

# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND EDUCATIONAL ETHOS IN DIDACTIC COMMUNICATION

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## Abstract

The diversity of teaching methods in academic institutions, as well as the tendency to digitalise the educational process, challenges the teaching staff to identify and use elements that add educational value. Studies show that great emphasis is placed on the development of emotional intelligence, as a foundation for building interpersonal relationships. The Romanian reality proves that, in its attempt to adapt itself to the demands of the European education, Romanian education lost sight of the national ethos, which also plays a major role in the development of the educational process.

**Keywords:** *emotional intelligence, interpersonal relationships, ethos, teaching, national values.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In today's society change has become a constant element of life, fluctuations on the labour market are continually increasing and therefore designing and career development using social skills represents a constant preoccupation in order to reach professionalism.

It is becoming increasingly necessary to have specialists able to act strategically for a successful professional integration, a condition that generates complex metamorphoses, requesting new configurations in the professional profile of the skills in order to permanently adapt to pace of the sociocultural development.

Training/self-training in the spirit of the professional values represents a priority because with the help of new professional competencies teachers direct their development in the field of the pedagogical values, towards adequate decisions in order to build an educational style worthy of professional authority (COJOCARU-BOROZAN, 2010). From this point of view, researchers in the field of the emotional culture

pedagogy, at a global and national scale, eloquently prove the predictive impact of the social skills stating that “emotional culture represents the essential resource necessary for projecting and building a career, emotional skills also being regarded as the values of professional culture” (COJOCARU-BOROZAN et al., 2014).

Emotional intelligence is regarded as a trust predictor for professional success, offering a number of opportunities in social adaptation, the correct perception of emotions, decision making, building and preserving positive interpersonal relationships, efficient professional integrations.

The teachers with a high degree of emotional intelligence are able to identify and correctly manage both their emotions and also other people's emotions. They efficiently cooperate within workgroups, have a strong intrinsic motivation, are flexible in behaviour, can avoid and solve conflicts, and are more able and optimistic.

The importance of the pedagogy of emotional culture grows in the historical context of the development of pedagogical sciences and of its scientific potential of a philosophical, psychological, sociological and axiological approach regarding emotional culture, from the perception of emotions as a factor that disturbs rational knowledge to the approaching emotional culture as an indicator of pedagogical professionalism, predictor of successful self-affirmation and trigger of the teacher's career development (BIRSAN, 2017).

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to achieve a suitable reasoning regarding emotions and the ability to use emotions and the emotional knowledge in order to improve thinking.

This newly introduced concept of emotional intelligence offers a new way of analysing this topic – people can reason about emotions and they can use emotions to help the reasoning.

## **2. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE - THEORETICAL CONCEPTS**

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The term “emotional intelligence” was occasionally used starting from the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and scientific references date back to the 1960s.

For example, emotional intelligence was mentioned in relationship to psychotherapeutic treatments (LEUNER, 1966) and with the promotion of personal and social development (BEASLEY, 1987, PAYNE, 1986).

In the 1980s, psychologists expressed a renewed opening to the idea of multiple intelligences (Gardner 1983, Sternberg, 1985), but, at the same time, research on emotion and the way in which emotions interacted with knowledge started to increase (MATHEWS et al., 2002). This led to scientific articles regarding this new field of research (MAYER et al., 1990).

The interest for the study of emotional intelligence increased significantly at the end of the 1990s, due to a dissemination of the subject (GOLEMAN, 1995) and the enthusiasm that surrounded the identification of a new potential intelligence, making many people use the concept, but often in very different ways (GOLEMAN, 1995; MAYER & SALOVEY, 1993; PICARD, 1997).

Emotional intelligence is defined in various terms but the one closest to reality belongs to Thordike, who defined social intelligence (referring to emotional intelligence) as “the capacity to understand and act intelligently in interpersonal relationships” (GOLEMAN, 1995; MATTHEW et al., 2002).

Focused on study of the brain, creativity and behaviour, Goleman developed one of the scientific visions on emotional intelligence, stating that it is comprised of the following constructs: self-conscious (self-trust), self-control (the desire for truth, conscientiousness, adaptability, innovation), motivation (the desire to conquer, dedication, initiative, optimism),

empathy (to understand the others, diversity, politic capacity) and social skills (influence, communication, conflict management, leadership, establishing relationships, teamwork ability) (GOLEMAN, 1995).

Analysing research on the necessary skills for gaining organizational performance, Goleman added the emotional skill to the set of technic and cognitive skills, placing it on a central position in terms of the capacity to organise and manage organizational processes (GOLEMAN, 2007).

He considers that emotional intelligence represents the personal ability to identify and efficiently manage a person’s own emotions in relation to personal purposes (career, family, education etc.)

