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Mihaela SUDITU, Cristina Georgiana SAFTA

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Mihaela Suditu*
Cristina Georgiana Safta**

Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiești
Educational Sciences Department
Ploiești, Romania
msuditu@upg-ploiesti.ro
csafta@upg-ploiesti.ro

Since the advent of new communication technologies, students, now digital natives, have changed, and their relationship with learning, with school, with the way they relate to knowledge and, beyond that, with the world in general, is no longer the same. In these circumstances, teaching, learning and schools cannot ignore this development, which makes both the provision of equipment to be quickly obsolete and the offering of new learning methods to become an imperative in/for education.

The book *The Digital Natives' Schooling*, written by Prof. Emil Stan, PhD., from the Department of Educational Sciences, Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiești, invites us to reflect on a collection of issues concerning the relationship among students and the school and the educational environment from a current perspective, as defined by digitalization.

The basic premise is the following: *Are classrooms ready for the unique needs and expectations of the second-generation digital natives?* The idea of internet connectivity and computers might seem reassuring if it weren't

* Professor, Educational Sciences Department, Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiești, Ploiești, Romania.

** Associate professor, Educational Sciences Department, Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiești, Ploiești, Romania.

ridiculous; the educational environment, like any other kind of environment, is not made up of objects, as it might at first seem, but of the relationships that people who populate it establish with these objects: “The idea that the environment contains objects is wrong. It contains relationships.” (Clear, 2019, p. 84)

And the relationships that give substance to the educational environment make up the codes and rituals that the classroom assumes and (often) implicitly conveys to children; for example: they are used to learning in groups (sharing), but assessment will certainly be individual; they are used to being connected, but the school demands individual efforts; they prefer a flexible timetable (an anti-timetable, rather), but the school imposes a strict sequence of study subjects and issues; they are immersive and passionate about the world of games, but the school accepts and uses only didactic play; they expect frequent rewards (the instant generation), but the school rewards medium and long-term effort; they seem rather intuitive, creative, looking for patterns and big pictures, although the school requires analysis, reasoning, linear thinking.

In Daniel Pink’s terms, it can be said that schooling is (still) centered on *S-type thinking*: “It is a form of thinking and an attitude to life that are characteristic of the left hemisphere of the brain: sequential, literal, functional, textual, and analytic.” (Pink, 2019, p. 41)

At the same time, digital natives (especially second-generation digital natives) come to school with specific *D-type thinking* skills: “It is a way of thinking and a way of looking at life characteristic of the right hemisphere of the brain: simultaneous, metaphorical, aesthetic, contextual, and synthetic.” (Pink, 2019, p. 42)

Enlightenment ideas about school and its purpose have been distorted over time, resulting in the depreciation of *D-type thinking* and the reduction of the educational process to one of instruction; instruction is concerned with “lateral connections”, the links between elements - similarities, differences, correlations, causes and effects, in a word, explanations and predictions, whereas education is concerned with “hierarchical connections” between elements - good or bad, right or wrong, desirable or undesirable, in a word, valuations of them.

Thus, we can deduce that the result of the above-mentioned ideas can be constituted in a genuine collection of problems that teachers and educational policy makers alike face (or should face), problems that are amply and critically analyzed by the author throughout the 10 chapters of the book.

The first issue - *Classroom Management and the Implications of Neurosciences* - concerns the rethinking and reconfiguration of classroom management; today, classroom management is primarily concerned with optimizing instruction, ignoring the possible consequences for education. Effective management of classroom relationships and resources means fostering those behaviors that result in high test and exam results; paradoxically for some, this type of classroom management has led to increasingly poor results in tests and examinations (hence the learning crisis); the recommended solution has been to overuse rewards in order to maintain children's interest; as a consequence, rewards have become trivialized and their motivating force has diminished. Therefore, a paradigm shift in classroom management is needed and it should integrate key concepts from *neuroscience*.

The second issue – *Why Should We Go to School?* – reveals the paradoxical situation the current schools are in: they have increasingly powerful techniques and devices at their disposal, but they have lost their purpose; children no longer know why they have to go to school. As such, although there is talk of a learning crisis, school today is more of an education crisis, in the sense that it has simply forgotten the *Big Story*, the narrative that underpins its purpose; more specifically, the experts' efforts have been focused on optimizing the ways of learning (engineering), but have ignored the metaphysical problem: children no longer know why they have to go to school, given that they can learn anywhere, anytime, anything (online learning is a trifle for digital natives). The issue of reclaiming the educational dimension of school is addressed by asking: *Why should we go to school?* And the author's (tentative) answer is, somewhat paradoxically: to play.

The third issue – *About Education Again* – reveals the compatibilities and incompatibilities between the digital natives and the role of school as it is understood today; as a center of learning, school is outpaced by the digital competences of this generation, which has access to information but lacks

the standards, criteria and practices that allow the conversion of information into knowledge and the recognition of fakes; school has lost its power of seduction, which means that motivation, cultivation of values, intuition, creativity, and what is generally related to *type D thinking* (Daniel Pink) are no longer to be found in the classroom. So, *once again back to education* and bringing valuable experiences into school.

