

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INSTRUCTIVE-EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF POSTMODERN DIDACTICS

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Abstract: *The educational process represents an organized and systematic activity ensemble consciously carried out, within various educational institutions. From the point of view of its development, it supposes alternating teaching, learning and assessment activities, all of these components placing itself in an interdependence relationship with the others. The developed instructive-educational activities regard the formation of the pupil/student personality according to the educational ideal. From the perspective of postmodern didactics, which we can conventionally place in the second half of the 20th century and the first half of the 21st, learning results reflect the pupil/student's involvement in the activity, focusing on the formative nature of learning, on knowledge acquired by one's own efforts, and on acquiring knowledge at varying levels.*

Key words: *educational process; teaching; learning; assessment; postmodern didactics*

INTRODUCTION

Didactics is a fundamental pedagogic discipline, a component of the educational science system, whose main study object is the educational process. It is a theoretical as well as practical discipline.

In accordance with MIRON IONESCU (2000), didactics, regarded as educational theory and practice, studies:

- the learning process as knowledge accumulation and formation;
- the educational system as training and education institution ensemble;
- the main didactic activities;
- education content;
- didactic technology;
- didactic activity organization and development forms;
- teacher-learner relations;
- educational relations;
- didactic activity style etc. (IONESCU, 2000, p. 17).

From the perspective of the educational system, the educational process, as its main subsystem, refers to:

- "the ensemble of activities carried out in a conscious and systematic way by educators in an institutionalized framework, with the purpose to form their personalities in accordance with the requirements of the educational ideal" (Nicola, 1994, p. 275);
- "the instructive-educational activity, complex, developed in an organized and systematic way by learners and teachers at school, due to which learners acquire a system of knowledge, capabilities, skills, competences, intellectual and motoric acquisitions, which leads them to a scientific knowledge of reality, helping them shape their conception about world, their moral convictions, character traits, as well as knowledge, research and creative aptitudes" (RADU, 2009, p. 55 ÎN IONESCU & BOCOȘ, 2009).

DISCUSSIONS

In Pedagogy, the term “*didactics*” occurred in the 17th century, being established by the Czech pedagogue *Jan Amos Comenius* (1592 – 1670), the author of “*Didactica Magna*”.

From an etymological point of view, more Greek terms pertain to the semantic area of didactics: *didackein* = to learn; *didaktikos* = training; *didasko* = learning, education; *didaktike* = the art of learning (CRISTEA, 1998).

Defining didactics as “the art of teaching everybody”, Comenius shows teaching someone else means to know something and to determine someone else to know it quickly, in a pleasant way and thoroughly. The means through which this aim can be achieved are the following: examples, rules, general or special applications (which take into account the nature of learning objects and topics, and the desired purposes: “Because we firstly advise that the foundation should result from the thing’s nature itself, that the truth is demonstrated by comparative examples from mechanic arts, establishing its development in years, months, days and hours, and that the path would finally be easy and precise and lead to a happy result” (COMENIUS, 1970).

The scope of didactics has grown; today we are talking about stages/level of didactics, respectively a classical, *traditional didactics*, a psychological *modern didactics*, and a curricular *postmodern didactics*. As S. Panțuru (2002) shows that, since the second half of the 20th century, the *postmodern didactics* stage has begun. In table 1., one can see a guiding model regarding the comparative approach to traditional, modern and postmodern didactics (Bocoș&Jucan, 2007; Panțuru, 2002).

Table 1.

