

We are IntechOpen, the world's leading publisher of Open Access books Built by scientists, for scientists

6,900

Open access books available

185,000

International authors and editors

200M

Downloads

Our authors are among the

154

Countries delivered to

TOP 1%

most cited scientists

12.2%

Contributors from top 500 universities



WEB OF SCIENCE™

Selection of our books indexed in the Book Citation Index
in Web of Science™ Core Collection (BKCI)

Interested in publishing with us?
Contact book.department@intechopen.com

Numbers displayed above are based on latest data collected.
For more information visit www.intechopen.com



Case Studies as Unconventional Meanings

Victorița Trif

Additional information is available at the end of the chapter

<http://dx.doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.70247>

Abstract

The critical exegesis of the epistemology of educational science illustrates various narratives: postmodernist views on educational sciences, links between pedagogy and the politics, dialogs between education and culture, counternarratives, critical pedagogies, etc. These reflect an intellectual space that incorporates various constructions of knowledge: different experiences, fragmentation, transcultural changes, divided borders of educational sciences, conflicts, and unifying themes. This chapter is focused on the Romanian case study in the schools playing a role in developing recent pedagogy. The qualitative research presented in this chapter is based on an investigation conducted from 2014 to 2017 at the University of Bucharest. The target population consists of 300 students in teachers training, and 446 teachers, psychologists, and school counselors who were invited to report case studies on learning topics in accordance with their personal experience. The empirical research aims to explore the Romanian possible identity of case study about learning issues and to discriminate the qualitative features of the data collected. The results are considered mentalistic structures of a case study. In these structures are included learning strategies, life styles, learning styles, teaching styles, communication styles, level of rationale involved in case studies as storytelling, and remarkable' patterns of social network from the classroom.

Keywords: case studies, qualitative research, best practices, communication, classroom management

1. Introduction

The meta-analysis of the educational literature in the workfield reveals the perspective of multi-literacies: pedagogy theory, education studies, education research, practices in education, pedagogy in education, etc. As a consequence of these multiple discourses, there are various categorizations in the function of different theories (causes) conducting to hybrid

educational links (effects). The educational epistemology inserts and develops multiple explanations about the knowledge in the field of education. The data collected reflect four types of explanations:

- a. Epistemological explanation,
- b. Historical explanation,
- c. Etymological explanation,
- d. Contemporary explanation.

The most used explanation is dependent on the etymological perspective: the term “pedagogy” is connected to pedagogue, a Greek slave accompanying the child on his way to school. The time distance between Greek antiquity and the sixteenth century, when imposed pedagogy is important and are negotiated polymodal explanations. The rhetoric of epistemological explanation is related to knowledge and to different cognitive models of science (linear, nonlinear, shifting, etc.):

- Is it about the education sciences?
- Is it about pedagogy or about education research?
- Are questions with ambiguous meanings in the dominant literature in the workfield?

From the vantage point of historical pedagogy could be analyzed in a fragmented way the scientific discourses: these are phases detailed by various thinking schools adapted to multiple cultural links. The key terms demonstrate a shifting identity of the education sciences: “pedagogy theory,” “pedagogy in education,” “teaching pedagogy,” “pedagogy of poverty,” “pedagogy of hope,” “pedagogy of the oppressed,” “pedagogy of multi literacies,” “andragogy,” “pedagogy of higher education,” “pedagogy in primary school,” “digital pedagogy,” “online pedagogy,” “traditional pedagogy,” “radical pedagogy,” “pedagogy in curricular discourses,” etc.

Education wording depends on the globalized society, by finances, by ICT, by news in communication and in STEM, and by the multiform negotiations refined into such different educational systems (USA, France, Italy, Spanish, Romanian, German, etc.). The following table exemplifies the most important epistemological questions in the field of educational sciences in this age of supercomplexity (**Figure 1**).

This chapter investigates case studies in terms of contemporary pedagogy. Worldwide, the researches describe the potential solutions for the traditional classroom structures. The theoretical wordings on the quality of education reveal disparities in educational opportunities or inadequate capabilities. The chapter is based on an approach in relation to Romanian curriculum and contemporary learning cultures. The influences from the vantage point of constructivist, sociocognitive, and sociocultural perspectives evidence a gap between the new learning cultures and the classic views in the field. There is no doubt that the challenge in Romanian education is connected to the challenge from the society. A case study implies discerning between various capacities of the target population: capacity for analysis and synthesis; problem solving; teamwork; capacity to learn; capacity to adapt to new situations; concern for quality; capacity for organization and planning; sense of maturity; thinking abilities; and so on.

Questions	Possible Epistemological Answers
Towards a polymodal world?	Critical pedagogy
Linking education to cultural studies?	Cultural pedagogy
Linking education to learning environment?	Educational psychology
A pedagogy for life?	Lifelong learning
Towards excellence in teaching?	Teacher education
A bound pedagogy?	Hybrid educational sciences
Towards reconstruction in education epistemology?	Multiliteracies pedagogy
Rethinking recent pedagogy?	Cases studies

Figure 1. Questioning educational epistemology.

