

# THE FORMATIVE VALENCES OF PERSONAL REFLECTION IN THE STUDY OF PEDAGOGICAL DISCIPLINES AT HIGH SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY LEVEL

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**Abstract.** Pedagogical reflection designates a mental process, which maximizes on the inner language, focusing on meditation. The subject observes, analyzes and issues opinions, ideas, hypotheses, theories with reference to educational phenomena and processes in general and / or about their particular aspects. Individualistic reflection gives students the opportunity to compare their own way of solving the problem /situation / task with that of others, of the teacher, the standard model or with their own previously established guide. The educated have the opportunity to analyze and identify their own performance, to be aware of their difficulties in acknowledging and solving problems. Personal cognitive reflection has a special role in the development of cognitive behaviors of the learner, because it develops cognitive flexibility. Personal metacognitive reflection has the potential to enrich the formative valences of a learning situation. It allows students to identify some metacognitive meanings in the learning process that can be used later in learning effectiveness. In order to stimulate the personal metacognitive reflection of the pupils/students, the teacher can recommend the use of a variety of strategies and reflection tools. Among these we can put emphasize on: reflection /self-reflection journals, self-reflection guides, observation sheets, idea /reflection sheets, self-assessment sheets, learning portfolios.

**Keywords:** pedagogical reflection, personal reflection, personal cognitive reflection, personal metacognitive reflection, self-reflection journal

„Pedagogical reflection is a mental process, focused on inner language and meditation, in which the subject observes, analyzes and issues opinions, ideas, assumptions, hypotheses, theories, etc. about educational phenomena and processes in general and / or about their particular aspects”. (Bocoş, (coordinator), 2019, p. 281)

From a pedagogical perspective, the following possibilities are seen as mandatory for classifying personal reflection:

1. Depending on the nature of the learning situations, the reflection can be capitalized in individual (solitary) learning situations, when it is called “individual reflection”, or in group learning situations, when it is called “collective reflection”.

2. According to the intellectual operations involved, the reflection can be mainly heuristic (deductive, analogical, etc.), critical or based on mental experimentation of new cognitive structures-ideas, models, strategies etc.
3. According to its character, the reflection can be spontaneous, occasional, systematic, methodical.
4. Depending on its form, the reflection can be directed from the outside or self-directed. (Bocoş, 2013, p. 162).

The reflective teacher, interested in his *own learning and teaching*, wonders:

1. What is the latest information in the subject that I teach to pupils/students?
2. How I could learn new, interesting, effective teaching and learning techniques?
3. My knowledge - declarative, procedural and attitudinal - is appropriate to the current requirements of the pupils or could be considered obsolete?
4. What is my most valuable knowledge that my pupils /students should acquire?
5. How could I work on the content so that students can learn it more easily?

Concerned with what his pupils / students learn, how they learn and how they use the knowledge they learn, the reflective teacher wonders:

- ✚ What is valuable for students to learn?
- ✚ What strategies and techniques to use for students to learn effectively and sustainably?
- ✚ What knowledge should students acquire that could help them to handle problems throughout life? (Bernat, 2004).

The teacher will have to take care to remove from his practices what could impede the student to reflect, everything that would restrict own possibilities for reflection (excessive information, excessive use of images, transmission of ready to use knowledge, mechanical readings and restraints) (Cerghit, 2006, p. 194).

For teachers who perceive learning in a constructive way, the reflection of students is fundamental, because it facilitates their construction and development of acquisitions, cognitive and meta-cognitive skills, and helps teachers to organize their teaching manner.

Reflexive/ reflective learning is that type of conscious, assumed, self-determined, self-assisted learning (self-monitored and self-assessed), active and interactive, constructive and meaningful. Its key element is the reflection capitalized in all stages of the learning process, which, in practice, gives the person the opportunity to transform their own experiences (which correlate with each other) into learning. Thus, in the process of reflective learning, the student's thinking, action and experience are oriented and led towards oneself, being involved the abilities and competencies of the learner, his entire learning potential. Being actively involved, the student becomes aware of his own learning process, his strengths and vulnerabilities, gradually becoming able to self-regulate learning. (Bocoş, (coordinator), 2017, p. 185).

