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THE PROFESSIONAL OF EDUCATION VERSUS THE CHALLENGES OF YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMMORROW

ABSTRACT

Looking back at the beginnings of my professional career, with a detailed approach of the period after 1995, when I obtained a Ph.D. in education, the fundamental finding is related to a strongly emerging feature: that of *unity in diversity*.

The habilitation thesis has a title suggesting the *permanence of education* along the history of human being and the *lifelong learning* along a human being life, two features that become challenges for the professionals of education.

The thesis is structured on two main parts [according to the Order no. 3121 of January 27, 2015 (art. 6)]

a. A first part presenting the significant scientific and didactic results obtained after receiving the PhD in Educational Sciences. This part captures the main aspects of my professional academic and scientific evolution on defined topic areas; this part is focused on subject areas intrinsically related to educational management that has represented the topic of my PhD thesis. These, together with the issues highlighted and argued in the second part of the thesis are fundamentals for the proposed development directions within the eighth chapter.

b. The second part is focused on the arguments concerning the ability to coordinate research teams, to organize and manage the teaching process, explaining and facilitating learning and research on thematic areas of activity, complementary to the first part.

The paper, as a whole, has eight chapters and two sequences of references. Three chapters are related to the first part of the thesis and other three represent the central body of the second part. Chapters VII, VIII serve both parties alike. Thus, they present the main directions of action planned for my future activity (chapter VII) and some reflections instead of conclusions. The references from personal publications and the references and bibliography as support for the original contribution presented in this thesis are the last sequences of the thesis. The original contribution is the result of an in depth documentary research on the evolution of curriculum concerns along the history of the people living on Romanian lands.

A brief description of the chapters is necessary.

I. The Ph.D. Dissertation: presents the topic of the thesis and the original contribution of the author; the novelty of the field educational management (centered on its institutional hypostasis) along the years of 1993-1995 in Romania is stressed out.

II. The chapter *Personal contributions in the field of curriculum studies* has two subchapters. The first gravitates around topics related to curriculum, as it is reflected in my publications and communications produced over the years, underlining some personal points of view. The second is, in itself, a personal latest contribution, specifically designed for this thesis. It is an extension of a chapter included in an important book published under the aegis of International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies, of which I am a member of General Assembly. This thoroughgoing study of the historical perspective connected to curriculum covers a long period of evolution of education on Romanian land: from ancient times to nowadays. Writing this part was for me an interesting opportunity to value an impressive experience of the past, to become aware about the incredible intuition in Romanian education of elements that are considered extremely new and modern. A deep concern for developing through education of the local population, and a remarkable care for the educational institution and its professionals appear as being obvious. The Romanian education has had pioneering features; the formal preschool education, as just one example, had been introduced at the beginning of the twentieth century; it was much earlier introduced in Romania than within countries that then and now are considered as being substantially more advanced. If only these aspects would be taken into consideration nowadays the major milestone of a genuine educational reform may be identified.

III. The third chapter (centered on contributions to **teacher training**) deals with the issue of teacher training, one of the topics of interest for my research work and my professional activity itself. The first subchapter is in this case as well, a new contribution and it deals with the same historical perspective of the issue of teachers training. The second subchapter presents the personal published contributions in the field; based on my professional experience, some personal points of view are argued.

IV. The fourth chapter is focused on my **concern and contributions within the academic field**, as a result of 19 years of experience on academic level, based on other previous 21 years of teaching and having connected activities within the pre-university level. Before being a scholar, I had the privilege to work as teacher from kindergarten to high school, at all the intermediate levels, in main stream education and special education, as speech therapists and career counselor, and finally as trainer for in-service training of teachers. I had passed all the specific degrees of pre-university system.

This chapter involves an analysis of Bologna system with its *lights and shadows* and an argumentation about the actuality of adults training area in this beginning of a new millennium. A consistent number of personal contributions are presented.

V. The fifth chapter closes the circle started by the PhD dissertation topic. It goes back to the **educational management** area, this time highlighting my personal contribution along the years after the pioneering approach of the field in my thesis. The structure of the chapter is determined by the nature of the concerns, contributions and personal experience as educational institution manager for 24 years, and precisely envisages the analyze of the manner in which the practical experience has contributed as a source for documentation and research in the field. Furthermore, a proposal on how to manage the human resources, generally in educational reform, and particularly in the curriculum reform, is presented. The analysis presents the key elements of a proposed strategy; this has been the subject of papers published over the years. The subchapter also summarizes the legal framework provided by the educational act in force.

VI. My career have had interesting meanders with a positive side of an unexpected chance to be forced to deal with multiple and complex challenges, both within knowledge area and in the socio – professional one. This is the reason of the sixth chapter structure. As a result of a wide area of **activity connected to my concern for an effective work, the preoccupations and their written results** had to be presented on four subchapters. The first one summarizes 14 topics on interest with their connected publications. The second subchapter presents a selection of significant presences to international scientific events. The third summarizes the involvement in training sessions, documentation visits, co-operating activities with an important impact on my formation. Finally, the last one is focused on my activity as initiator, organizer and co-coordinator of training sessions or other types of scientific activities. Some of them had been pioneering activities at national level.

