

About a (non)theory of education. Education for peace versus education for war

EȘI Marius-Costel
“Stefan cel Mare” University, Suceava, Romania
E-mail: mariusesi@yahoo.com

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Abstract

The analysis of an educational theory in terms of the peace-war relationship illustrates a relevant view whose defining aspects are given by a number of issues that in our opinion are related to the typology of the organizational culture. Such social differences, which are related to the dimension of the organizational culture, generate a series of problems that are not always offered positive solutions. The dimension of social/educational pragmatism somehow reveals the need for a model of empowerment of all the social actors towards what is in terms of morality/ethics the imperative of social utility. Thus, the assessment criteria of the optimization sequences of such a model can be considered mere qualitative aggregates of the very idea of education (for peace/war).

Keywords: *education for peace, education for war, (non) theory of education, pro-social behaviour, universal humanism*

Introduction

The idea of education in the analytical context that we have developed within this scientific approach is, at social level, a functional structure whereby the activities of (self) education of the social actors become relevant to the extent that such a view highlights a socio-educational reality that refers to a specific pedagogical approach. Thus, the activities developed within the educational dimension can materialize only if the socio-educational actors can exert some influence upon the social system (for example, the case of opinion leaders or educational leaders). This situation reveals several axiological meanings that can explain the involvement of the social actors in relation to their own pro-social behaviours. In fact, any kind of assumed education involves a process of valorisation and action that is meant to reveal specific typologies of the human/collective personalities.

1. Peace education and universal humanism

Peace education, described and explained in relation to at least two assumed goals (Read, 2012: 13), can be correlated with education for democratic citizenship. This issue becomes fundamental and primary when it comes to educational sciences. In other words, the understanding of the structural forms of humanity depends on how the concept of “peace” is understood in terms of mentalities. Everyone’s right to peace also involves the right to life, the right to intercultural education and the right to tolerance.

In these circumstances, education for peace is the same as education for positive peace (Reardon, 1988: 26-35). In the context of the new educations, education for peace involves taking into consideration a common conscience, wherewith humanity is reassessed. Maybe this is why humanism provides independence, but generates social crisis (Husserl, 1993: 203-230). Hence, the need to adapt to events related to the authority of the society's conscience; thus, the idea of humanism requires an analysis that also takes into account the global aspects. However, the adaptation is closely related to change. The new type of humanism requires a change in mentality; however, its materialization requires what A. Toffler calls *a movement that responds to future challenges* (Toffler, 1995: 34).

The behaviour of the society in general shows a causal development according to the new scientific results but also to the structural changes to address social injustices which may be the cause of violence (Galtung, 1990: 291-305). Despite this *generalized humanism*, the responsible commitment of some social and political systems to the human condition is poor. In this respect, the historical and political events that had and still have an important role in explaining the issue of humanism and the idea of education for peace/for war are well-known. Under the pretext of controlled humanism, the general conscience of the present can cause hatred. Humanism wins if it finds a way to explain certain changes within a social system. Reconsidering certain prerogatives complies with the need to avoid *moral solitude*, which means the individual's privation of values, symbols and patterns.

1.1 The idea of education and paradoxical values

In a pragmatic context, the idea of value related to that of humanism has specific connotations. This humanism claimed by the society enables a conscious approach politicized in the middle of the contemporary thought. Stressing the fact that "humanism is laic through its own foundations; it is also an original creation, typical for the European culture" (Morin, 2002: 81), E.Morin points out the idea that humanism gives rise to contradiction. This contradiction tends to grow along with the development of science, which involves reducing the human dimension at global level. The problem of reducing humanism shows the existence of certain needs that have to be identified and that can meet both the simplicity as well as the complexity criteria. In this regard, we believe that the new political changes lead to the emergence of *strategic humanism*, which is promoted by the major powers and has socio-economic implications.

Sometimes the paradoxical social system existing at a certain moment is characterized by an inconsiderable attitude. The social system is full of paradoxes; within it, the idea of education for peace is more than obvious. Not acknowledging the existence of such a system means negating your own conscience. Or, without conscience, one lives for the history of impossibility. Any system that adopts conventional education falls into a lethargic state, without even getting to know its own weapons that it became a pray to in the first place.

