

Chapter 9

Developing Student Self– Assessment Competences in the Online Learning Environment Amid the COVID–19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

Didactic self-assessment represents students' ability to make value judgments on their own academic performances obtained as a result of the instructive-educational process. Developing self-assessment competences in the virtual environment represents a major challenge, given that teachers' regulatory intervention to ensure the objectivity of the process is very limited. The aim of the present study conducted on a sample of 139 students from the University of Oradea, Romania was to identify how the implementation of an interactive teaching approach may contribute to the formation of student self-assessment competences as objectively as possible. The results obtained showed that most students tend to underestimate themselves in exams due to a lack of confidence in their own abilities due to insufficient preparation for the subjects studied. However, the use of specific strategies for the development of self-assessment competences can lead to their improvement but only if they are implemented constantly and to as many study subjects as possible.

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INTRODUCTION

The transformations that have taken place in contemporary society demand substance changes at the level of all the segments that compose it. A priority in this respect is education, being imperative to transfer the emphasis to an interactive pedagogy performed at the level of all its components: teaching/learning/assessment. However, the experience of the last decades shows that these changes have made their presence felt only at the level of teaching and learning strategies, assessment remaining dependent on a conservatism manifested by a one-way teacher-student relationship, expression of the former's "excess" of power and authority. On the contrary, in a modern and high performance education, interactive assessment (having formative and, at the same time, forming valences) becomes absolutely mandatory and can be concretised, on the one hand, by teachers' constant and permanent preoccupation for students' academic evolution as well as by the prompt and systematic help that teachers must offer and, on the other hand, by students' active and responsible involvement in the act of their own assessment (thanks to self-assessment and inter-assessment).

BACKGROUND

In the last 3 decades, the instructive-educational process from Romania has undergone significant changes, one of the most important being the shift of emphasis from the teaching/assessment activity of the teacher to the learning/self-assessment of the student (Kiss, 2018). The literature addresses self-assessment from various points of view. In terms of social psychology, Breakwell (1992) relates self-assessment to social self-efficacy and defines it as the perception of each individual on their own abilities, which influences their course of action, cognitive patterns, motivational level or emotional reactions in various situations. The perception of one's own effectiveness is positive if the individual has succeeded in accomplishing the tasks and is negative if the individual has been wrong or unable to correctly anticipate future actions. The authors' observations have applicability in different areas of social life such as orientation towards various forms of schooling, choosing a career or involvement in political or social activities (Breakwell, 1992).

With reference to the educational phenomenon, self-assessment represents "*the student's ability to make value judgments on his/her own academic competences and performances, of his/her own person, in general*" (Stan, 2001, p.11). By analysing this definition, one can notice a number of similarities with Breakwell and his collaborators' conception. As in the case of the social dimension of this phenomenon, academic self-assessment aims at students' own cognitive, emotional and practical skills that will lead to academic performance as an expression of achieving a learning task. However, the two components are not always in a direct relationship, sometimes students may have high availability, but not materialized by performing a school task at optimal parameters. A reverse situation where students obtain outstanding performances in terms of reduced skills for that activity is also possible. In such situations, the role of self-assessment is precisely to seize the real level of their academic competences meant to facilitate the achievement of expected performance.

From a socio-psychological point of view, achieving self-assessment in students is strongly mediated by their personality traits, the requirements of their background as well as by teachers' teaching style. Without the intention to carry out a "factorial analysis" of these elements, it can be noted that students' age can influence the assessment of the difficulty of the task and of their own potential (elements that

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