



## **Again, on the Continuous (re)Training of the Teacher**

### **Review of the book Strategii moderne de formare a cadrelor didactice pentru predarea antreprenoriatului [Modern Strategies for Teacher Training on Teaching Entrepreneurship]**

(Viorel Robu, Liliana Mățã, Roxana Mironescu, Cluj University Press, 2020)

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#### **Abstract**

*The aim of this paper is to present the content of a new volume published at Cluj University Press. It connects two areas of knowledge / interest of maximum relevance: modern strategies for teacher training and respectively entrepreneurship and teacher training for its teaching. The paper presents the essential aspects of the content of each chapter. Special attention is paid to Chapter III, where the strategies considered by the authors of the volume the most relevant are presented and described, in detail and with examples. The volume presented is imposed by the need for approach, topicality and the expected impact of efficiency, for teachers, students and wider categories of trainers.*

**Key words:** Entrepreneurship; strategies; teacher education

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In the volume of essays on social pedagogy entitled *Educația, profesorul și vremurile* [Education, the teacher and the times] (2009), Gabriel Albu addresses, in his already renowned Socratic manner, several problems specific to the spiritual universe of the teacher, caught in the grip of many trends and dilemmas: bureaucratization, centering on understanding, on problems and methods, the relationship with the students' parents, communication, mirror and self-formation, psychological obstacles in the initial training, one's dreams, the lesson of honesty, educational contagion (pp. 159-255). Some of these topics are older (the relationship with students' parents, communication), others newer in form and/or content (focusing on understanding, problems and methods, mirror and self-formation, psychological obstacles in initial training, dreams, lessons of honesty, educational contagion). Beyond the holistic nature of the approach to the issue and the interactions between them, the interest for the teacher (quite rarely targeted in current pedagogical writings, exceeded by focusing on the student !!!), with his/her states, ideals, and values, in the context and the restrictions of contemporary society. Resuming the reading of this editorial emergence brought us, in a strange way, close to the content of this volume, although they are extremely different. We have the diffuse feeling that the author's plea for "the teacher in fact, not so much the one who knows and claims to know much, as the one who understands (and wants to understand) as much as possible" (2009, p. 175) is the perfect opening for the **Strategii moderne de formare a cadrelor didactice pentru predarea antreprenoriatului** [Modern Strategies for Teacher Training on Teaching Entrepreneurship]. Here are several arguments in this regard:

The topic of lecture notes is a very current one, following the evolution and requirements of the labor market in general, and of the Romanian one in particular (a competitive, imperfect, contractual, strongly segmented market, with a high degree of heterogeneity, characterized by a certain administrated rigidity), with the training needs of various categories of actors (teachers, trainers, entrepreneurs, managers, instructors, researchers, mentors) who interact/will interact with young people from the perspective of entrepreneurship education. It responds to one of the purposes of education, that of preparing teachers and, implicitly, pupils/students for the present time and, relatively, future, with specific requirements, sometimes unknown, from the perspective of their socio-professional integration (social and economic functions) to equip them with the set of skills needed to solve current and future problems. *Its theme is very well-identified, calibrated, and developed*, the 4 parts of the volume correlate fundamental aspects of the process of forming the set of skills integrated into entrepreneurial competence.

The lecture notes open with **Part I**, concerning which we consider as *very interesting and intelligent the placement*, in the first part of the approach, of the perspective of *using the computer in entrepreneurship education*, with the punctual analysis of some sensitive and relevant aspects for this approach: integration of computer and information and communication technologies in instructive-formative activities in the field of entrepreneurship; communication and collaboration tools in entrepreneurship education; issues related to the use of the computer in ethical and security conditions. The entire analysis performed here is connected with and performed by reference to the specifics of the global information society, with all its defining aspects and, especially, with all the specific elements of impact. Fine conceptual analyzes, from notions with a relatively narrower scope (online training) to integrative notions (integrated learning system) pragmatically substantiate the subsequent approach as well as the proposed applications. Of real utility for the knowledge and understanding of the complexity of the entrepreneurial training process are the European and international projects presented and capitalized as arguments for the integration of computer and information and communication technologies in the field of education. The presentation of the strengths and risks associated with the use of the computer, as well as the information and communication technologies in the

