

## THE HERITAGE OF PROF. GEORGI LOZANOV, PHD, IN THE CULTURAL DOMAIN OF BULGARIAN SCHOOLS

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This report is the first step of an in-depth survey of the organizational culture of the modern school through the perspective of the model of values bequeathed by Prof. Georgi Lozanov, PhD, and formulated into the 7 laws of Suggestopedia. The objectives of this forthcoming survey are the following:

1. To study the place of each of the Laws in the current picture of modern science and organizational culture.
2. To select and apply a relevant set of tools to survey school organizational practices to establish the actual impact of the Laws on school communities and their cultural identity.
3. To justify the viability of the combination of the 7 Laws and their synergic impact on organizational culture in case of harmonious interrelated application.
4. To formulate conclusions regarding apparent and hidden resources for organizational development offered by the Laws, and to delineate potential perspectives for recognition and use thereof.

The text of this report is in the direction of a favourable opportunity for the transfer of this model from the field of pedagogical work to the wider context of school culture and the life of the school community as a whole. If we allow ourselves to extend the process of

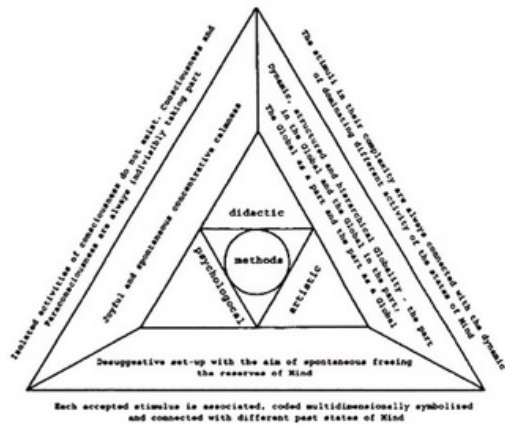
generalization of the topic and transfer the impact of the Laws of Suggestopedia to interactions in the human society, then their philosophical nature may evolve further and be rethought into a new social theory – a model for empathic and creative co-existence and algorithm for public progress. Thus, this report is an Introduction [1] to the global topic of Suggestopedia Laws and school organizational culture. The author aims to justify the sense of this interrelation and invite the audience to explore the idea's potential, namely: applying the laws of Classic Suggestopedia, as formulated by Prof. Lozanov, PhD, to the models, motives and degree of interaction in the school community in order to check how their intended realization and complete application impacts human activity, satisfaction with organizational communication and motivation for participation and empathy to common aims and the building of a sustainable positive culture at school.

At concept level, it is valuable to clarify:

- Prof. Lozanov's concept of the Laws of Suggestopedia;
- The concept of organizational culture.

#### **The seven laws of classic Suggestopedia**

The laws of classic Suggestopedia are defined in the most mature stage of the scientific work of Prof. Lozanov, PhD, in the period after his return to Bulgaria. For the first time he wrote about the main principles of Suggestopedia in 20025 in his book "Suggestopedia – desuggestive learning". [i]



*Основи на десугестологията: външният триъгълник.  
 Принципи на десугестивната педагогика: средният триъгълник.  
 Средства на десугестивната педагогика: вътрешният триъгълник.*

*Foundations of desuggestology: the outermost triangle*

*Principles of desuggestive pedagogy: the middle triangle*

*Means of desuggestive pedagogy: the innermost triangle*

In the above source, he initially formulated three main principles (scheme 1):

1. Joyful and spontaneous concentration calmness.
2. Dynamic, structured and hierarchical globality – the individual in the general and the general in the individual; the general as individual and individual as general.
3. Desuggestive attitude for the purpose of spontaneous liberation of the potential capabilities of the mind.

The Laws are finalized and completed in Prof. Lozanov’s last book, “Suggestopaedia/ Reservopaedia”.<sup>[ii]</sup> There, he describes them as condition sine qua non – an indispensable condition. They lay in the basis of each reservopaedic communication and are so closely interrelated that they need to be observed simultaneously at all times during the learning process. It is exactly the application thereof that results in uncovering the hidden psychological reserves.

