on the most urgent needs, but this sudden change in communication methods, the anxiety of not knowing how to perfectly manage the tools and the need for many children and young people, to take advantage of special attention and compensatory tools, has made the school process difficult and cumbersome, often weak and without good results.

Students4Student has the aim of supporting, with volunteer tutors, the most fragile children, to support their learning stages, but above all to instill trust and positivity in students and in the family group. The project began in March 2020, during the pandemic and the lockdown, following an objective problem linked to online learning. Many children were unable to connect during online lessons and the reasons were many: difficulty in finding electronic devices; inability to use work tools; cultural and social fragility of families who were not always able to help their children in these virtual activities, etc ... Thus, a first phase of the project started, which the educators defined as "artisanal" and thanks to a well-organized word of mouth, through social media and other informal communication channels, a small group of volunteers made themselves available for tutoring primary school students. The volunteers were students at the University of Florence who mainly belong to the degree course in Primary Education, but there were also many students studying to become Professional Educators. Students who came from other university courses (for example economics or law) and who perceived the importance of putting themselves at the service of those who, in this very complex phase of our history, manifest evident difficulties in staying "connected" also joined this initiative and responded to the schools' requests.

In the first phase, 60 tutoring activities were carried out by 47 students, and everything took place remotely, using the computer. The tutors taught the children not only how to use electronic tools, but they remained with them, "even if virtually", in the moment of re-elaboration of the contents to be carried out privately at home. The support in doing homework and in reworking the lessons in DAD was essential in order not to weaken the linguistic, logical-mathematical and communication skills, even if the lack of proxemics inhibits the implementation of emotional skills.

The pandemic has imposed important limits and the birth of Students4Students has made it possible to make the best use of new technologies in trying to transform the impossibility of carrying out school activities in person, into a "resource". From a pedagogical and didactic point of

view, the school should represent the place par excellence where the many peculiarities meet, dialogue, compare, learn to know each other. It is where emotions take shape and meet everyday life. However, such a sudden and devastating event, COVID19, has called our whole existence into question and the school was able to maintain its educational role - at least partially - thanks also to new technologies and online lessons.

A strong anxiety-inducing component developed in the most insecure and uncertain children (fear of not fully understanding the messages of the teachers, inability to decipher the requests and didactic proposals, etc.) and the students4Students volunteer tutors intervened mainly on these emotional aspects. Furthermore, they also acted on the learning front, as the screen can inhibit interpersonal dynamics, causing moments of discouragement and disorientation. Among the most evident and immediate consequences related to DAD, there is the loss of the "body", a physical, emotional, communicative loss, and this certainly creates a gap in the training process, which needs to be constantly accompanied and nourished by educational experiences targeted and enjoyed through distance learning. The images of the teachers do not always come in a clear and understandable way, and the same happens to the words. The classmates lose tangibility and a movement, a gesture that could help the students to grasp a concept more quickly and correctly, remains suspended in a cold and unusual virtual world. However, the DAD allowed the school to continue its path and turned out to be the most widespread solution on a global level. The volunteer tutor, therefore, created an intentionally educational and formative link between the messages coming out of the video and the need for attention and care required by young students.

The S4S project changed over the weeks and months, managing to involve more and more volunteer tutors to answer the growing demands of families. Starting from April 2020 an agreement was activated between the University of Florence and S4S, with the patronage of the Councilor for Education and Welfare of the Municipality of Florence, expanding the field of intervention of educators and starting a very important second phase. Specialized training began for the acquisition of skills necessary for carrying out the tutoring activity in the emergency and precarious conditions expressed by children and their families. It is true that experience and empirical action help a lot in acquiring new forms of knowledge and new skills, but the risk of improvising educational methods and communication techniques could weaken the process of supporting the person, especially from an emotional and relational point of view. It is about facing the specific requests coming from subjects with dyslexia or dyscalculia or other issues with the right pedagogical, didactic, and clinical skills that a volunteer tutor may not have.

Specialized training becomes fundamental and essential to build work teams, where you can share your experiences and reflect on pedagogical planning and on the techniques to be put into practice, inside and outside the school.

S4S is an important and innovative pedagogical project which, over time, has turned to different partners to implement the potential and interventional skills of the group of educators and individual tutors. For these reasons, when Students4Students began to grow, it became necessary to guarantee targeted and qualified training for tutors, which could give them operational indications and stimulate points for thought. The training course, which precedes the start of tutoring, aims to allowing university students to familiarize themselves with appropriate knowledge and skills, considered fundamental for the educational relationship they will establish with young students at primary schools. It is also a process that prevents tutors from becoming demotivated or disoriented but, on the contrary, can give them greater security and make them feel at ease when meeting children.

The University of Florence has supported this initiative thanks to some teachers who have created targeted modules and interventions, involving postgraduates and social cooperatives operating in research, training, and clinical intervention. The training modules were carried out online with the common goal of maintaining an interactive, dynamic and cooperative atmosphere. It is a further opportunity for discussion, in addition to the meetings held monthly between the tutor group and the team, in which a lot of space is given not only to questions, but to a real dialogue between trainers and university staff. We can say that an original model of Educational Care has been created. A model that connects more than one institution (University, School, Families, Educational Associations, etc ...) and that immediately presents some points of valuable value: the voluntary action to support the tutor; the development of transversal skills by the pedagogical team; the development of specific skills that affect the teaching and self-esteem of the most fragile subjects; the implementation of strategies shared by the educational team. These activities are supported by sponsors outside the original group, for example the University, but also other public and private entities in the Florentine area.

With S4S the concept of tutoring has paved the way for new forms of collaboration and support in favor of the scholastic well-being of the youngest and the implementation of the quality of their life.

