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## **Legitimizing the Educational Experience in the context of the Didactic Methodology**

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# Legitimizing the Educational Experience in the context of the Didactic Methodology

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## Abstract:

The didactic methodology reminds of the idea of an efficient functioning of the education process. In this way, the systemic perspective of the didactic methodology illustrates the way in which the educational experience transposed at the level of the teaching-learning-evaluating activity. Thus, the didactic courses of action initiated in the context of the educational reality emphasize an image that legitimizes the experience of learning itself in general. Therefore, from a pragmatic perspective, the didactic methodology represents a transposition of the educational strategies in relevant learning situations and adequate (self) training actions.

## Keywords:

didactic activity, educational methodology, didactic methodology, didactic technology, educational experience

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### 1.1. Didactic methodology and educational model

The acceptance of an educational model generates at the level of the education process didactic strategies meant to ensure the optimization and the success of the going on didactic activities. Within the didactic activity the specific forms of organization are given by the ways of planning the education process. In this context, the concept of *didactic activity* must be understood, representing an organization form of the instructive process through which one tries to put into practice from a formal and non-formal point of view the finalities assumed at an educational level. One must emphasize the fact that through these forms of organization characteristic in fact to the didactic activity one tries to make the binomial pupil/student-teacher as efficient as possible. There are obvious, from this perspective, at the level of the education process the different criteria of eligibility through which the didactic activities themselves become concrete.

The didactic activity stresses out a specific typology according to which one defines a certain value reference point. Thus, as a functional structure the didactic activity concentrates on certain epistemic capacities of understanding which offer the actors involved in this course of action specific modalities of approaching the educational strategies. Moreover, there are significant within the education process the methodological problems through which there are obvious certain didactic correspondences. In this sense, the involvement of the socio-educational actors acquires a utilitarian character. At the same time, the didactic activity generates "rivalries" and "paradigms" which allow "philosophical" interpretations meant to support relevant ideas referring to the didactic approach more or less.

The analysis of the didactic activity from the perspective of the "quality" concept allows an interpretation that reminds of the importance that certain social actors have in the initiated course of action. Moreover, their involvement in certain social environments represents a basic element in supporting the idea of social responsibility. An advanced didactic activity highlights pedagogical experiences through which the theoretical and conceptual problems remind of different approaches and understandings concerning the transmitted/received cognoscible structures. Once the differentiation of the axiological dimensions takes place the forms of manifestation of the didactic activity also become diverse. In this way, the educational actors' approach reminds of an understanding of the language from the perspective of the communicative act. This argumentative strategy represents in fact a fundamental form of the intersubjective relationship which makes possible the relating to the connection between the socio-educational actors.

In these conditions there are obvious the relationships among didactic-performance-quality at the level of the education process:

- The didactic activity supposes a discursive act where the communication plays an important role;
- Performance relates, on the one hand, to the educational actors and on the other hand, to the concretization of the communication process;
- Quality refers to the result of the involvement of the socio-educational actors in the education process and emphasizes a value dimension of the didactic activity at the same time.

Therefore, the benefit of such a paradigm reflects, in the context of the didactic activity, the educational strategies which involve a methodological consistency.

The analysis of such a situation resides in the fact that the activities initiated and unfolded in the education process emphasize an educational reality in a deep transformation. From this standpoint, we support the idea according to which the individual and collective behaviors tend towards models of social interaction which are in fact only generating values. Furthermore, these values are the result of the connection between the social and the educational reality (understood as socio-educational dimensions in a sequential rapport).

The didactic methodology reminds of the idea of a specific mode of approaching the learning-teaching-evaluating activity. The syntagma *didactic methodology* (Cucoș, 2002: 286) supposes a unitary understanding of the interactions between the didactic principles (which have normativity and are also orienteering) and the learning-teaching-evaluating methods (which are characterized through an execution act of the activity itself). Also through didactic methodology one understands "*the series of methods and procedures used in the process of teaching having at its basis a unitary conception concerning the teaching-learning act, the principles and the laws that governs it*" (Dumitru; Ungureanu, 2005: 225). Consequently, a didactic methodology supposes a theory on method concretized at the level of the practical action.