Its purposefulness consists in reaching a person’s goals with a minimum of inter and intrapersonal conflicts.

The model proposed by the American psychologist consists of the following elements:

- Self-awareness, the ability to identify and name the emotions, be aware of their cause and acknowledging their impact on the manifestation manner;
- Self-management - consisting of controlling the emotions and choosing the best way to express emotions in different surroundings (to deal with anger, to tolerate frustrations, to express anger without aggressiveness, to get rid of social anxiety and loneliness, to manipulate stress etc);
- Social awareness – recognizing other people’s emotions, the ability to understand and react to the emotions of the people around you
- Relationship management – the ability to inspire, influence and develop interpersonal relationship in order to efficiently communicate and to avoid conflicts.

Unlike cognitive intelligence, emotional intelligence can be taught and improved during lifetime. In order to succeed in life, Goleman considers that each of us should learn and practise the main dimensions of emotional intelligence. Teachers have to discover and develop them as well as this type of intelligence, which is so useful in a grown-up’s life. The mood of the teacher has a significant impact on the student. If a teacher acts full of energy and

enthusiasm in any situation, he may become a source of inspiration for his students, but if he transmits negative emotions, then the entire student community will suffer.

### **3. THE ROMANIAN EDUCATIONAL ETHOS - SHORT RADIOGRAPHY**

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The starting point for such radiography is determined by the words of professor Motru: "no matter how many statistics and observations we might have on the soul life of the Romanian people, since there is no clear conscience of the spiritual finality of this life, the interpretation of the data becomes unclear. Data can only justify a spiritual reality revealed by precise and exquisite institutions, but when this finality is not revealed or it is only partially revealed, then they represent no more than clues put up for debate. So far, the conscience of the Romanian people presents only some vague clues on the finality of spirituality"

According to Radulescu Motru, the ethos of the nation (following the German school of analysis), as a sum of the psychological tributes, is determined by the biological inheritance, by geographical factors and by cultural factors in their historical development. Therefore, here are the elements of the Romanian ethos: egocentric individualism, lack of perseverance and lack of individual conscience.

Dumitru Dragicescu offers another approach, with French influence, which is closer to the Romanian spirit, claiming that our ethos is influenced by the Dacian and Roman ethos, and also by the ethos of the people that we lived together with: Slavs, Turks, Austrians etc. Therefore, we Romanian are: intelligent, strong-willed, treacherous and duplicitous, dominated by a formalism without any essence, organised and anarchical, according to the situation (RADULESCU & MOTRU, 1999).

Mircea Vulcanescu, proposes another radiography, close to the one belonging to Dragicescu. He states that we are consistent because Romans were our ancestors, we present some tendencies of greatness because we have a connection with the Byzantium, we are religious but marked by softness, influenced by the Slavs,

imitators because we are influenced by the French, metaphysical because we lived together with the Germans in some regions, creative because we were influenced by the Jews, bumptious because we neighbored with the Polish, and also scandalmongers because we are Balkans (RADULESCU & MOTRU, 1999).

The current picture of the Romanian ethos comes from the study conducted by Professor Daniel David in his paper on the psychology of the Romanian people (DAVID, 2015). He claims that the surface psychological profile is in some segments incompletely developed and it doesn't express our potential. Therefore, the high potential for cognitive/emotional intelligence, creativity and learning is not enough valued.

In psycho-cultural terms, Romanians look for social power, but in a hypocrite manner, according to some collectivist culture, then, the use of the power is done in a feminine paradigm, characterized by discussions and the seek for consensus, but it doesn't get to concrete plans, and often leadership is denied proper respect.

Romanians have a repressive and avoidable cultural style, which makes them defensive, displaying inferiority complexes, and if compensated, in superiority complexes. Law scores on values such as universalism (preoccupation for the general well-being), benevolence (good will, preoccupation for the well-being of those we know), hedonism (the pursuit for pleasure), stimulation (the pursuit for the new) and self-determination (autonomy/independence), show that Romanian are somehow interested in these values, but only in order to make a good impression.

The causality for this ethos might be bidirectional and interactional, starting from our history, by being on the outskirts of the empires and through the position of theatre of struggle (in this context we developed some defence mechanisms). Therefore, the preference for durable constructions became lower, the trust in people, especially in foreigners became lower, and the lack of discipline became a form of resistance for the week, in order to protect culture from the strong (DAVID, 2015).

