BOOK REVIEW

GEORGETA PÂNIȘOARĂ. PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING. HOW DO CHILDREN AND ADULTS LEARN?
Iași, Polirom Publishing House, 2019, 296 pages, ISBN 978-973-46-7725-2

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RECENZII

GEORGETA PÂNI OAR . CUM ÎNVA COPIII I ADUL II?
(Psychology of Learning. How do Children and Adults Learn?)
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The present volume, *Psihologia înv   rii. Cum înv   copiii i adul ii?* (Psychology of learning. How do children and adults learn?), is coordinated by Georgeta Pâni oar . It came recently into light in 2019 where it was published by Polirom Ia i, under the „Psihologia Copilului & Parenting" collection coordinated by the author herself.

Other authors who have contributed to this collection are: Ruxandra Chirca, Barbara Cr ciun, Violeta Ene, Siliva F t, Cristina Marina Ghi , Florinda Golu, Ana-Nicoleta Grigore, Iuliana Laz r, Ovidiu Pâni oar , Nicoleta Laura Popa, Alexandra Predoiu, and Radu Predoiu. Most of the authors are teachers currently teaching (assistants, lecturers, senior lecturers, professors, etc.) either at the University of Bucharest, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences or at the University of Ia i, "A.I. Cuza", Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences. By far this brings about a lot of career experience in the field of learning in general, as well as metacognitive perspectives.

Georgeta Pâni oar 's previous works focused on certain topics related to: motivation, career management, education, psychology, etc. Here are some of the works she wrote or co-authored: *Medaliile de succes 2. coala de vis* ("Success Medals 2. Dream School"), *Medaliile de succes 3. Marele muzeu*

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al c r ii ("Success Medals 3. The Great Book Museum"), *Cele 7 medalii ale succesului* ("The 7 Success Medals"), *Managementul resurselor umane* ("Human resources management"), *Copil ria i adolescen a. Provocari actuale în psihologia educa iei i dezvolt rii* ("Childhood and Adolescence. Current challenges in the psychology of education and development"), *Motivarea eficien ei. Ghid practic* ("Efficiency Motivation. A Practical guide"), *Integrarea* în organiza ii. *Pa i spre un management de success* ("Integration in organizations. Steps towards a successful management"). The author has also co-authored different educational materials for teachers or parents: *Personality game* and *Provocarea emo iilor* ("Provoking emotions"). As one can notice, the author has constantly addressed challenging topics in her work that support the coordination of the volume.

Looking into this volume, Georgeta Pâni oar has brought together various fields of interest that one might have not pursued so easily: human resources management, career management, pedagogy, psychology, and educational psychology. Our authors discuss various themes which for students, parents, psychologists, educators, school counsellors and even researchers in the field of education are of great importance, nevertheless in a single book. In this respect, the volume looks into common or uncommon typical learning angles, from childhood until adulthood, the capacity to learn, strategies approached to learning and how to improve learning from an early age up to maturity. In this volume, the authors include essential psychological "clues" for learning such as how to achieve good learning skills for everyday life. They are summarized through suggestions, questions or recommendations at the end of each chapter in a way that reminds an effective lecture where the audience/readers get a final in-depth core knowledge.

The book's main theme is "learning", a key factor in anyone's development, child or adult: "learning is present to us from birth to the end of life, whether it is convenient or not" (Pâni oar , 2019, p. 13). What the readers could recognize is that the emphasis is mainly on the need to find various coping mechanisms in order to develop a positive psychological "learning strategy" through behaviour, motivation, creativity, management, etc., to oversee the multitude of information with which one is confronted every day; aspects that are underlined throughout the book.