instructive-educational process carried out in the pre-university education system and the academic environment. This is relevant not only from a cognitive point of view but especially from the perspective of the impact of the analysis on the modeling of a balanced, ethical, wise attitude of the user of these tools, beyond any aims he would pursue. We consider that the presentation of tools necessary for individual presentations (PowerPoint application, SmartArt illustrations, Excel, Access, the introduction of hyperlinks to web pages, audio-video clips, dynamic applications) expresses a pragmatic approach to the proposed content. These are complemented in the same spirit by substantial analyses on Internet-based communication and collaboration tools, especially those of the social-media type: websites such as Facebook, Google+, MySpace, ResearchGate, Twitter; blogging, microblogging, social networks - Google+, Facebook, Flickr, hi5, Instagram, LinkedIn, MySpace, Netlog, QZone, Pinterest, Twitter, Twoo, WhatsApp, YouTube; online tools that allow instant communication (for example, Google Talk or Skype) or those used for communication and collaboration purposes - Academia.edu, wiki web applications, BibMe, CiteULike, Dropbox, Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, myExperiment, ResearchGate, Scribd, Skype, Twitter, WebCT, WordPress; sites used for social networking purposes (Facebook, Messenger).

They are accompanied, in the same spirit of moderation and balance in use, by highlighting the advantages and limitations in use. In the context in which the crisis of values has a global and universal impact, it was expected, inevitably, that ethical issues would also affect the field of integration and use of the computer in education. The idea that "Science without consciousness is only a ruin of the soul" is all the more relevant today, in a world hard to imagine without a computer and the facilities it offers, than when it was formulated. This explains the development of ethics in the field of Internet use. Punctual cases of violations of the principles and rules of ethics applied in the field of modern information and communication technologies increase the practical value of the editorial offer and the interest both in the "clean" use of applications and in the measures to be taken for young users (if not, of course, all users!) not to violate the ethical rules in force. The entire issue related to copyright and the Law on the protection of computer programs in Romania comes as a logical, necessary, and extremely useful development of previous analyses, being integrated into the dimension of information security management.

**Part II** of the volume significantly deepens its action, practical-formative dimension. Significant is the fact that the entire proposed training has as a theoretical benchmark the personal development of the teacher (university), to which the local literature does not always pay the necessary attention. For example, in the continuing education programs for the teaching career (teacher certification, 1<sup>st</sup> grade, and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade) there are NO highlighted competencies, topics, or areas of interest in this direction except at the level of the final exam where only for the professional skills of the beginner teacher/primary school teacher/preschool teacher is highlighted the competence *2.8 Career and personal development management*. It goes without saying that in this context personal development remains, rather, an individual approach, subsumed by the effort of lifelong learning, individualized as weight, strategies, and impact by reference to their motivation and resources of each teacher.

After a punctual and well-conducted analysis of the significance of the notion of personal development, accompanied by the underlining of the favorable effects of this approach, the presentation of some models of personal development is highlighted. The fact that they are accompanied by reflective and self-reflexive exercises allows the deepening of the dimension of self-knowledge for teachers and their identification of concrete ways of developing their personality. The component of maximum relevance and impact on personal development is the set of 6 methods and techniques of personal development analyzed theoretically, but especially illustrated with applications specially designed for teachers. They have the opportunity, in this context, to identify the specifics of these methods, to apply them to themselves, to form their ability to use them to later integrate them in the activities with the pupils/students involved in the

general education process, or, in particular, entrepreneurship education. The module ends, in the same pragmatic spirit, offering a model for developing the personal development plan.

**Part III** undertakes a natural logical approach to the issue that descends deductively and reaches the plan of maximum interest for teachers, namely that of modern teaching strategies used to develop skills in entrepreneurship. Recalling the notional content of some basic concepts such as method, procedure, interactive method, didactic strategy, didactic methodology, modernization of the didactic methodology ensures the scientific foundation of the applications proposed later. It is important to emphasize the interactive way of proposing these contents, including the theoretical ones, in full agreement with the promoted principles (an aspect rarely encountered in the training courses, especially those that have as target group the professors from the university environment). The stated intention of the author is to ensure an agreement between the formative approach and change (understood generically), the aspiration that "the teaching methodology be consistent with all changes and transformations in terms of education, educational content, new requirements of students and society", the desire for the learning process to become one with a "participatory, active and creative" dominant component.