In many educational systems, case study [1] served for disciplinary content knowledge. Currently, we live in a measuring culture. Assuming this hypothesis, the contemporary Romanian case studies involve new knowledge, skills, and experiences both from the part of the teachers and students.

Case studies are discussed in the literature as knowledge context-dependent [2]. Rhetoric on case study delineates the meanings [3], the identity, the categorizations, the analysis procedures [3], and so on. From the perspective of the critical exegesis [4] based on research methodology [1], it is important to specify the continuities and discontinuities concerning the camps of fieldwork. There are varying approaches implying polarization of paradigms: case study versus survey; questionnaires versus case studies; qualitative versus quantitative; objective versus subjective; numerical evidence versus textual evidence; and probabilistic versus opportunistic. Within this paper, the meaning of case study includes a continuum [2, 3] delineated by various understandings: an event, a situation, an individual, a method, an approach, a narrative, and a learning problem. This understanding is related to an epistemological explanation of case studies, the philosophical questions of the issue. The “sophisticate” attribute of the approach resides in an authentic combination of different kind of methodologies [1], theories, and paradigms. Assuming this hypothesis, the case study is a concept defined in contrasting points of view [2]. When taking into account, the dialog between learning and curriculum [3], it is about the intrinsic case study. Instrumental case study means using case study in order to clarify the Romanian identity of learning problems. The huge number of different data (cases) collected provides that a research could be considered as a collective case study. To conclude, a research is very complex, combining opposite paradigms. These involve exceptional documentation, atypical design of the research, and special effort to capture the educational reality.

The research is based on a personalized design of investigation and takes into account both subjective and objective data. Beyond the review of the literature in the fieldwork, this approach has been conducted in terms of longitudinal study over time within the University of Bucharest during the period between 2008 and 2017. The stages of the research could be delineated by the followings steps:

- The pretesting stage (from 2008 to 2009) using students as target population;
- The pilot research (from 2009 to 2010) using students as target population;
- The research itself (from 2010 to 2012) when the respondents were teachers, psychologists, school counselors, and students from the University of Bucharest;
- The stage of test-retest (from 2012 to 2017) using students as participants.

Because of the supercomplexity of the research, the target population was involved in realistic, relevant, and explicit tasks. For example, over time, the tasks were focused on various situations [2]: recognizing the case study; reflecting on the case study; reporting the case study; assessing (measuring) the case study; solving the case study; selecting a case study from the Romanian press; comparing case studies (from different levels of education, from different cultures, from different thinking school or trends in the field, etc.); delineating the principles of case studies; evidencing practices; identifying case study applications (in education, in social sciences, in neuropsychology, etc.); giving specific examples; and clarifying implications.

Apart from the analysis of the studies published as a result of the investigation, this paper examines the data collected in the confirmatory stage of the research. Equally problematic as the demands of the approach were the nature and the extent of the investigation beyond the academy. It is about the SOPHRD/87/1.3/s/63906 project on learning issues. This wording critically presents the qualitative materials collected in the project in order to cover the requirements according to case study. The target population consists of 300 students in teachers training, and 446 teachers, psychologists, and school counselors who were invited to report case studies on the topic of learning in accordance with personal experience. The objectives of the research are as follows:

- To explore the Romanian culture of case study about learning issues (ethnographic part of the investigation in order to clarify the culture of Romanian case study);
- To examine the typical features of the data collected (psychological level of the investigation).

From the 446 participants in the project, 400 narratives were collected from the answers; 360 case studies were selected in terms of the topic. Only 300 narrative exercises are considered “master narratives” and are measured in a scientific way. From 300 students in teacher training were collected 290 narratives, and 200 were considered scientific discourses. As a consequence of these explicit requirements or theoretical considerations, the findings are literally based on 500 descriptions of the learning discontinuities in schools.

There is a Romanian educational reality that could be examined by the following thematic and linguistic structures (**Figure 2**):

1. Personal or individual case study
2. Organizational case study
3. Case study as interpretations of cultures
4. Case study in terms of leadership practices
5. Case study as school-community interrelationships
6. Case study as a story (piece of literature)
7. Case study as a problem to solve
8. Case study as general considerations on the topic
9. Reconsidering the task
10. Semiotics as a result of previous generalizations
11. Personalization of case study
12. Example of wording on learning problems
13. Cases selected from foreign educational systems
14. Case study as a narrative explanation
15. Case study as shift in discourse defining pedagogy
16. Case study as making inferences
17. Case study as action research
18. Case study as specific knowledge

Figure 2. Categories of analysis.