1.2 Value milestones and pragmatic rationalities for assuming the idea of (non) theory of education

A planned society without any pragmatic rationality refers to a state of humility of the social process in the sense that the development of rationality reveals the decline of pragmatism. In other words, planning somehow excludes the idea of evolution at socio-economic level in terms of a specific understanding. This does not mean that rational thinking based on a specific approach

strategy should not be accepted in an evolutionary approach; instead, it means that the intention of development according to an exaggerated rationalism can highlight certain limits and even a stagnation of the actors involved in this process. Trying to avoid unsubstantiated speculations, through these insights we are trying to point out that planning that cannot be justified should not be adopted at social level. Scientifically, irrational planning rather refers to a logically extensional understanding of this phrase. Therefore, *irrational planning* is a logic term designed to support conventional education which is incorrectly put into practice.

In this respect, we believe that the humanism – peace education relationship also requires an analysis from the perspective of the main events that take place in the world, which sometimes influence the political and economic context. In this context, we are taking into consideration the role of the identity factors in understanding the idea of conflict (Johnston; Stewart, 2007, 247-251), and that of peace education as empowerment education (Harris; Morrison, 2003: 84). Such an approach involves positive and negative implications in terms of (non) assuming the idea of conflict, and the idea of peace education (Davies, 2005 : 17-34). Thus, setting clear objectives and actual work in the educational dimension are, in our opinion, important milestones in the analysis of the educational process at international level.

These problems are systematized in the thoughts, frustrations and reactions of the present, which is always facing interrogations regarding specific aspects of the existential context. This is precisely why some authors highlight the fact that peace education involves a distinction between conflict resolution and conflict transformation (Salomon, 2004 : 123-124). All these facts reveal a tacit form of complicity in adopting conventional education. In other words, the emphasis would be put on those *moral intuitions* that reveal “intercultural uniformities of judgment” (Chomsky, 2007 : 145) of those involved in a socio-educational approach.

2. Specific attitudes of the social actors involved in promoting and supporting the idea of education (for peace/ war)

Although we are responsible for acknowledging and promoting the idea of humanism, becoming aware of it does not provide a full picture of the contemporary destiny. However, we can say that its ontological reconstruction is a specific way of integrating new values that are meant to promote the idea of humanism at any *level of organization*. Such values, which are grounded on a specific form of education - conventional education, involve becoming aware of certain principles that are not always related to pragmatic criteria. Moreover, from our point of view, such an approach acquires some specific pragmatism to the extent that such values assumed by the social actors have a utilitarian equivalent within the community they belong to.

As a structural entity, peace education promotes attitudes of the social actors wherewith communication relationships become possible after a whole process of selecting the information. Moreover, the social criterion only supports the moral (self) assessing principles that peace education must take into account. The activities undertaken in terms of an integrative theory of peace education (Danesh, 2006: 55-78) are materialized to the extent that the socio-educational actors may have some influence on the social system. This social fact refers to axiological meanings whereby the involvement of the social actors determines pro-social behaviours. In fact, any form of education involves a process of valorisation where responsibility and personality development involve a certain state of mind. This kind of approach generates a certain axiological share of the resources of any kind in terms of the human conscience.

We are taking into consideration the example of the reforms that emerge after a conflict is over, which aim at the “deconstruction of education” (Shibata, 2005). Moreover, education is more than a social and economic issue to the extent that its fundamental principles do not always converge towards the pedagogical models assumed at social level. In other words, the problem of implementing the educational process is a matter of principle, which highlights various pedagogical models. However, the educational typology reveals a number of shortcomings that exist at social level, which result from the misunderstanding and misapplication of the fundamental principles of an educational paradigm (Sommers, 2005: 197). In this respect, the removal of some conceptual and theoretical contents from the curriculum is possible precisely because of the lack of professionalism of those involved in this process. The assumed objectives of this type of education show certain issues that are meant to support ideas regarding the quality of professional (self) training. In other words, the effect of operationalizing certain specific objectives refers to multiple ways of interpreting a (non) theory of education.

2.1 Axiological limitations of the society of yesterday, today and tomorrow

The system of social values represents a level of organization structured in such a way that the action strategies may become more efficient. Describing the social reality in terms of the logical-philosophical education generates major changes regarding the educational system. The understanding of such realities must be based primarily on the attitudes of the social actors and then on the operationalization of the objectives assumed by them.