4. "No Truly Liberating Pedagogy Can Keep Itself Away from the Oppressed ..."

Articles The words that compose the title of this paragraph are by Paulo Freire and indicate what we should really do by virtue of a concrete ideal of cognitive democracy. Edgar Morin has very often recovered this concept and made it into an epistemological construct of his understanding of human formation. "Freedom and the possibility of accessing knowledge are configured in the concept of cognitive democracy, a process of educational care that starts from the intention, understood as a phenomenological category, to re-establish the practices and places of education, to allow everyone

the opportunity to approach, to know and cultivate one's own thinking and being in the world" (Certini, 2021, p. 41). This exemplifies the primary objective of S4S: that no one is deprived of the ability to access knowledge, while being aware that every methodology, every educational practice, every teaching will need to be continually renewed and critically rethought. The perfect solution does not exist in any context and for any situation.

S4S is a healthy project, that is implementing its mentoring and accompaniment practices. The training of tutors and all participants is taking on an increasingly professional and scientific aspect to improve performance and to obtain better results for the scholastic success (but not only) of younger students.

What is the state of the art of the project and future developments?

1. During these pandemic years, dozens and dozens of interventions have been made in favor of primary school students. This denotes interest in this type of activity and confidence in the tutoring process by all participants (primarily families). An appreciated and esteemed work, which has brought good results both in specific learning, but also in the emotional and relational sphere.

2. The work of the schools was fundamental in intercepting those children to whom the tutoring project was proposed. Good educational practices always start from the fruitful collaboration between all the partners involved, starting with the school that can detect the greatest difficulties of children. Therefore, the good collaboration between S4S and the school is one of the central elements for the growth and development of the project.

3. S4S volunteers sent anonymous questionnaires to families and teachers to find out how much the project was appreciated, considered significant and important. The results were very positive especially from the families, who felt supported in this difficult path along with their children.

The tutors, on the other hand, highlighted communication problems with families, many of which of foreign origin. Often, they spoke with only one parent, with great difficulty in understanding each other because of the language.

Finding the tools or internet connection was also often an obstacle, and the tutors pointed out, in their answers, that these were initial circumstances, and that the situation has greatly improved over time.

4. The work of S4S is very complex and intricate. In recent years, it has also made use of experts in the educational field, psychologists and professional educators, a real team of experts to analyze well the data collected,41 and proceed with the case study as a survey technique and educational methodology, to implement the skills and knowledge of the tutors.

5. Starting from October 2022, the University of Florence will organize specific training courses for tutors. "The training meetings will be divided as follows:

a – Cultural and psycho-pedagogical skills

b – Technical-professional skills

c – Methodological and didactic skills

d – Relational skills

e – Reflective skills

The task of University of Florence's teachers will be precisely that of promoting inclusive and updated attitudes both in the didactic and educational fields, using adequate communicative-relational strategies (Debate, Cooperative learning; Focus Group; Flipped classroom, etc.) and teaching techniques adapted to the developmental age of primary school 1) Frontal lesson; 2) Demonstration; 3) Tutorial approach; 4) Discussion; 5) Case study; 6) Group learning; 7) Problem solving; 8) Simulation; 9) Role playing; 10) Project; 11) Brainstorming. These actions will be accompanied by monitoring and evaluation activities of the various phases of the project.

We can say that the project is growing continuously, and the works improve with practice, exercise and constant training: work in progress. The team working on tutoring is also aware of the risks that digital area entails (addiction, emotional deprivation, confinement, inertia, addiction to the virtual world, etc.) and for this reason one of the great objectives is precisely to be able to "transform" these remote activities into face-to-face actions, but to do so it will take many new resources and massive help from city institutions. Telematic infiltration phenomena can also occur. Among the most widespread phenomena, especially in the last two years, we find zoombooming, characterized by people who introduce themselves in video conferences, even in platforms used by children. The tutors also have the task of carrying out legal control activities and reporting to the authorities all actions of violation of privacy, especially for the protection of children.

Students4Students was born with the intention of making a very small change within the world of the school. It was an experiment, of which it was not possible to predict certain results. Undoubtedly, the changes made have been minimal, perhaps imperceptible, but there have been some, and this is great. This means collaborating to ensure well-being starting from little things, from communion with other people, from wanting to develop one's qualities and attitudes. It also means giving greater value to that affective dimension that allows the subject to emerge for the construction of a large community. The educational work of S4S is important and involves many specific areas of childhood life. The active participation of all the people involved is essential in order to work better on all these dynamics and problems. No one is excluded from the process of growth and well-being of the youngest and one of the objectives for the next few years is to expand the project to other Italian realities.

Not only, S4S is the beginning of a research and work proposal also in the European context, through Erasmus actions and through the collaboration with other educational associations, universities, and schools. European citizenship is based on shared good practices and practicing cognitive democracy

through support work for the most vulnerable, which means implementing the best possible democratic educational actions.

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Students4Students

https://students4students.it/

Volontari per l'educazione – Save the Children

https://www.savethechildren.it/partecipa/volontari/volontari-per-educazione

Obiectivul general al proiectului

Asigurarea mentoratului profesional pe durata întregii cariere didactice, în sistemul de învățământ preuniversitar, prin crearea unui sistem național coerent și fiabil de formare profesională și de dezvoltare a competenței didactice, ca formare psihopedagogică, necesare ocupării și exercitării unei funcții didactice precum și obținerii performanței pedagogice în învățământul preuniversitar din România, în activitatea de predare/formare și în activitatea de management educațional, în contextul procesului global de digitalizare a sistemelor de educație.