In terms of ethnographic research, the collected narratives offer a “natural” manner to look at the Romanian learning problems. The findings could be interpreted according to the following typical discourses; each type of situation is illustrated by a significant example:

(a) Personal or individual case study

“B. I. is a student in the fifth grade, is part of a family with reduced material possibilities. The parents do not have stable jobs, and the family income is represented by the grandfather’s pension and by the children’s allowances. (B. I. has a brother in the first grade in the same school.) He is diagnosed with ADHD by the psychiatrist; his intellect is at the limits of normalcy, has low interest toward school activities; he has not promoted in Romanian and in French classes on the first semester.”

This discourse details the aspects relating to the socioeconomic environment of the student’s family, the family structure, and typology. The highlight of the parameters from the perspective of a psychological and educational process give consistency to the case portrayed. It is a narrative about the individual case of B.

(b) Case study as a story

"A 11-year-old student, comes from an orphanage (the children's home). Departing alone from school, unattended, and neglected (he does not do the homework). Mother visits him from time to time (at the beginning of the school year, at the end of the semester, and at the end of the school year) arrives late to classes, often is not prepared for lessons; has no writing instruments, books, and exercise books. He is encouraged by his colleagues to learn, to play together but without any echo from his part. Many times, he is given as a negative example by the teachers, because he does not do the homework."

(c) Case study as a problem to solve

"The case study is about a student in the fifth grade in danger to have to repeat the fifth grade. At birth, he was abandoned by his mother—who was then 18-year-old—and his father is not known. He was taken into care by a lady who knew his natural mother. Subsequently, she christened the boy, becoming his godmother. The boy has been educated by his godmother and her husband. It is necessary to mention that his godmother and godfather never had children and were quite old when they got him. They try to offer the boy everything. He meets the natural mother, but he refuses any relationship.

The boy is overweight, and when he entered the school, he became the target of offenses from the part of classmates; sometimes, even from the part of the teacher. In the second semester of the fourth grade, he has been moved from his class to another class because he refused to activate in the same collective. He was emotionally affected, offended, and marginalized. In the fifth grade, his godfather died, and he was supervised and educated only by the godmother. Shortly, he became violent: he hit a colleague with a chair in her head and used violent language with the teachers.

Now, after the event, he refuses to come to school and his godmother is saying that he should not do that and not knowing what to do. The boy stays at the computer all day and does not care about anything."

Compared to most of the collected narratives, this case study is different because it offers a history of the problem and delimits the causal relationships.

(d) Case study as general considerations on the topic

"(The case or the student) might be

- extremely selective because he learns only subjects that she/he likes;
- low interest toward school (maybe it is about other rewarding mechanisms; for example, prizes obtained from a concern for artistic order);
- a child going through a family trauma, which remains unknown for the school environment [5];
- maybe it is about a child who was not taught to learn and face a particular difficulty of learning and is not able to solve the learning problem;
- a student with an upside down value system."

Narrative descriptions are based on the dissociation of the core features of the weak student from the vantage point of learning; the wordings are adding psychological delineations strictly in each sentence.

(e) Reconsidering the task

“Weak student in learning:

- is low motivated intrinsically;
- the parents of the student are not involved in the activity of the child or the parents’ educational constraints appear manifested by unrealistic requirements that causes demotivation;
- (the student) has negative relationships—in family, in school, and from the vantage point of social perspective, in general—which generates labeling of the student;
- from the economic perspective, the conditions of the family are around average;
- the parents are divorced or separated;
- the whole educational activity of the student is at surface, inconsistent, and poor.”

The writing correlates the motivational aspects of the case with relationship, environmental, and performance issues of a Romanian prototype. Some of the research participants associate the task with the portrayal of a weak student in learning, which could be considered a routinized or “soft” view. The wording is comparable with any of the similar case study presented in the global literature in the fieldwork.

(f) Semiotics as a result of previous generalizations

The student with low performances in learning:

- “is absent;
- disturbed constantly working overtime because he does not understand;
- seeking justifications and guilty for his failure;
- defies the teaching framework;
- develops family conflicts;
- disorderly behavior;
- trying to impose by force or by power in front of colleagues;
- low extrinsic motivation;
- choosing to evidence himself by negative activities or by dezaptative modes (e.g., smoke);
- lacking self-confidence;
- manifesting the need of affection and valorization.”

The wording includes two parts: the first part details the profile of the student, while the second part outlines the features as a result of generalizations. In terms of personality, it is delineated

as a contradictory image: assertive or unassertive, extrovert or introverted, educated, or ignorant student. The consequence is the fact that there are very numerous cases in schools. The dichotomic structure acquires a whole dimension by connecting various cognitive genres of the narrative: cognition, social cognition, moral cognition, and meta-cognition.

(g) Personalization of case study

“George is a student in the fifth grade, coming from an authoritarian teacher that managed the classroom all the time. In this class, apart from the primary school, George works with many teachers and sometimes he does not understand the tasks. During the classes, he plays with personal objects and disturbs the colleagues. He is helped by a school counselor that explains to him the rules and the discipline requirements. At home, he is establishing for himself the rules and the program, but he does not assume the workloads in school or at home. He becomes attentive and cooperative only if his mother is called... George needs permanent control.”

