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9th International Conference Education, Reflection, Development**THE TEACHER'S ROLE AS A "MENTOR OF EMOTIONAL RESILIENCE"**

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Abstract

Current contexts in the educational process have become more and more unstable and numerous and this fact is demonstrated by the recent events occurring in the educational system, in which the traditional face-to-face teaching and learning have moved in the on-line environment. If it comes to foresee the future of education, these changes may lead to positive outcomes in teaching, if the teacher has knowledge and is guided to interact with the pupils, develop new strategies and techniques meant to eradicate pupils' inappropriate emotional and social behaviours. In order to help diminishing the effects spread by the pandemic upon pupils, the teacher has to adapt her/his teaching style and develop a series of emotional competences that are needed in the teaching activities. The teacher should also demonstrate a high level of openness towards new experiences, a strong social intuition, an extremely well-oriented sensitivity to the context and a great resilience. However, all the above could only be achieved by employing an Emotional Style of its own in the educational process. We believe that the role of mentoring in the current educational context should be reflected upon all the pupils, not only upon the ones capable of high performance. Therefore, the idea of implementing an educative scheme for primary classes as concerns the development and improvement of the emotional resilience of the primary learners is perfectly justified.

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1. Introduction

Educational contexts around the world have undergone multiple changes, with most schools having to relocate online following the coronavirus pandemic of 2020. The focus in education is shifting to teachers' ability to adapt their methods teaching and developing effective strategies to encourage pupils to overcome their current fears, to manage and control their own emotions and impulses, and at the same time to train and develop pupils' emotional and social skills in order to reduce and diminish their inappropriate behaviours.

The teacher's responsibility focuses primarily on the reflection of his own behaviour and the attitudes and emotions he conveys to pupils, because his level of emotional and social skills directly influences the formation and development of emotional and social skills of pupils needed to achieve a long-term emotional resilience.

1.1. The role of mentoring in the school environment

Mentoring in the Romanian school environment is not very clearly defined, but it has been legislated since 2011. If mentoring refers only to pupils capable of high performance, we consider it necessary for it to take into account all pupils and the development of an educational programme which leads to acquiring and improving the emotional and social skills for all primary school pupils, in the current educational context.

The main role of mentoring is to establish a collaborative relationship between teacher and learner, between learner-learner and between learner and the others, and this interaction must take place in a pleasant and safe environment, learning and experimentation must take place through analysis, examination and re-examination, to guide children in reflecting on experiences, situations, problems, mistakes and success encountered in teaching in order to identify new learning opportunities.

It is a special relationship that forms a bond built on trust and respect, openness and honesty, a framework where each party can be itself. The relationship is strong and emotional, and in order to achieve good results, the mentoring relationship must be qualitatively superior (Hossu, 2017, p. 2).

1.2. Emotional resilience mentor

The resilience mentor has a strong influence on the harmonious development of pupils from a multilateral perspective, with particular emphasis on the development of emotional skills and the formation and maintenance of positive relationships between pupils. According to Manciaux (2003), the resilience mentor is a person who trusts the child and who the child trusts in.

In order to achieve a quality educational act, the resilience mentor must have a series of specific qualities and competencies. From these we extract only those that lead to the following types of support for pupils (Hossu, 2017, p. 2):

Information support - the mentor must develop the latest knowledge necessary for pupils in developing long-term emotional resilience, make them accessible to them and find how they take effect.

Instrumental support - the mentor has the main task to build the habit of learning in pupils, to select only what is useful for their emotional development, to discern certain information using their own thinking.

Assessment support - the mentor's role is to encourage pupils in self-assessment, to motivate them to self-assess and also to assess the progress of other colleagues.

Emotional support - the most important purpose of the mentor is to provide understanding and support to pupils in order to overcome the problems and traumas they are going through, to develop their self-confidence and to form a positive self-image.

The qualities and skills that a good resilience mentor must develop lead to a more detailed knowledge of pupils' emotions and feelings, to the identification and understanding of feelings, to the reduction and elimination of inappropriate emotional behaviours, and to their replacement with some positive and constructive experiences. A relationship is established between the pupils and the resilience mentor based on cooperation, communication and especially on mutual trust and help.

Therefore, the role of the resilience mentor is not limited to the development and improvement of pupils' emotional skills, but also affects the entire instructive-educational activity, and her/his performance must take into account the changes in the education system, trying to find the most appropriate solutions. On existing problems, while maintaining a close relationship with the children's parents, in order to ensure a learning environment as relaxed as possible, safe and appropriate under the given conditions.

1.2.1. The didactic style of the emotional resilience mentor

The teacher's emotional skills are most effective if they are related to his teaching style. Thus, in forming a teaching style we must take into account the characteristics of teaching, the types of behaviour in different situations. In this context, Cerghit (2002) defines the didactic style as “a relatively stable model of behaviour that characterizes the activity of a teacher and that is objectified in certain typical practices of instruction and education” (p. 312).