The materialization of a (non) theory about education reflects a complex psychosocial situation that can generate specific attitudes of the social actors. In other words, we are dealing with different levels of understanding the way the social life develops and should (must!) evolve. Fears, religion (particularly, faith), the organizational culture and the idea of value (as it is perceived in different societies), etc., all these simply illustrate different ways of interpreting and explaining the education of that specific system. Moreover, the materialization and (re)invention of education in a particular socio-cultural space highlights an entire universe of values that can be defined according to the emotional states that exist in that society.

This way, the idea of tolerance and the *principle of tolerance* acquire new meanings and significances when certain facts that are more or less justified are assumed. In other words, from our perspective, social responsibility corroborated with “ethics based on the Principle of Tolerance” (Maxim, 2004: 66) determines a socio-ethical paradox: on the one hand, we can note an asymmetry regarding the ethics specific to organizational cultures, and on the other hand we can say that such a situation is within the limits of normality as long as the human being gets a social/ontological/economic benefit. Thus, we can note a number of social, economic and political limitations when trying to develop a diachronic, respectively synchronic analysis about a (non) theory of education.

2.2 Compensation and the educational typology

In our opinion, the analytical study of a (non) theory of education involves a reassessment of the ideas of responsibility and tolerance. Thus, the mechanisms of a social system show that the social policies assumed by the decision-makers do not prove to be effective if the resulting benefits are only visible at ideational level. In other words, in the name of general good or some compensation obtained in a different world, all the actions that are undertaken and assumed acquire ethical and

social validity. Moreover, given that this view becomes justifiable based on a rational model (assumed in relation to a particular organizational culture), we can say that the mental representations of a given community can find correspondence in the social reality if their final goal is the idea of general good, of ontological compensation. This assumption shows that the personal knowledge of a perfect world (in a subjective sense, it goes without saying) translates the idea of (non) theory of education (for peace/for war), in a various way, at different levels of the reality. In other words, in a pragmatic context, the idea of educational compensation related to the dimension of education (for peace/for war) involves a reassessment in terms of the ontological and axiological limitations specific to the social reality. In our view, it refers to the acceptance of an imaginary social representation, where explaining the issue of humanism is rather a matter of principle.

The issue we have raised is in fact a matter of principle. This assumption becomes justifiable when subjective knowledge is materialized in the name of a *Principle of Pragmatism*. Moreover, such a situation determines axiological/ontological meanings and significances according to which the educational reality finds its correspondence in the social reality. Correlated to the idea of compensation the educational typology illustrates ways of expressing the human consciences in relation to the (de) encrypted languages of the human behaviour. Moreover, when we talk about the idea of a (non) theory of education (education for peace/education for war), we can only bring into question the fact that the idea of humanism is present within the disputes between different organizational/virtual cultures (taking into consideration the idea of Internet humanism (Niculescu, 2002: 94-27)) and different human typologies, within the treaties of peace or the more or less justifiable conflicts in terms of social/moral justice and equity. Therefore, this situation shows that the significance of the social/economic/educational reality requires (by means of epistemological explanations) a laborious analysis and judicious conclusions that can reduce the human conscience to a greater or smaller extent (such an idea sounds so relative/vague, but holds so much realism).

Conclusions

The final goals of the activities focused towards a (non) theory of education for peace/war reveal a number of issues which point out the need for the dynamics of the values found within the social dimension. In this context, the educational strategies assumed within the organizational culture can be validated to the extent that they reveal the axiological achievement of the goal assumed by the social/educational actors. Furthermore, when we talk about assuming a (non) theory about education for peace/for war, we must have in mind the fact that certain eligibility criteria need to be complied with; based on these criteria, the assumed educational strategies aim at the operationalization of the whole decision-making process. Such a decision-making process involves a judicious understanding of the organizational culture that the social actors belong to. Therefore, in our opinion, the analysis of a (non) theory of education allows the emergence of new axiological systems correlated with social and economic phenomena. Of course, this situation is possible as far as the axiological context is validated in relation to the perspectives assumed by the social actors in terms of their own organizational culture.

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