This narrative is a mini essay in which the causes to learning deficiencies, daily problems, and exceptional circumstances are presented. The end of the case adds a conclusion, an educational diagnosis, and a suggestion for the student’ educational therapy.

(h) Example of wording on the learning problems

“The student that has learning deficiencies:

- is constantly bothering hours or is always dutiful;
- has poor social relationships or develops conflicts;
- comes from a family where relationships are in trouble and parents do not encourage the child to learn effectively;
- the claims of the parents are exaggerated or the parents are indifferent to the style of education and toward the outcomes of the student;
- (the student) has no motivation toward learning;
- (the student) can have difficulties of understanding the educational content;
- (the student) is contaminated by the negative cultural models;
- (the student) is part of a group in which the beliefs and the principles are in disagreement with the education and personal development;
- (the student) is in need of understanding the topic and educational support all the time;
- (the student) has cognitive gaps and fluctuations of attention;
- (the student) needs affective attention;
- the behaviors could be outside social rules;
- in the classroom, the child might be marginalized or stigmatized.”

From the vantage points of linguistic and semiotics, the narrative is structured in the form of seen traits; in terms of educational and psychological perspectives of the portrait as a whole.

(i) Cases selected from the foreign educational systems

"An Egyptian student aged 12 years was physically assaulted by a teacher because the student was not doing the homework at home. Aggression has resulted in the death of the student. The Ministry of Education from Egypt decided that the school located in the neighborhood of Cairo must close until the completion of the case. It is necessary to mention that the regrettable event took place on the 5 March, and the pupil's death occurred on the 8 March... The case is inextricably tied to race violence... It is known that people who live in a violent environment most often adopt an aggressive behavior."

The case is connected to the state conflicts in entire Egypt and to behavior theories.

(j) Case study as a narrative explanation

"I choose this case because it has created a situation that tends to become a habit to a certain category of schools in tertiary education.

Unfortunately, the Romanian schools can be divided into two categories: (1) very good schools and (2) very poor schools. In the second category, the most important cases are those of violence which, even if they differ from one from another, are about the same causes.

In the present case selected, two students from a high school listen to music during the mathematics class. Such cases have multiple causes:

- lack of education on the part of parents,
- the absence of communication between parents and their children,
- the educational deficiencies of students,
- lack of interest from the student and parents toward learning,
- the promotion of negative patterns in society (the model of dishonesty),
- because the school is currently talking about the students' rights without detailing the students' obligations."

The wording is focused on explanations; the case identity consists in explicit sentences about the situation—problem.

The critical exegesis of the multiple case studies is based on the key features of the case study. The most important areas of case study are grouped into classes or categories by exploring between:

- strength of reality and repeatable problems;
- attractive metaphor and scientific description;
- "hard data" and impressionistic data.

2. Analysis and discussion of the results

As it is illustrated in the findings, each case is a piece of reflective written text that could be discussed as cultivating communities of practices. The discourses are categorized as follows:

- explanations about a specific process;
- answers giving details concerning features of the reality of education;
- structures logically sequenced for a relevant problem;
- tasks (pieces of work or of an activity).

In terms of explanations, the cases are often complete, clear, and unambiguous. The target population narrates the response without difficulty. As answers, the texts remind that the communicative competence of the teacher is important. The frequently asked question is related to the teacher as a “co-communicator” because of the achievement problems. Our discussion is not based on gender-role stereotypes. Taking into account the sociocultural diversity, the collected data argues the necessity to delineate various students with achievement problems:

- students with failure syndrome developing self-handicapping strategies,
- students interested in protecting their self-worth by avoiding failure,
- students who procrastinate,
- perfectionists students,
- uninterested or alienated students.

The analysis of the cases demonstrates that there are different realistic problems, including these in the following examples:

- nonperformance,
- underestimation of learning task,
- students with negative, self-damaging thoughts,
- students with low motivation, with support, or undercut motivation,
- cases about high anxiety and constant worry,
- unrealistic expectation achievements,
- students promoting behavioral diversions,
- apathetic students, uninterested in the learning process,
- problems with high pressure because of the social comparisons,
- students dramatizing or ignoring the learning tasks.