At the same time, through the "concretization" of the didactic methodology - which is understood as a "theory on the education methods (...) / group or totality of methods and procedures used in education" (Frumos, 2008: 150) - within the education process, on the one hand, it is emphasized a dynamic of the knowing process and on the other hand, the obtaining of some specific educational performances. In this sense, as far as the idea of methodology is concerned one should also mention the fact underlined in some specialty papers by some authors that the method must be differentiated from the methodology (Kopnin, 1972: 246).

This observation sends to a principle distinction of the approach possibilities of a specific method when a certain scientific approach is tackled. Furthermore, there must be realized the distinction through which the methodology is seen, on the one hand from the perspective of education in

general (the methodology of education- in this case the methodology of education is understood as a constitutive branch of pedagogy and that is why it is also known under the name of *educational methodology*), and on the other hand, from the perspective of the education process related to the activities initiated in the private sense (teaching-learning-evaluating methodology - in this case, *the methodology of learning is understood as a constitutive branch of didactics* and that is why it is also known under the name of *didactic methodology*). It is obvious in this situation the understanding of the didactic from the perspective of the levels of organization specific to the education system: the education/ educating methods and the teaching-learning- evaluating methods).

An educational methodology is characterized by:

- *generality*: it relates to the general level of the education system;
- *scienticity*: it focuses on the creation of some reflective, critical-analytical competences and innovation of the educational practices: at the same time, it concentrates on the pedagogical-scientific research of the informational dimensions and content of a monodisciplinary, pluridisciplinary, interdisciplinary/ intradisciplinary and transdisciplinary nature.

A didactic methodology is characterized by:

- *dynamism*: the concretization of the objectives/ competences must be done in accordance with the components of the didactic process; this process must adapt to specific didactic situations; the dynamism of the didactic methodology depends to a great extent on the finalities of education in general and on the way in which the latter are perceived at the level of the education process;
- *conceptual transfer*: the understanding of a theory depends on the understanding of the used concepts and formalisms and on the other hand, on the way in which they are correlated and used at the level of the interdisciplinarity.

The substantiation of the education contents imposes that at the educational level the strategies assumed by the educational actors should have a systemic character. Thus, the formal aspects can correlate with the informal ones in accordance with the existent socio-educational context. Also, the reevaluation of the education content is possible through the didactic transposition, a state of fact which supposes the passing from the purely scientific understanding to the purely didactic one. Moreover, the content of education has a global, dynamic character (the informational content is mobile, it always enriches) and a stable one (the informational content is established for a determined period of time).

## 1.2 The didactic methodology, a fundamental component of the didactic technology

A didactic methodology relates from the perspective of the courses of action initiated, to the teaching-learning-evaluating activities. Thus, one should take into consideration the assurance of an optimal interaction between the concrete modalities of action and the strategies assumed at the level of the didactic approach. In this context, one can admit that a didactic methodology subordinates to the didactic technology, understood as an organized form of instruction in accordance with a certain structure of knowledge (concepts, theories, rules, laws, specific operations etc.). In conclusion, a didactic methodology regarded from the perspective of the didactic technology sets in a specific system of teaching-learning-evaluating. It relates to a conceptual-theoretical frame taking into account at the same time the assumed objectives (competences), it emphasizes a relationship of communication referring both to the binomial teacher-pupil / student and the binomial evaluator-evaluated.

The didactic process involves a series of cognitive and affective approaches. Thus, regarded as an integrating system, the didactic methodology supposes taking into consideration some research strategies and putting into practice the informational contents. From this point of view, a methodic is seen as a group of methods, procedures and techniques founded on pedagogical and/or didactic principles. In other words, a methodic generates a specific disciplinary dimension (the methodic of economics), and on the other hand, a specific conceptual-theoretical and practical approach from the perspective of a didactic of specialty (I think that this perspective emphasizes the relationship of identity (equality) between methodic and the didactic of specialty). In first situation, in the specialty literature and practice it is preferred to use the syntagma *the methodic of teaching* a certain subject (for example, *the methodic of teaching the economics*). We consider that this syntagma is insufficient from a conceptual point of view because a methodic of specialty (the didactic of specialty) must take into account both the process of learning and the one of evaluating. Probably that from a conceptual point of view, it would be more appropriate to use the syntagma *the methodic of teaching-learning-evaluating* the specialty (for example, *the methodic of teaching-learning-evaluating the economics*). As a consequence, through the didactic methodology there are emphasized the essential components of the instruction strategies, the relationships among them and the assumed finalities.