Due to the recent changes in education, the teacher has the duty to update and adapt his managerial skills and teaching style according to the new situations that appear in the instructive-educational process of pupils. In Iucu's (2000) point of view, the didactic style is “a process through which a person or a group of people identifies, organizes, activates, influences the human and technical resources of the pupils' class in order to achieve the proposed objectives” (p. 129).

1.2.2. The teacher's emotional skills

The ability to form a certain teaching style consists in selecting from the multitude of competencies specific to a teacher the qualities and particularities that positively influence the entire professional activity. But the teacher's emotional competence is becoming more and more important in the current context of the school environment. In this respect, Cojocaru (2011) considers that by emotional competence we mean the system of (p. 76):

- attitudes (professional beliefs) about the importance and value of balanced management of emotional energy;
- the set of knowledge about the affective life of the individual and on the volume of emotional experiences;
- complex of emotional capacities: emotional self-regulation, assertion, empathy, etc. which ensures intra- and interpersonal harmonization, personal satisfaction and happiness.

Therefore, the feature of the effective teacher, from this point of view, consists in “the preoccupation for the optimization of the operating strategies with two types of contents: scholastic and affective - emotional” (Goleman, 2008, p. 29).

1.3. The emotional style of the resilience mentor

The emotional participation of pupils and educators in didactic communication / interaction, as Ezechil (2007) emphasizes, is influenced by: the teacher's temperament (introvert / extrovert, sociable / unsociable); the degree of demand of pupils in learning situations; the attractiveness it inspires, the stimulating capacity of the teacher in relation to the class of pupils; optimism and the degree of professional and personal satisfaction; the measure of satisfying expectations and the socio-affective climate established in the class of pupils.

In order to create a positive work atmosphere and an emotional environment appropriate for the teaching activity, the teacher must form a teaching style based on both the basic skills needed to teach scientific content (specialized skills, psycho-pedagogical, social and managerial) , as well as emotional skills necessary in the most detailed knowledge of pupils, their needs and feelings. In this regard, Davidson and Begley (2020) through systematic studies on the neural basis of emotion concluded that the teacher must form an emotional style based on six dimensions. According to the authors, “the major networks of emotion in the brain are well-known today, and if we believe that the only aspects of emotion that have scientific validity are those whose origins can be identified in the brain, then six dimensions fully describe the Emotional Style [...] And each of the six dimensions has an identifiable neural signature - a good indication that they are real, and not just a theoretical construct” (Davidson & Begley, 2020, p. 7):

- *Resilience*: how slowly or how quickly you recover from adversity.
- *Perspective*: how long you have you been able to sustain positive emotions.
- *Social Intuition*: how gifted you are to take social signals from people around you.
- *Self-awareness*: how well you perceive body sensations that reflect emotions.
- *Sensitivity to Context*: how good you are at adjusting your emotional responses depending on the context you are in.
- *Attention*: how sharp and clear your concentration is.

We believe that the formation of emotional and social skills in both pupils and teachers is necessary given that stress is the constant counterpart of educational circumstances, and the education system becomes the area responsible for solving problems of adaptation to the continuous amplification of emotional life. However, in order to create an emotional balance in the didactic activity, it is necessary to form a didactic style that is based on the development of the affective-emotional competence of all educa-

tional actors. The teacher has always been the "mirror" in which the learner is reflected, the model that the pupil has at her/his disposal to be imitated and taken over.

2. Problem Statement

In today's society and even more so in tomorrow's, the main predictor that ensures adaptation to adulthood is not a high cognitive potential, but the ability to establish relationships with others. In this respect, we aimed to create an intervention programme that would develop the socio-affective skills of children and teachers that would lead to the acquisition of a high level of emotional resilience. Thus, in our research we follow the following aspects:

- Involvement of teachers from experimental classes and the formation of an emotional style based on the six dimensions mentioned above, in the instructive-educational activity.
- Formation and modeling of pupils' basic socio-emotional skills: recognition and expression of emotions, understanding emotions, emotional regulation, compliance with rules, social relationships and prosocial behaviour.

3. Research Questions

The main research questions are the following:

What are the most commonly used training modalities in the process of acquiring the emotional skills needed for a resilience mentor?

What are the formative and informative values of an educational programme for promoting emotional skills with concrete applications for primary school pupils?

4. Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the research involves a theoretical investigation of the role of an emotional resilience mentor in the school environment, by assuming an emotional teaching style and design, and then developing, implementing and validating an experimental programme to improve emotional resilience of pupils, particularly for primary school learners, a context that we expect to contribute to the formation and acquisition of emotional skills among young schoolchildren, to the formation and modeling of basic socio-emotional skills of pupils: the recognition and expression of emotions, understanding emotions, emotional regulation, compliance with rules, social relationships and prosocial behaviour.

5. Research Methods

Through the intervention programme at the level of experimental classes, the aim is to acquire children's emotional skills, as well as to create a positive climate through the resilience mentor. In research we use complex methodological systems in which methods interact, complement each other and act convergently.