The exegesis illustrates the students typically characterized as students with achievement problems, but a special concern could be the issue of socioeconomic status, dealing with

behavior problems, or the climate of the classroom. The cases are stories about chaotic classrooms, communication, motivation, relationships, and sociocultural contexts. It is necessary for the teacher to currently reflect on goal-setting activity and on the plan to teach. The following comments are important for the excursus (**Figure 3**):

The collected observations reflect the wide range of psychological principles and educational orientations explaining the facts. The case studies narrate about managing the classroom behavior and the individual behavior; presenting directly aggressive style, manipulative style, passive style, assertive style, or active style promoted by the members of the Romanian educational communities. The classrooms described by the target population are different social groups called permissive, aggressive, authoritarian, chaotic, authoritative, or democratic classrooms. These give the reason to develop reflective programs to train teachers in order to understand the processes of solving problems, cultivating collaborative work, and researching the best Romanian practices. It is dangerous to establish algorithms of feedback in the classroom without preparing teachers to create their own classroom rules. Despite the fact that the violence is a major problem in schools, a good management strategy might be able to combine authoritarian style, face-to-face style, offset style, seminar style, and cluster style.

Features of the semantic network provide a substantial amount of emphatic elements, social and emotional intelligence, and gestures. The messages are coded or not, but the variables of

Explicit and Implicit Perspectives on the Task
<p>"The school is a lab... It depends on the teacher to be positive, to influence and to communicate. "</p> <p>"There are various conflicts in Romanian schools. The examples are presented in the press."</p> <p>"The sellected case is about violence in school. It is a very complicated situation because of the behavior problems involved."</p> <p>"The case is about the lack of the strategies to managing the tasks in the classroom from the part of the teacher."</p> <p>"The teacher's relationship with the psychologist and with the manager of the school to solve the case. The strategies and the techniques to be adopted are well examined by the team."</p> <p>"The case relates the situation of an adolescent beaten by his four classmates in a Romanian Secondary School. The punishment applied to the young boy could be compared to a horror film."</p>

Figure 3. Reflections and issues: a summary.

communication differ in the function of the aims. A number of barriers or communication limits, misunderstandings, and psychological distortions are typical for the semantics analyzed. The antagonist cultures of the players involved in the educational process are indicated by the vocabulary. The lexical is "clear," "truth," connected to "learning landscape," "direct," inherently including the symbolic representation of educational problems. Different aspects of language from the data collected may explicitly prove that the findings are re-lexicalizations of putting into relationship the human spirits. Some different cases should be considered as a transfer of human agency from the contemporary society to the learning space. It may be about the observation of social codes in educational contexts.

It is impossible to reflect upon case studies without considering the social mental aspect that is being communicated. Educational communication working practices gain meaning because of the network that links cultures, thoughts, and words; communication is a condition of contemporary social people, but it is an effect that creates links between people. As a result of interpreting the findings from this perspective, the potential explanation refers to the social kaleidoscopic of school life. Anthropological linguistics regard state learning practices, mentalistic structures of the cases, learning strategies, life styles, learning styles, teaching styles, communication styles, level of rationale involved in case studies such as storytelling, "remarkable" patterns of social network from the classroom, etc.

In terms of educational communication, the narratives are dialogical forms of knowledge and are logically linked to innovations in education. Various members of the educational communication socialize, exchange meanings, send and reframe messages, relationships, influence each other, rethink solutions, etc. The critical exegesis of the case studies collected indicates that its linguistics forms are closed to news press or Internet styles. All the patterns of conversations found on socialization networks (Yahoo, Facebook, and mobile phones) as well as the representation of the case studies in terms of tacit knowledge involves interpersonal elements and social semiotics. Concise and accessible narratives are connected to the plurality of voices from the press: the language illustrates ways of coding social values, consensus and contradictions, and conversation and transitivity. The linguistic structure of storytelling confirms the schemes of modality: terms such as "with regret," "should," "may," "fair," "correct," are consistent details of descriptions. The model of educational communication is very much depended on syntax, terminology, contents, and dynamic of interaction (as in news) through cases. Educational communication becomes an interaction between people, intra-, and inter-groups (students, teachers, staff members, educational decision-makers, etc.). From these interactions, it is possible to delineate options of participants, new assumptions, connections with theories, and a new cognitive map of the ideational functions.

The communicative interaction from stories looks into the terms of disagreement presentation. There are many varieties of negative communication configurations. This means (**Figure 4**):

The cognitive representation of the whole map of communication as a result of the research could be drowned by the following patterns: a few normal teacher-students relationships, huge disagreements between different groups of students, people insulated from the educational organization, adverse effects of the mechanical confrontations between different tribes or cultures, a negative agency in the schools reflecting the conflicts from the entire society,

"a negative map of communication (in family)"

"a negative image of the classroom as an organizational system"

"fight between the two student groups as well as between the teacher and the students"

"many tensions between the students and the teacher"

"the social relationship from the classroom is illy"

"the fact that in this map of communication the teacher is isolated from the classroom"

"the best learners from the class don't communicate with the rest of the students"

"a negative brotherships (between the students)"

"the formal norms used in schools and the informal norms of the students which are at war"

"the negative classroom atmosphere, the moral of the students which is low and the affective resort of the students is downgraded"

Figure 4. Content analysis of negative communication.