The didactic methodology supposes a group of didactic strategies meant to support the course of action of the activities initiated at the level of the education process. In this sense, in the reference literature it is supported the idea that "the didactic methodology represents the system of methods and didactic procedures studied from a theoretical and practical point of view

(definition, nature, status, functions, classification) and of the principles, the orientations and the requirements of their substantiation on the basis of some unitary and coherent conceptions on the act of teaching, learning and evaluating" (Bocoș, 2008: 212-213). Thus, it is obvious the fact that the methodology in general constitutes an epistemological approach of the informational contents. Moreover, the didactic methodology reflects the interdependence between the activity of the actors involved in the activity of teaching-learning-evaluating and the strategies adopted at an educational level.

Planning the contents of education must subordinate to the curricular perspective assumed at the educational level. Hence, in accordance with certain strategies of making the competences, the informational contents have an instrumental and axiological character. To put it differently, as long as these competences are corroborated with the educational finalities followed in the system and process of education the new paradigmatic openings legitimize the necessity of a reevaluation as far as the curricular planning is concerned. Thus, there is a pragmatic relationship between the didactic performance and the formed competences through which the evaluation of the instructive-educative activity is emphasized. In this context, as a result of an optimum planning of the content of education there are obvious the personalized didactic courses of action, meaning that the approaches and the understanding are done at an operational level in accordance with the different educational practices.

Also, taking into consideration the fact that the education represents a process specific to the human personality one should not neglect the possible correlation between the planning of the contents of education and the resulted psycho-social implications. In other words, such an approach must relate to a psychology of learning through which the educational activity can be adapted to an existent reality. Moreover, the didactic communication plays a fundamental role in an educational model. This situation should determine an encouragement as far as the planning of the cognoscible structures is concerned situated in an axiological dimension. By becoming aware of some flaws at the level of planning one can create a methodology of the scientific knowing characteristic in fact to this type of approach.

The methodological context correlates with the scientific field as long as the didactic transposition proves to be more than efficient. Regarded, on the one hand as a theory of the teaching-learning methods and on the other hand as a system of these methods, the didactic methodology reminds both of an approach characteristic to the educational actors (teachers and students) and an activity specific to the didactic process at the level of a certain lesson. In these conditions one can admit that there is a correlation of a conceptual-theoretical nature between the didactic methodology and the theory of the curriculum. Therefore, a didactic methodology becomes efficient as long as the

implementation of the curriculum in the education process generates performance.

The term "curriculum" comes from Latin (singular: *curriculum*; plural: *curricula*) and meant initially *race, running*. Its connotation reminds of the idea of circularity (Negreț-Dobidor, 2001: 13), it went through transformations and gradually, this term acquired educational (pedagogical) valences. This concept of "curriculum" does not constitute the object of the present analysis but we consider that in the context of a didactic methodology one can make an approach through which to legitimize the necessity of the significances that it can involve. Thus, a theory of the curriculum becomes pragmatic under the conditions that the curricular organization modalities should be found in the dimensions of making compatible the education plans with the school system in general.

Depending on the quality and the selection of the knowing process in the theory of the curriculum one accepts the existence of the curricular areas. By a *curricular area* one understands that field established scientifically in accordance with the finalities of education and which have a variable importance on periods and grades established depending on the age of the *object of education*. At the level of the didactic action we consider that the distinction between the object of education and the subject of education should be made correctly. Thus, in some specialty papers it is considered that both the one who educates and the one who receives the education represent the subjects of education. Or, if in an educational action there is a receiver and a sender of information then there must be made a difference at the level of the structure of functioning of the educational action, between the actor who "transmits" the education (the subject of education) and the one who "receives" it (the object of education). All in all, one can consider as a subject of education the educator himself (in an individual or collective sense) who can be represented by the teachers, primary school teachers, kindergarten teachers, parents etc. in these conditions, one can consider as an object of education the educated one (in an individual or collective sense), who can be represented by the pupil, the student, the nursery and primary school pupil, the adult who receives the education in special instructive-educative contexts.

From this standpoint, the organization of the didactic activity supposes the transposition of the finalities at the level of the education process through a didactic taxonomy (Blându, 2005: 130). The creation of such taxonomy is possible as long as the didactic activity has an optimum level of understanding. As a result, the educational reality can offer the success of any didactic activity on condition there is a principle correspondence at the level of the perceptive identifications. In this way, we think that it is justified the idea according to which "any didactic activity must start from establishing some direct perceptive relationships with the objects offering the student the possibility of identifying

the *real* properties of what he/she learns. This state of fact expresses a "moral" commitment from the part of the educational actors which has to subordinate to some deontological and axiological principles. Furthermore, those involved in this course of action must take into consideration the quality of the didactic act. Yet, the performance of a didactic activity also depends on the planning modalities assumed for a determined time period.