According to Father Staniloaie, the idyllic vision on some fundamental dimensions of our ethos is, in fact, the product of a subtle



development between, on the one side, the native sensibility, inherited following its mysterious development process over the course of two and a half millennium of constant and traumatizing torment and social change, and on the other side, due to its maximum spiritual opening, oriented both towards the concrete and incredibly shaded human, which tends towards the fulfilment of some Christian life ideals, and also through “the passionate crush of its being... towards that single reality called God,” therefore towards religion, because it is the only one which “asserts the whole human being and ... sheds light, thinking of God, on the whole human being and therefore on the lives of the collectivities” (LEASEVICI, 2013).

Analysing the Romanians geo-cultural position, rooted and persistent in a space which influenced their way of being, the author observes that the Romanian people is “at the border between the East and the West,” “a bridge-being, supported by a bridge-space,” which they cannot leave without a loss or “an essential change in their being” – being different from the Jews, Armenians or Greeks, who can preserve their “surface simplicity” if they settle either in the East or in the West. Romanians’ existence, resulting from “the synthesis specificity of their being” is determined by this bridge-space, that, summing up the two universal cultures, and therefore gaining complexity or a “fundamental ambivalence,” offers some people a sort of “fragility” that represents “a danger of losing the balance between its antithesis components,” whereas for others it emphasises “the side of one of the spiritualities which comes into the Romanian synthesis,” and it creates the possibility of easily detaching themselves from their native environment (LEASEVICI, 2013).

Therefore, Romanians recall the good will and a certain fragility derived from a precarious balance between the two antithetic cultures, eastern and western, which lie at the core of the Romanian being, but which were melted in a specific synthesis of the place a long time ago. The Romanian has an incredible opening and understanding towards the living ways, cultures and foreign languages, therefore distancing himself from other people, who are somehow encapsulated in their unilateral way of being.

Also, generosity and harmony are deeply rooted in the wonderful nature of our country.

The Romanian is characterised by cleverness united with a generous kindness, which helps him fight against evil. The national being of the Romanian reunites the rational lucidity of the personalistic Latinity and the mystery feeling present all over the place, therefore opening the perspective for an endless spiritual progress, but without annulling himself as a person originating in the feeling of the communication unit that we live.

#### **4. EXPECTATIONS IN THE ROMANIAN EDUCATION AT THE BEGINNING OF THE MILLENNIUM**

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Before approaching the methodological searches in order to establish some elements of folding education on the ethos of the Romanian people, we consider that the opinions of the late mathematician Solomon Marcus have to be presented as references and current expectations.

According to the great mathematician, with some exceptions, in our school people don't know what learning really means. We think that everything comes down to receiving knowledge and information, storing data, names, quotations, formulas, algorithms or equations. All these take the general form of some recipes or indications, which are used on a repetitive basis, of memorization. (GANDUL, 2016).

Authentic learning starts from educating a state of questioning, wonder, of the need to look for an answer. Going through the fundamental states of the human being: amazement, doubt, suspicion, hypothesis, intuition, explanation, critical spirit, the right and the freedom to agree or disagree with what you are presented, are all normal stages in the understanding process that has to come together with acquiring knowledge. (GANDUL, 2016).

Educating the need to understand the world, this is what we often lack. Becoming aware that not all the knowledge that we are provided with have a status of certainty, that many, maybe the most, are just hypothesis, more or less credible, paying attention to the way in which culture and learning support a permanent metabolism between

questions and answers, understanding the way in which an answer generates new questions, all these belong to the learning process (GANDUL, 2016).

The psychologist Daniel David claims that we need to analyse education starting from the fact that from the moment that Romania joined NATO and the European Union, we also adhered to the western values. But here we also have a complex problem because with the exception of Romania, Bulgaria, Portugal and Greece, who have a collectivist psycho-socio-cultural profile, all the other states have an autonomous-individualist profile (David, 2015).

The way in which education is conceived in Europe differs from one state to the other because on the continent there are two unavoidable cultural brands, one of Anglo-Saxon type, characterised by rigour, sobriety, severity and frequent assessments, and the other one, the Latin type, which is more permissive, based on communication and understanding.

Without generalising, by noticing the preoccupations of the educational structures, analysing the predisposition for experience change within the whole European habitat, observing the interest for creating leaders and managers, in a system which seems to separate expectations and avoids referring to the concept of master, which in the past also quantified the leader and the manager, we allowed ourselves to present the qualities, knowledge and necessary skills for a social individual, as well as the subjects that would contribute to the development of his personality.

## 5. INSTEAD OF CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, we could state that education is and will always be the way in which we become what we want to become, that the educational process was and will remain adapted to history, but the responsibility regarding its value belongs to us all. History will not excuse ignorance, superficiality or mercantilism but will mark, through positive or negative events, the steps of the society.

The analyses, impulses or criticism do not help action in the same manner. The civic duty

does not only imply the radiography of the disease, but also its diagnostics and especially providing the proper medication.

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