contradictory norms, etc. It indicates subjectivity, new logical relationships, different geometrical configurations of social dissonance [3], liaisons of both—deontic and epistemic authority, socioeconomic troubles, new power manifestation in society and in school, etc. This new register emerges from the borders between the official discourses on education and —paradoxically—implicit, dialect, educational communication. The changes of status and roles of the educational community members are reflected in the immediate linguistic context. This demonstrates that the map of educational communication shows different levels of motivation, tensions, different needs, various distances adopted in communications, a renegotiated truth of discipline in classroom or in school, etc. Some of the written narratives showed thematic statements that were identified (**Figure 5**):

"the distance between the best learners and the worst learners are huge"

"there are incorrect positions of peers to the smartest learners"

"the educational climate is influenced by the social network"

"it is a negative coalition"

"the smartest learners are minoritars"

"it is about the power reproduction and its result is frustration"

"the relationship is based on domination"

"uncommunicativity and frustration are the most important characteristics of the case"

"the psychological dimension of the classroom is ambiguous"

"the implicit norms are more important than the official rules"

Figure 5. Example utterance connected to observational categories.

Some of the writings focus on the operational dimension of the classroom: the need of strategies, principles, techniques, or any mechanisms to solve the case. There are specified different “surviving techniques or measures,” “domination principles,” “stress,” “risks,” “confrontations,” “negative attitudes toward one another,” “divergent behaviors,” “revolt toward formal authority,” “unfriendly relationships,” and “ambitions.” The language of the case studies reflects a rigorous sociometric exegesis of micro-social picture. This image, of reject each other, is contrary to the normal classroom. All the cases are related to classroom management, educational communication, assessment, educational psychology, educational sociology, and educational counseling and suggest new critical reflections in order to establish new connections between the fields that contribute to conceptualizing learning. A new pedagogy as a hybrid entity could produce new methodological guidelines for new needs of education. Traditional approaches of the educational groups as well as the creative steps of engaging students in learning could solve the sophisticated educational situations collected in the present research.

Following the scientific conventions that aim producing rigorous and credible research, the data collected have been analyzed both in terms of descriptive and explanatory case studies. The literature of analyzing case study contains various strategies: logic models, explanation building, process and outcome evaluations, cross-case synthesis, and rival explanations. The theoretical positions of this research design (systematic requirement of case study investigation, results, validity, relevance for generalization, sensitivity, etc.) are convergent with communication literature initiatives based on cross-case synthesis and rival explanations. The data collected indicate a sophisticated social network of educational case studies. The systematic analysis of narratives indicates the following qualitative cross-synthesis: classmates’ relationships; educational communication in school; outside school interventions, community illness (as values, attitudes, relationships, etc.), features of the educational atmosphere, etc. The case study analysis demonstrates the heterogeneity of multiform risks: risks of replicating the identity of bad or even the worst human agency in everyday life, the risks of disturbing communication, the risks of amplifying confrontations between groups, the risks of “soul” pain, etc. The results are interpreted from two viewpoints: educational communication paradigms—synchronous and asynchronous—and the words as indicators used by the target population to describe or to explain the cases.

The reflective nature of learner and learning require exploring alternative ways of lesson planning and instruction. The categories and outcomes for design instructional objectives could evaluate how well the teachers work: knowledge, understanding, application, thinking skills, general skills, attitudes, interests, appreciations, and adjustments. Helpful guidelines for future managing classroom behavior could be used differentiating between social and scientific attitudes; between personal, educational, and vocational interests; or between social and emotional adjustments. The design lesson takes into account various ways of thinking—creative, critical, and caring thinking.

Not surprisingly, the amount of writings covers the assumption about the interdependence between minds and cultures or about models of minds and models of education. The narratives are ways of thinking about the conception regarding the mental abilities of learners,

teachers, and parents. The effort to analyze the data is an active interpretation of facts, attitudes, expectations, behaviors, meeting of minds, thoughts, professional practices, beliefs, and perspectives on human understanding, spatiotemporal meanings, etc. The chapter starts with a classic expression of the problem going to intersubjective-objectivist understandings of the case study.

There appear several sides of learning in the discourses:

- Behaviorist dysfunctionalities,
- Cognitive recombinations of the reflections,
- Constructivists conceptual structures,
- Social learning interactions.

This exploration of the data collected by contemporary learning cultures produces explanations about both mental processes and “making meanings.” For individuals, communities, and organizations, the learning is important in order to generate a shared experience.

A consequence of the target population’s differential way of responding to the task is the wide range of discourses. Several respondents mention in a visual way the problem from the case; images are powerful. Another writings are correct procedures to represent the potential achievement of a pupil. Several narratives detail the cultural context of the cases. Some cases are descriptions of daily situations from the classroom—drawing the hesitant, the unmotivated, the anxious, the dependent, the untypical, or the poor learner. These views reject the universal commodity of understanding the case study as a turbulence in transition. In contrast, the issue of ethnicity, the home-school relations, the identities of the school, and the special educational needs are all themes presented in the examined descriptive profiles, requiring conventional and unconventional discussions. The case-data are untheorized situations about values, cognitive styles, and the curriculum.