VII. The habilitation thesis continues with a chapter dedicated to the **presentation of future projects**. It begins with a brief reflection upon the past, considered a necessary foundation for any future projection. Directions for future action are structured on two levels: the scientific and the academic ones. They contain a summary of *rational intentions of a professional who has a full professional background*. I do know, in this moment of my career, that *I still have the strengths to further contribute to the development of the educational field. More than this it is important to feel that the joy of doing this is still inside, without any external constraints under the power of "must" but under the force of "being able to"*. And I also know that *somebody always and everywhere will need an experience and expertise painstakingly constructed, with perseverance and passion and with undeniable, tangible results*.

VIII. As a final point, after more than 20 years of using metaphor in education *a metaphorical reflection upon the balance between the professor as researcher and the researcher of education as professional* is introduced, on the wider frame of a metaphorical representation of education itself.

The last two sequences of the thesis present the references that have been the fundamentals of its design; they are structured on two parts. The first one contains the own publications covering the organized topics within the six core mentioned chapters. The last one presents references and bibliography of the historical perspectives involved as original contribution within this thesis. These two last sequences serve for both the two requested parts of the thesis.

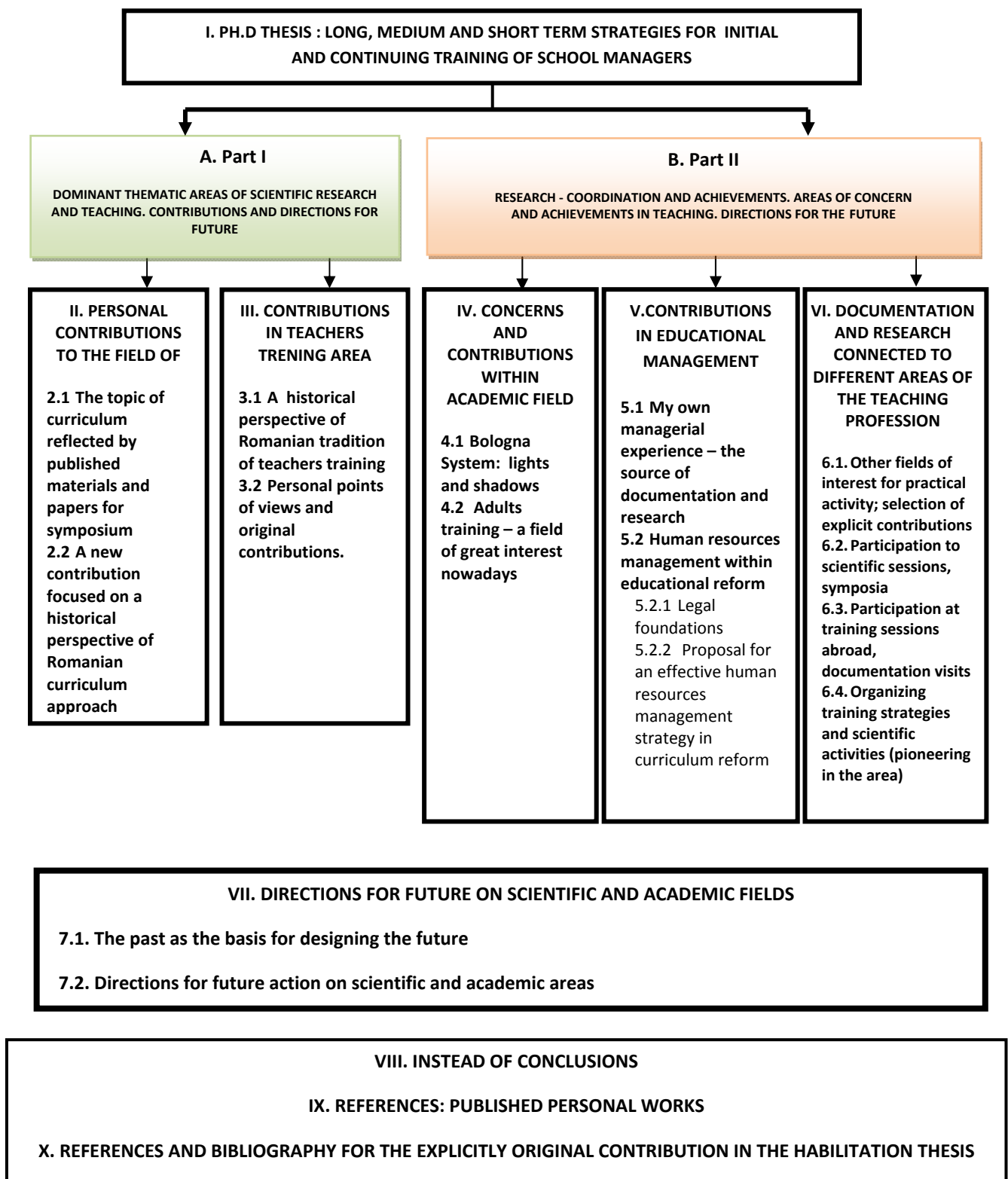


Figure 1. Structure of the habilitation thesis