The main "key" that opens the door over the years for constant "learning", improving one's learning habits or even overcoming certain obstacles encountered in/during school or outside of their environment, could be "held" by each individual, in which one has to comprehend the various learning influences encountered daily in order to cope with them: "all around us there are learning opportunities. From birth to death, we learn continuously. Consciously or unconsciously, spontaneously or in a systematic way, directly or implicitly, we are subjected to various learning influences, which may impact us or improve us more or less" (Pâni oar & F t, 2019, p. 15). In other words, this equation discusses about the relationship between us and our environment, the influences surrounding us as a *modus operandi,* in that from the beginning of our life, we need to understand that the learning process is somehow determined by the *know-how* of our learning influences that are with us until adulthood.

The book contains an introduction, with seventeen short chapters and several subchapters associated. These chapters could be seen as learning modules, from the beginning to the end of this volume, chapters and sub-chapters, that contain subjects that one teaches, as the theme of the title suggests, where each chapter or subchapter becomes more and more an "educational approach to learning", the "substance" needed to give them more connotations for the readers from a didactical perspective (the tendency to teach and learn). Equally, as the individual starts to apprehend the world around him/her, how to eat, walk, write, calculate… they are more and more aware of what he/she has acquired, how to adapt to knowledge, how to overcome various learning milestones, even negative ones, during their life. This allows the individual to have a clearer and more coherent approach towards learning: "the process of understanding can have a complex and sinuous path, but it can be, with the help of positive, easier and more pleasant benchmarks, assisted by an intrinsic motivation, by the psychosocial balance, by the personal and managerial competences of those who guide this learning process" (Pâni oar , 2019, p. 14).

Our authors present in these chapters and subchapters definitions, applications, examples, descriptions, questions, exercises, case studies, etc., from both a psychological and pedagogical approach for the readers aspects which reflect teachers' perspective, applicable for many areas, such as: child

development, pedagogy, educational psychology, teacher training, etc. I will not go into every chapter or subchapter separately, leaving the reader to go through the volume, as a learning process, since some of them (2ⁿᵈ chapter through the 12ᵗʰ chapter) follow the same sequence: introduction, theory, reflection questions, conclusions based on presenting a certain theory.

The first chapter: "Learning. Definition of learning" (*Învăţarea. Definiţia învăţării*) consists of an introduction to, as the title suggests, definitions related to "learning", simplifying and contextualizing the idea surrounding this word, alongside with others issues: factors that are involved in learning (cognitive, biological, etc.), forms of learning (e.g., e-Learning). An easy statement is provided to the readers related to the fact that we have it in us to reach the "key hole" of learning and adaptability to make our life easier: "…learning contributes to the development of personality, a personality that continuously adapts to the challenges around it. These [challenges] are more and more substantial and that is why we must be prepared for what our daily life reserves" (Pânişoară & Făt, 2019, p. 23). If the readers have questions about their own mechanisms of learning, this chapter offers some possible answers.

As mentioned above, in the 2ⁿᵈ chapter through the 12ᵗʰ chapter, the authors provide information about the various learning theories: associationist/ behaviourist (J. Watson, EI. Thorndike, B.F. Skinner, E.C. Tolman), Albert Bandura's theory (social-cognitive learning); humanist theories (C. Roger, A. Maslow); constructivist theories (J. Piaget, L.S. Vygotsky); cognitive theories (traditionalist, social, cognitivist, multimedia, etc.) (Pânişoară, Popa, Enea, Ghiţă, Grigore, Predoiu, & Lazăr, 2019, pp. 25-157). Apart from this, they offer substance about the psychoeducational implications that each theory addressed following a similar template: questions, an introduction, the theory undertaken, applications, exercises, etc.

"Forms and styles of learning" (*Forme şi stiluri de învăţare*) is another chapter in this volume, where the learning process is explained comprehensively and where in Florinda Golu's view, each individual has the ability to manage his/ her own resources: "knowing how to learn, how to create and direct your own learning environment requires a good knowledge of your own personal resources and availability, learning

objectives and contents, transforming learning into an active, personalized, creative and constructive process" (Golu, 2019, p. 178). In this chapter, she reflects upon the perspectives concerning learning, the link between education and learning, the types and forms of learning, explaining how some people are very efficient in the way they are in learning, etc. The author underlines the fact that it is important to know your dominant type of learning (audio-visual, logical-mathematical, kinesthetic, visual, etc.) in order to improve your own learning skills, necessary for identifying the best strategy and resources for learning.