The research is a unique approach on the Romanian curriculum, based on a very complex investigation, risky for the researcher (because of the Romanian Eastern countries’ social problems), and proving a problematic image of the reality. Each case is both a metaphor and a truth and the knowledge is context-dependent. Most of the cases reported are explained by social dissonance [3]: the counter-cultures of the families, of the schools, and of the society. The discussion is complex because values, beliefs, ethics, attitudes, and behaviors of those involved are antagonistic. Interpretive analysis of the data requires multiple dimensionalities [1, 2] of the data collected—psychological, didactical, sociolinguistical, logical, and open-ended strategies. The multiple sources of evidence could be connected to the human agency in the classroom, in the school, and in the society. As an educational situation, each case study is a classic representation of student life, classroom life, or school life; as a human agency, the inflexible practices suggest the lack of cultural synchronization between educational process players.

From the vantage point of linguistics and semiotics, the words inserted in narratives are related to various functions of educational communication [2, 3]. The words from the data collected

are considered ways to express meanings. One of the most widely used analysis in case study relates to semantics as the study of meanings of the words. In the context of this investigation, it is necessary to explain that case study refers to the definition from literature [1] and semantics. This is important because it is in line with denotation (as emotional overtones of case study) and its connotations (as nonexplicit meanings).

The critical analysis of the case studies has revealed that words are linguistic entities giving sense to verbal messages. For example, most of the titles of the cases presented by Romanian press contain key knowledge important for the changes of the information in the society: “without education, without future” interrelate social and educational perspectives. The words are tools of educational communication with a role in expressing thinking, knowledge, feelings of those involved, and features of the educational environment. Discourses are logical systems of sentences, phrases, and meanings describing the educational reality from polyphonic views: philosophical, psychological, and social in a constructivist or in a postmodern way, etc. Words are signs that enable participants in an educational environment to organize communicative roles. This approach has the potential to deal with linguistic relativity given the social context of language.

The wordings from the findings could be considered an example of a particular discourse community, an educational discourse distinctive by the fact that the problems of learning are the most significant resources to explain interactions between students, teachers, educational staff, parents, inspectors, press, etc. Changes in meanings are inserted in the descriptions of the cases. In terms of linguistic analysis product, the formal question concerning the presentation of case studies maintains the cognitive system of the target population. “Control area,” “confrontations,” “limits of the educational situation,” “opposite rationales or arguments,” “lack of communication,” “barriers”, “real problem”, “problem-solving”, “rebellion”, “judgments”, “dispute”, “fight,” “refusal/denial” are words demonstrating that the descriptive style relocate meanings in a new social agency. There are speaker-learners, speaker-teachers, active speakers, neutral speakers, critical speakers, etc. Linguistic equipment is closely in relation to counter-cultures from the educational space. In such circumstances, social dissonance [3] is sustained by a new property of linguistic competence: formal and informal mental heritage is reconstructed in a new habitual social language. Literature in the fields contains various theories according to agency: mechanical agency (agents and objects), actional agency (agents and action), and cognitive agency (agents and attitudes). These conventions are included in the exegesis. Empirical explanations of target population indicate a new common sense of a new moral agency in the classroom (**Figure 6**).

There are connections to the moral curriculum, to the classroom management as a moral activity, to the direct and indirect moral instruction, to the moral atmosphere from education (e.g., sociomoral atmosphere in the class). In terms of micro-level indicators, the written communications contain signs that reflect distributed cognition, moral cognition, cultural models, conceptual brands (multi-literacies), gender issues, technical steps of communication or classroom management laboratory (e.g., prototypical schemas and subschemas or subsets of knowledge stored into memory). These lead to intersubjectivity and interactivity

- "it is about a conflict between the teacher and the students"
- "there are emotional barriers"
- "the situation indicate communication barriers"
- "behaviors were modified"
- "there are educational troubles"
- "this is an unexpected event"
- "it is a critical context"
- "semantic distorsions / dissonances"
- "lack of positive guidelines"
- "there are shortcircuits"
- "I don't understand what has happened in the classroom"
- "confrontation between the parts involved"
- "lack of open ideas to the problem"
- "bad experiences"
- "social relationship disturbed"
- "various human typologies and disturbed formal assessment"
- "informal and organizational dimensions of the classroom"

Figure 6. Countercultures: types of response.

in communication and to mental representations of behavior involved. The construction of realities within cases uses words as ingredients of language: there are interactions between peers, between parents and students, between community and school, between educational staff and press, mass media effects and students, between students and teachers, and between organizations.