Individualistic reflection gives students the opportunity to compare their own way of solving the problem / situation / task with that of others, with the teacher,

with the standard model or with their own previously designed guide. Pupils have the opportunity to analyze and identify their own performance, to be aware of their difficulties in knowledge, in solving problems.

The personal reflection is prolonged in activities of transposition in words, in external language, of the approaches, of the reflective strategies and of the operations of thinking practiced by the subject of learning. Thus, he will acquire the habit of questioning his own experiences and finding ways to access the new and training. Whether or not he knows the source of his representations, he will become accustomed to questioning them, to questioning his own knowledge, be it empirical or scientific, to adopt a critical attitude in knowledge, to formulate his own hypotheses, to test their validity, to highlight the conclusions which he reached to.

All this helps the student's thinking, which reflects cognitively and meta-cognitively on future activities, anticipates and manages their work, the whole activity, given that there are multiple ways to solve tasks. It is recommended that students be confronted not only with repetitive situations that do not require their initiative, but also with particular cases, with exceptions to the rule, with contexts in which transfers of acquisitions are required, which would force them to practice their strategies, to cultivate personal cognitive and meta-cognitive reflection (Bocoş, 2013, p. 163).

Personal cognitive reflection plays a special role in the development of cognitive behaviors of pupils / students, because it develops their cognitive flexibility. Personal meta-cognitive reflection has the potential to enrich the formative valences of a learning situation. It allows the identification of meta-cognitive meanings in the learning situation that can be used later in improving learning. In order to stimulate the personal meta-cognitive reflection of the pupils /students, the teacher can recommend various strategies and reflection tools, as follows: reflection/ self-reflection journals, self-reflection guides, observation sheets, idea /reflection sheets, self-assessment sheets, portfolios for studying (Bocoş, (coordinator), 2019, p. 281).

According to the "Praxeological Dictionary of Pedagogy", the self-reflexive journal is a complementary method of open and flexible assessment that includes the student's notes on aspects experienced in the process of knowledge behavior manifested in the process of knowledge, and which develops his meta-cognitive skills. (Bocoş, (coordinator), 2017, p. 275).

Self-reflexive journals have a significant contribution to the development of meta-cognitive strategies, to self-awareness through introspection and to the development of self-reflexivity as a mechanism for self-control and self-regulation of aspects experienced in the process of learning. (Bocoş, (coordinator), 2019, p. 291).

I am presenting such a self-reflection journal, used in the topic "Psychosocial climate" (Anca, 2020, p. 283).

**Table no. 1:** Using the reflection journal on the topic "Psychosocial climate", for discipline -Student class management.

<p><b>ANALYSE!</b></p> <p>Use predictive-evaluative learning through the PORPE strategy! (adaptation after Neacșu, 2015, p. 135)</p> <p>P (Predict) - Anticipate, make predictions about the text!</p> <p>O (Organize) - Organize the content to be studied effectively!</p> <p>R (Rehearse) - Repeat the essential ideas with small personal stories!</p> <p>P (Practice) - Practice learning, by applying procedures that have been proved to be effective!</p> <p>E (Evaluate) - Evaluate your initial messages and set them as an integrated set of ideas!</p>	<p><b>PRACTICE!</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make a conceptual map / cognitive organizer, in which to highlight the (inter) relationships and (inter) determinations between the key concepts /key phrases identified in this subchapter.</li> <li>2. Show the interdependence between the school climate and the leadership style practiced by the principal/ manager of the school organization.</li> <li>3. Write an essay on "The role of the psychosocial climate in the development of the instructive-educational process".</li> </ol>
<p><b>REFLECT AND SELF-ASSESS YOURSELF!</b></p> <p><b>Self-assessment journal</b></p> <p>Today, I have learnt.....</p> <p>Today, I have recalled that....</p> <p>Today, I have written that....</p> <p>Today, I have discovered that.....</p>	

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