The face-to-face comparative analyses of classical and modern teaching methods, of classical and interactive pedagogy, are meant to highlight the psychological, pedagogical, and social advantages of those in the second category, to trigger and support the attitude of attitudinal and methodological renewal of teachers, to unleash didactic creativity, to refine the formative practices, to generate the pleasure to collaborate, to amplify the effort of personal and professional development as well as the obtained results. The illustration of the classification criteria of the interactive methods allows the generation of a comprehensive picture of them as well as their integration in different categories, in which they can be placed or from which they can be easily selected by students.

The maximum interest is generated and supported by module IV, which describes a significant number of interactive methods and techniques for teaching entrepreneurship education. Inspired and very well operated, the selection of the presented methods was made according to criteria of formative relevance and possibility of efficient use promoted by Romanian authors, in accordance with the age particularities of the course users:

- 10 techniques based on the evocation of previous knowledge and experiences (Dulamă, 2002) - Think - Pair - Share with the version Think - Pair - Work in groups of four; One Minute Paper; Round robin; The Mad Hatter's Tea Party; Freewriting; Graffiti; The tree of ideas; Treasure Hunt or Find Someone Who Knows; Categorization;

- 19 techniques of mental construction of understanding through formulations of judgments and reasoning (Joița, 2007) - Organization of arguments; Diagram of supporting points of view; Diagram of writing an essay; The cactus of mistakes; Text mining; The "S" chain of interpretations; Deduction of consequences; Generative arrows; Reflective hat; The spider web of the arguments; Starfish; VENN diagram of concepts; Comparison matrix; Cause-effect graphic organizer; The cascade of questions; The double-entry journal; The flying saucer; The SWOT analysis; Applied cognitive map;

- 13 reflection techniques (Dulamă, 2002) - Quintet, Reflective writing exercises, Five-minute essay, Ten-minute essay, Essay with pros and cons, Foresight techniques, Colored cards, Assertion sorting, Synthesis, Small announcement advertising, Photolanguage technique, Riddles, the gallery tour;

- 5 methods of fixing and systematizing the knowledge and of verification / interactive alternative evaluation of the type of conceptual maps (Oprea, 2003) - The "spider web"; Hierarchical conceptual map; Linear conceptual map; Concept map systems as well as the Answer-Ask-Pass the ball method.

The diversity of methods and techniques presented, their increased degree of applicability, their full compatibility with the approach to entrepreneurship education turn them into action

anchors extremely useful for teachers. How a series of suggestions are generated and offered regarding the role of the university teacher in the integration of interactive methods expresses knowledge and methodological balance from the trainer. Among the most important aspects to be pursued in this context, we note: the achievement of a favorable climate for the application of interactive methods; generating and managing collaboration; organizing the learning atmosphere; encouraging mutual evaluation and self-evaluation; creating an educational climate in which to move from competition to collaboration. The author's questioning of the limits of the process of capitalizing on interactive methods correlated with the presentation of the conditions for effective collaborative learning demonstrates a realistic approach, focused on the beneficiary of the process and placed under the desideratum of dynamic personal development.

The content of **Part IV** is folded in an appropriate way to the size of the issue of entrepreneurship. One of the significant questions asked and urging reflection in this context is that of the certainty of the real career option in the field of entrepreneurship. If psychological or counseling approaches can help young people to (self) know and prepare for a decision and a career plan, through this last part of their volume they can have access to data necessary for their entrepreneurial training interactively, support of possible subsequent action. The proposed modules - starting a business, the team, the promotion policy, funding sources, the product concept, the marketing strategy, the business plan successively reveal significant aspects of the entrepreneurial course. Some of the social and psychosocial dimensions of the issue such as teamwork, team-building, entrepreneurship, defining features of the entrepreneur, advantages, and disadvantages of being an entrepreneur, aspects to avoid in entrepreneurial activity, personal presentation portfolio emphasizes the practical component, action, application of skills training.

“Facts give the rank of words”, as Gabriel Albu reminds us (op. cit, 2009, p. 208). In the same spirit, we expect the use of these lecture notes to produce the desired and expected positive effects, by capitalizing on it by known and unknown beneficiaries, attracted only by its intrinsic value (theoretical but especially applied).

## **References**

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