The framework of micro-paradigm suggests some formal structure involved within cases' identity: "un-pleasant," "guilty," "incident," "bad," "worst," "beaten," "unsatisfied," "fight," "disturbed," "broken," "fear," "tensions," "pressure," "mistake," "contradictions," "myth," etc. The qualitative analysis of the texts reveals multiple images of social dissonances. The theory, research, practice, and evaluations of education from the texts reflect the appetite of

the respondents to consuming science. The verbal statements are connected to the story from the case study. The following example is in relation to the epistemology of scientific argument: “A shocking incident was in Motru. A student throws himself on the window because of bad marks in biology.” The rhetorical point of the case is related to canonical methodology providing explicit questions, using scientific tools, arguments, and adapting professional protocols.

Beyond this dual analysis—micro-level indicators (e.g., word and sentence) and macro-level indicators (structure of the case study as linguistic text)—the research offers a multiplicity of strategic level of communication: social communication, organizational communication, educational communication, philosophical communication, mathematical communication, institutionalized, and noninstitutionalized communication. The results could be linked to a diversification of theories or adapted models of meta-discourse and discourse: structure and content stories, narratives style, and their educational implications, gender and written communication, learning as a symbolic and social process, intertextuality in case study, semantic and structural constraints of educational comprehension, etc. The cross-sectional exegesis proves that there are inserted demographic variables (age, gender), risk perceptions and risk behavior, personality characteristics (emotions, moral cognition), motivations, skills, beliefs, educational constraints, persuasion, etc. In many cases, there are inserted terms that exemplify correct and incorrect interpretations of classic and contemporary theories from the fieldwork. The results reflect the various schemes of communication from different perspectives: rhetorical, sociocultural, phenomenological, sociolinguistics, semiology or semiotics, ethnography or ethnomethodology, psycholinguistics, etc. The constraints from the conceptual framework on text linguistics are considered multiple textual voices about written academic discourse. Rhetoric from the case studies was based on multidisciplinary approaches: beyond the conventions working adopted in different cultures—discourse analysis, text science, textology, text studies—the results confirm the research questions about Romanian culture of case study with a particular identity.

Most of the contradictions lead to hostility, victimhood, poverty, intergenerational differences or conflicts, suspicious gipsy versus diplomatic white persons, etc. In these terms (of synchronous and asynchronous communication paradigms), the linguistic material can provide strategic analysis of the educational phenomenon as well as a multimodal exercise.

There are various educational ideas. Among conclusions or lessons to be learned, these must be expressed as follows:

- The study cases are expressions of the changes arising from the cultural context. In numerous educational systems, there are various learning cultures.
- A possible version of varied meanings of the case study take into account the idea that cases are inherent anomalies of the education policy.
- The longitudinal research serves as a systematic collection of Romanian insights in order to discriminate the distinctive feature of narratives. The symbolic space [4] brings together psychological, educational, sociological, and linguistic resources.
- Because the communities create and transform meanings, the findings could be analyzed in terms of universal models from the literature in the fieldwork.

- Hermeneutic meaning is based, first of all, on the contemporary learning culture. The exercise is clearly linked to curriculum. It is not surprising that there are involved critical issues concerning curriculum planning and development, curriculum management, teaching perspectives, or curriculum ideology.
- The investigation explicitly suggests ways in which the theory and practice interrelate.
- The study cases are complex social issues and the solutions are unpredictable.
- Arithmetic addition reflects the need of different approaches to guide an exemplar research: seeing investigation as problem-solving, a form of “moral knowledge,” and “academic subject” based on realms of meanings—symbolics, empirics, esthetics, synnoetics, ethics, and synoptics.
- Most of the cases reported are explained by social dissonance because of the counter-cultures of the families, of the schools, and of the society. The discussion is complex because the values, the beliefs, the ethics, the attitudes, and behaviors of those involved are antagonistic [2, 3].

To conclude, cases studies are meaning systems and unconventional ways to reason about everyday moral issues. The findings are potential premises to establish codes of conduct. In these terms, schooling effects of moral or prosocial development [5], teaching as moral craft, building characters in schools, etc. are parts of a holistic view on education.

Author details

Victorița Trif

Address all correspondence to: victoriatrif@yahoo.com

Faculty of Psychology and Education Studies, University of Bucharest, Bucharest, Romania

References

- [1] Gomm R. *Social Research Methodology. A Critical Introduction*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan; 2008
- [2] Trif V. Case study—An interpretive exercise. In: *Romanian Journal of Experimental Applied Psychology; Special Issues*; Bucharest; 2016. pp. 125-129
- [3] Trif V. *Cognitive, Semantic and Social Dissonances into Assessment*. Saarbrücken: Lampert Academic Publishing; 2017. pp. 73-82
- [4] Lemeni A, Mihalache S. *Realitatea și semnificațiile spațiului*. Basilica, București. pp. 14-15
- [5] Cristian A. *Vocația terapeutică și asumarea ei în activitatea bio-medicală și activitatea pastorală* [thesis]. Iași: Alexandru Ioan Cuza University; 2015