The comparative approach to traditional, modern and postmodern didactics

| <i>Analysis Criteria</i> | <i>Traditional didactics</i> | <i>Modern didactics</i> | <i>Postmodern didactics</i> |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Historical framework | - 17 th – 19 th centuries | - end of 19 th century – beginning of 20 th century | - the second half of the 20 th century and the first half of the 21 st |
| Fundamental theories | Philosophical empiricism Associative psychology | Modern educational psychology theories | Efficient training theories Curriculum theories |
| Representative pedagogues | J. Locke J. A. Comenius J. J. Rousseau D. Gusti F. Ștefănescu - Goangă | J. Piaget P. Janet L. S. Vigotski P. I. Galperin R. Gagne D. Todoran S. Mehedinți | J. de Landsheere V. de Landsheere R. Tyler L. Stenhouse D. Potolea E. Păun |
| Knowledge acquiring mechanism | - the knowledge acquiring mechanism consists in forming images about things and establishing associations between these images | - the knowledge acquiring mechanism is based on action (external, object-related and internal, mental) | - the knowledge acquiring mechanism is based on interiorising the psycho-socially determined action, using teaching-learning strategies adapted to learner particularities |
| Main knowledge source | - the main knowledge source was perception | - the main knowledge source is the psychologically or socially determined action | - the main knowledge source: psycho-socially determined action, individually interiorised |
| Conception about training | - magistrocentrist type conception | - psychocentrist or sociocentrist type conception | - curricular type conception |
| Accent within the training activity | - accent on the teaching activity | - accent on the teaching-learning activity | - accent on teaching-learning-assessment |
| Learning guidance | - authoritative learning guidance | - psychological or social learning guidance | - psycho-social learning self-guidance |
| The learner’s role | - object of education, passive receptor of the information supplied by the teacher. | - object and subject of education, knowledge and action; - gathers new acquisitions through his own efforts. | - the learner has an active role in his own formation and is responsible for the learning activity – the transition from training to self-training, from education to self-education. |

Currently, didactics means “teaching theory and method”, and the term didactic means “which aims to train, which refers to teaching – learning – education” (Le Petit Robert, 1989, quote de Stanciu, 2007).

In accordance with most pedagogues, Didactics, in its essence, represents an important branch of pedagogy. Didactics represents for Pedagogy the explicative-normative framework, and its general applications in teaching - learning - assessment in various educational disciplines are outlined by *special didactics*.

The study object of didactics (cf. Ionescu&Radu, 2001) is the education and self-education, predominantly aiming for the pedagogic problems raised and implied by the programming organization of the formation of all human personality aspects.

Today, the characteristics of the instructive-educational activity from the perspective of postmodern didactics are (figure 1):

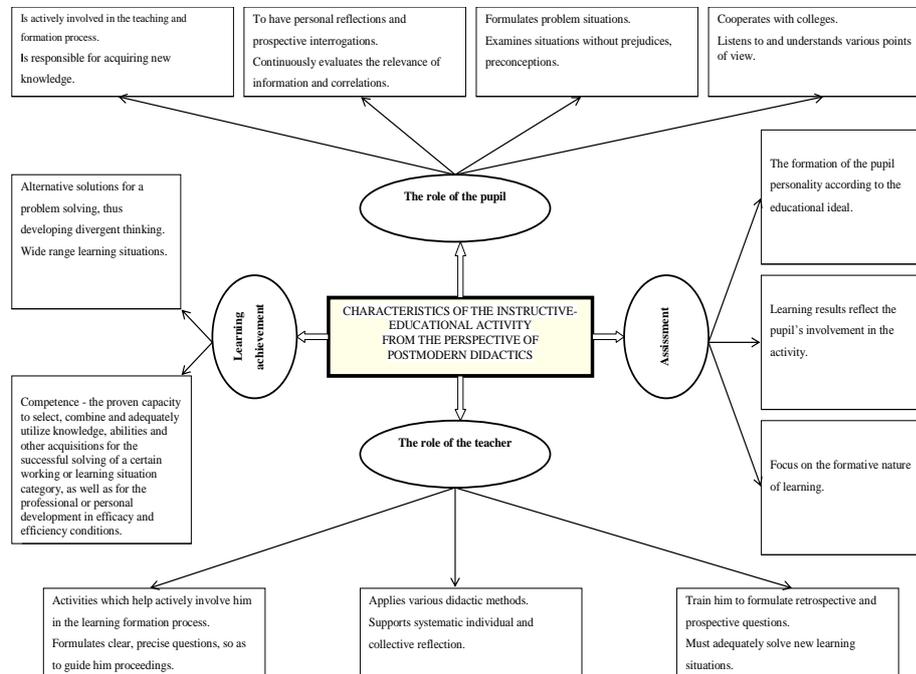


Figure 1 - The instructive-educational activity from the perspective of postmodern didactics

CONCLUSIONS

In the contemporary world, Didactics represents a complex branch of educational sciences, which studies and scientifically substantiates the analysis, design, development and assessment of teaching and learning as training and education processes, in school as well as through self-education.

From the perspective of postmodern didactics, learning results reflect the pupil/student's involvement in the activity, highlighting the formative aspect of learning, knowledge acquired by on one's own and acquiring knowledge on variable levels.

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