In the thirteenth chapter, "Motivation for learning" (*Motivarea pentru înv are*), we are looking into how to motivate ourselves when we try to learn. The authors, Georgeta and Ion-Ovidiu Pâni oar , touch upon how important it is to introduce, cultivate or increase our intrinsic motivation level in our learning habits from a young age through discovery and encouragement strategies: "children who learn about their motivation and others will be able to use the power of learning to grow as successful adults!" (Pâni oar & Pâni oar , 2019, p. 195). Another main "clue" that our authors underline, in this respect, is that other key people or factors contribute to increasing our motivational level, such as: social approval, the need for affiliation, curiosity/knowledge, exercise, etc. (Pâni oar & Pâni oar , 2019, pp. 181-195). In other words, the school community, but nevertheless the family, play an important role in developing our motivation for learning from a very fragile age until adulthood.

 "Creativity" (*Creativitatea*) is another main subject presented in this volume, consistent with the main theme of the current issue (no. 2/2019)[1] and with the inventory of factors that contribute to learning, consequently, creativity could be developed from a small age depending on: the development of intrinsic motivation, intelligence, intellectual skills, styles of thinking, creativity ability innate (mathematics, art, etc.). Apart from what was mentioned above, the two authors present: definitions associated to creativity, obstacles in developing creativity, etc. (Predoiu & Predoiu, 2019, pp. 196-218).

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[1]   See the Call for paper 2/2019, http://revped.ise.ro/call-for-papers-journal-of-pedagogy-no-2-2019/.

Although the fifteenth chapter, "The status of learning in the age of technology" (*Statutul înv   rii în era tehnologiei*) is short, the author emphasizes the fact that technology gives the individual the ability to select and adopt the best strategy of learning suited for him/her, an aspect that should not be neglected considering that our world is permanently changing. Ruxandra Chirca, the author of this subchapter, reveals George Siemens's view on the new learning theory related to "connectivism". In his opinion, "learning is a process that takes place within chaotic environments, whose fundamental elements are subject to permanent changes, which cannot be controlled by the individual (Chirca, 2019, p. 226). What is significant for the individual to understand from his point of view is that the information we acquire in our learning process is actually vital for making lifelong decisions; information gives us the possibility to adapt easier in a changing world.

Another author in this volume, Barbara Cr ciun, emphasizes, in the second last chapter, "Self-regulated learning and its benefits" (*Înv   rea autoreglat   i avantajele sale*), one of the main elements that surrounds the psychological viewpoint of learning, embracing a wide range of variables that influence this process, that are intertwined somehow with the chapters above: self-efficacy, will, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, cognitive strategies, cognitive reserve, maintaining positive beliefs, controlling emotions, etc. It is about the "self" and "regulation" if we break up the two words, an aspect the author pays attention to: "a way of self-direction by which pupils or students transform their mental skills into academic skills (Cr ciun, 2019, p. 246).

The last chapter of this volume was written by Cristina Marina Ghi   , "Success and failure in learning. Factors of influence" (*Succesul i e ecul în înv   are. Factorii de influen   *), as the title suggests, "success/failure" are aspects associated to learning. The author poses a series of questions to sketch this chapter: "how to define success in school?"; "what should a pupil do in order to avoid school failure?"; "does a pupil of success become an adult of success?"; "how can we overturn learning difficulties". As an incentive given by the author, she underlines the fact that each school actor should have in mind: "the capacity to concentrate, work, resistance to effort, ambition, enthusiasm and efficiency" when faced with critical moments (Ghi   , 2019, pp. 263- 264).