The fourth issue – *Ideal and Models* – derives from the ruination of the ideal understood as a standard of excellence, capable of generating motivation and the need for *imitatio*; but the need for *imitatio* has remained (it is one of the most effective ways of learning), even if models (as a form of substitution for an absent ideal) no longer possess the seductive power of the ideal; at the same time, the generation of digital natives finds itself without metaphysical support for life projects, which require the postponement of reward, prolonged efforts, the ability to resist temptations in the vicinity; in other words, if it takes ten thousand hours of practice to acquire expertise in a field, what support will ensure the consistency and coherence of this effort? The answer lies in the chapter on *Ideals and Models*.

The fifth issue – *Edutainer Versus Traditional Teacher* – is generated by the supposed discrepancy between the traditionalism of the teacher (looking to the past and the classicization that the past brings) and the modernity of the internet generation (looking to the future and the legitimacy conferred by novelty); if this is the case, school reform should mean only reforming the ways in which teachers are trained and selected. The Edutainer is, according to its supporters, the school's response to the challenges of contemporary children's culture, the way to make school relevant to the needs and interests of the child. But what if children's needs and interests are unacceptable from the perspective of the adult world? Can children's needs and interests be perpetuated so that they become the needs and interests of the adult world? Because, if not, it is more appropriate to look at the child from the perspective of the adult s/he can (must) become. These controversies constitute the substance of the chapter *Edutainer Versus Traditional Teacher*.

The sixth issue – *The Crisis of Learning – The Obsession of the Present* – addresses one of the *obsessions of the present – the crisis of learning*; the current approach in the field studies learning in isolation from education,

as a technical problem that can only have technical solutions. This has led to what Neil Postman calls the ‘engineering of learning’, neglecting the implications for education and the crisis that the absence of the educational dimension is creating in schools (schools are perceived by digital natives as old-fashioned institutions in which they do not feel at home); neurosciences reveal the neural mechanisms of learning and the close correlation between learning and education, with the results of research in this area giving substance to this chapter.

The seventh issue – *The Game and a Gambling Demonstration* – is generated by the absence of a child-friendly narrative that gives school its legitimacy; in this sense, three key concepts are analyzed: work, play and didactic play, in an attempt to change the perception of the educational process, tacitly assimilated (so far) with work, specific to adults; didactic play is the alibi of the marginalized or resigned teachers, who try an external infusion of interest where enthusiasm and involvement are lacking; emphasizing the transvestite role of the didactic game is further complemented by outlining a narrative about the purpose of school around play in its authentic sense; in other words, it is worth going to school if play and its characteristics are the paradigm of the educational process.

The eighth issue – *Motivation Beyond Trust. Comments on the Margins of Others’ Ideas* – is generated by the absence of the motivational force of a school that cannot credibly answer the question: why should children go to school? In other words, teachers have to resort to external processes (external rewards, in the broad sense) to energetically support the learning process, thus making up for the school’s crisis of purpose; the substitution of education for learning has had the consequence of replacing the development of the possibilities of the human being, as far as it is possible for the human being, by developing the skills required on the labor market; the transformation of school into a vocational school has imposed the recourse to external rewards for more and more children, those who do not discover any inner drive towards what school has to offer.

The ninth issue – *The Rewards and Their Demons* – addresses the lack of effectiveness of the external rewards used in school and proposes a reconsideration of the rewarding ways in line with neuroscience research;

given the volume and diversity of stimuli in the child's life we have to accept the conclusion that the child's habitual way of life is highly dopaminergic (they receive too many rewards); as such, the classroom cannot keep up with the child's life environment, which means that the reward system available to the teacher is rather hypodopaminergic (either fewer or less attractive rewards); the situation is also aggravated by the crisis of purpose that the school is going through, which means low internal motivation in children; against this background, in addition to reconsidering ways of recovering internal motivation, it is also necessary to reconsider ways and tools specific to external motivation (use of external rewards).

The tenth issue – *Gamification and Its Educational Impact* – refers to stimulating children using a process taken from the world of video games – gamification; gamification transfers into the educational space specific elements of video game mechanics – points, badges, praise, organization of rewards in several levels representing increasing levels of difficulty, etc. At the moment, studies in the field emphasize both advantages of gamification – stimulating internal motivation, which enables children to become involved in the medium and long term – and possible disadvantages – addiction, manipulation of children, blocking critical, autonomous thinking.

In an analytical, explanatory and, last but not least, critical manner, the ten issues raised by Professor Emil Stan, we believe, should shape the codes and rituals of the contemporary classroom, as well as the solutions that classroom management puts at the disposal of teachers. Faced with digital natives, in an environment (school) in which they recognize themselves too little, teachers must first of all be able to answer the ten issues that make up this collection in a way that makes sense to children. We also say that a book (all books) should contain collections of issues and not of solutions.

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