5.1. The pedagogical experiment

The main method of investigation in the proposed pedagogical research will be the psychopedagogical experiment in which the independent variable will be the implementation of an experimental programme to improve pupils' emotional skills, customized for primary school learners, based on adopting the emotional style of emotional resilience mentor.

5.2. Questionnaire method

We use this method to identify the current teaching style of the teacher, as well as to identify the level of the emotional and social skills of the pupils and teachers involved.

6. Findings

To create the relationship of genuine sympathy between him and the learners, the teacher needs some qualities: interest in children and the desire to help them prepare for life, passion for the profession, balance, sincerity, professional competence and a modern pedagogical conception.

6.1. Forming the emotional style of the resilience mentor

These qualities can be developed through the following dimensions that form the emotional style of the teacher. As seen in Figure 1 below,

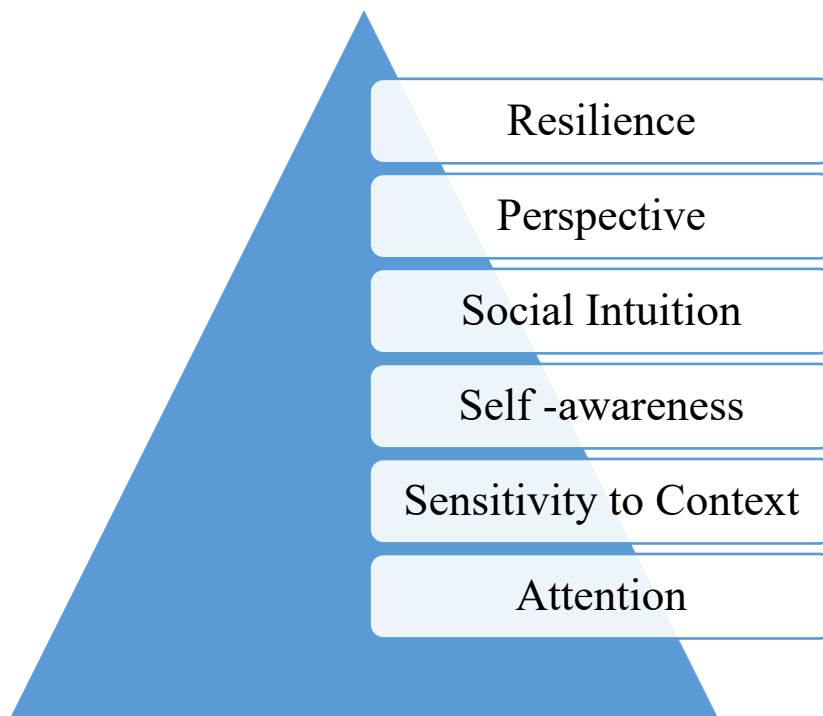


Figure 1. The six dimensions of emotional style (Davidson & Begley, 2020)

6.2. The difference between a teacher and a resilience mentor

The difference between a teacher and a resilience mentor comes from focusing on individual roles. In order to observe more clearly the difference between the role of the emotional resilience mentor compared to the role of a teacher, we propose the following tables 1 and 2, in which we present the main actions and functions performed:

Table 1. The roles of education agents

Aspects	Teacher	Mentor of emotional resilience
Definition	Transfers knowledge to pupils	Acts like a counsellor for pupils
Roles	Instructs/guide pupils	Instructs pupils
Context	Formal educational environments	Formal educational environments, non-formal educational environments, the family environment

Table 2. The roles of education agents

Aspects	Teacher	Mentor of emotional resilience
Influence	Develops academic knowledge	Develops emotional and social skills
Knowledge and experience	Deep academic knowledge	In addition to academic knowledge, she/he has emotional skills.

If we analyze the two concepts, presented in the previous tables, namely the aspects related to the activity of the teacher and the resilience mentor, we must take into account that the first, the teacher is the one who has a multitude of academic knowledge transferring it to pupils in a form adapted to the age, psychological and individual characteristics, while the role of the resilience mentor extends, above all, to the transfer and improvement of emotional and social skills, guiding pupils and encouraging them to overcome certain obstacles and problems of an emotional nature.

7. Conclusion

We believe that the teacher's greatest responsibility is to reflexively analyze his own behaviour and to pay attention to the attitudes and feelings she/he conveys, because her/his level of emotional skills directly influences the formation and development of pupils' emotional skills that are “a must” of good educational resilience.

7.1. The emotional skills of the teacher

In the present research we aim for the teacher to become a mentor of emotional resilience for all pupils in primary education, thus helping them to rediscover themselves, to improve their self-esteem, to express their own feelings, to establish harmonious relationships with colleagues. in a safe, friendly and very well organized environment.

7.2. Pupil's emotional skills

We aim to encourage pupils to acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes that will help them manage their own emotional states, control their negative impulses, and also develop and maintain positive relationships with their peers by developing effective strategies. as well as with teachers.

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