An example here can be given by the fact that through the substantiation of the objectives/competences there are aimed the pupils / students possible performances. Also, there are approached different orientation, planning, coordination modalities specific to the teacher doable within the learning sequence.

In this way, the didactic finality is done in a period of time (which can be more or less long). In this context, there is in the specialty literature, on the one hand, the distinction: reference objective- operational objective and on the other hand, the distinction general competence- specific competence. In fact, the general competences, as elements specific to the structure of the syllabus have an increased level of generalization and offer a synthetic image of the followed aim. On the other hand, the general competences differentiate from the specific ones. Thus, the specific competences suppose the establishment of some results previously proposed and concretize through the formulation of some statements resulted from general competences. Moreover, the specific competences refer to the informational contents approached within a learning unit. In these conditions, when planning the didactic activity one has in mind the action which must be accomplished. In other words, the planning of a didactic activity depends to a great extent on the objectives and the competences assumed at the educational level by relating, though to the conceptual-theoretical dimension, and an important role in this context is played by the problem of evaluation.

How do we evaluate? We have in mind two aspects connected to the theme of evaluation, illustrated through an example which has to do with the educational reality. In this way, if at an exam a student is caught cheating and another one does not solve any subject then the modality of evaluation must relate to the objectivity of marking implicitly. Yet, this objectivity rather takes into account the way in which the marking scheme is created. What marks will the two students receive?

If the two persons are given the mark one for fraud then we are right to admit that the objectivity in evaluation has not been reached precisely. On the one hand, it is possible to admit that the person who has been caught on the "didactic" act should receive the mark one, but this punishment cannot be situated on the same level of equality with the person who did not write at all.

The two students' deeds (participants in the exam) are totally different and their gravity has rather to do with the morality of their action. In other

words, do we punish or not the non-morality? If we punish it what would be the criteria according to which this punishment would be put into practice? And here comes the problem of the marking scheme. If the evaluation starts from a marking scheme where we mention the fact that there are two extra points from the very beginning then it is right to accept that the punishment received by the student who was caught cheating is justified (that of giving the mark one, that is the minimum grade - we have in mind the system of evaluation ( numerical marking) from mark 1 to mark 10) in comparison with the punishment received by the student who did not write anything on the exam paper (at least the mark two). On the other hand, in this case however, the mark of the second student cannot be justified because in this process of checking *it is evaluated what is known and not what is unknown*. However, how can such a result be quantified (giving, for example the mark two) giving a mark for something that does not exist, in other words, on an informational content which cannot be found on the exam paper? Of course this problem raises new questions and in most cases the one who can deal with it is the teacher. Through this case we want to stress out the impossibility of ensuring the objectivity of the process of evaluation and of the way in which an optimum marking scheme is done. Maybe one solution would be to mention in this marking scheme that "any trial to cheat will be punished with the mark one" and that "the marking will start from the mark two". Of course, one cannot say how didactic/pedagogical this way of diminishing the less elegant, "delicate" deeds, connected to the process of evaluation is.

The problem of the didactic (school) evaluation represents an important aspect in the instructive process. The peculiarities of the actions together with the educational activity materialize the (non) performances in evaluative differentiations. This situation determines a substantiation of the didactic potential. Therefore, the understanding of the criteria which are at the basis of the appreciations supposes specific abilities of (self) evaluation meant to justify the validity itself of the appreciations and educational performances.

The didactic approach of the disciplinary dimensions emphasizes complementary perspectives referring, on the one hand to the relationship humans-society and on the other hand, to the relationship humans-knowledge. In this context, the creation of competences expresses a substantiation of the potential specific to the socio-educational actors. Thus, "depending on the concrete situations (in the classroom) the teacher will build his/her own instruments (calendar planning, planning of learning units) after considering all the didactic components - the specific of the group of students, didactic resources etc. -" (Căpiță, 2001: 80). Therefore, the concretization of the didactic activity depends to a great extent on certain factors (internal/external) which can determine obviously the systematization but also the optimal substantiation of the main moments specific to this course of action.

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