## First Law: Love

No fine accomplishments have been made in the world without love. Love creates serenity and trust, and contributes to the prestige of the teacher in the eyes of the students, thereby facilitating the involvement of the subconscious mind. Love cannot be played as the students will feel that. But it should not be understood as some sentimental, soft mood, since this attitude brings about negative reactions. It should be experienced as genuine love for the human being. In Suggestopedia, the teacher’s love for the learners can be best illustrated by means of the metaphor of a parent teaching their child how to ride a bicycle without the child being able to tell whether the parent is holding the bicycle behind or not. Love, together with the other laws, creates the necessary cheerful, genuine and highly stimulating concentrative relaxation. This is a condition of relaxed concentration and brings about inner confidence and trust. Under these conditions of positive emotions, creative mental activity and the global learning process are characterized by the absence of fatigue. The principle of joy and concentrative calmness is realized through a system of games and laughter, through visual materials which are not illustrative but rather stimulating in nature, as well as through the overall organisation of the learning process.

## Second Law: Freedom

Where there is Love, there is Freedom. Freedom empowers the teacher to exercise their personal judgement and to make decisions. Freedom allows the learner to listen to their inner voice and choose their own way to the psychological reserves at different points during the learning process. Freedom is not dictated by the teacher; it is a spontaneous feeling of the learner. It is a feeling that they do not obey the methodology but are free to enjoy it and give personal expression in accordance with their personal characteristics. I.e., reservopaedia

is not pressure; on the contrary, it opens the door to personal expression.

### **Third Law: The teacher's conviction that something extraordinary is taking place**

The conviction that something extraordinary, different from the social suggestive norm, is taking place, results in inspiration for the teacher. This inner jubilation is reflected in the peripheral perceptions of the teachers, which are perceived and created in the learners. What is particularly important is that this setup is spontaneously created by the teacher's state of mind and the learners happily resonating with it, most often subconsciously. This is how the so-called de-suggestive relationship is created at the level of the reserve complex. The teacher's mastery is in facilitating this communicative process of resonance.

### **Forth Law: Very much increased study material**

In Suggestopedia, the study material presented to learners within a specific timeframe should be at least two to three times (times, not percent) larger in volume than the existing norm for other methods. If the traditional norm changes over time, in a few years or generations, the suggestopedic course must also be modified because of the constant stimulation of evolution. If in Suggestopedia the study material is kept within traditional boundaries, this would only fix and enhance the public suggestive norm regarding the limited capabilities of the human being. Thus, evolution would slow down.

### **Fifth Law: Whole-Part, Part-Whole; the Part through the Whole**

When teaching, there must not be separation between the element and the whole. Elements should not be taught and learnt in isolation. Each

whole is part of a larger whole, and this is infinite. On the other hand, this concept is based on some studies of brain functioning, according to which the parts of the brain contain information about the whole brain. According to the three foundations of Suggestopedia, human beings react as a whole and react to stimuli in their complexity. This is another proof that elements do not exist independently, but are always part of a whole. From the perspective of philosophy, there is a great theory that the whole is in the part and the part is in the whole. They are indivisible. There are no isolated entries. Therefore, in learning, elements should be studied together with the whole. The global should render additional nuances to the elements. The atom reflects the laws of the Universe, and the Universe is in the atom.

### **Sixth Law: The golden ratio**

The golden ratio discloses the law of harmony in the Universe that each suggestopedic process should be subject to. Harmony creates harmony and overcomes the psychic chaos often provoked by conventional pedagogy. Harmony is a major factor in teaching and absorbing such large volume of learning material within a short time period. The relations between the parts and the whole are in a golden ratio in the suggestopedic process of communication. Learning capacity is enhanced when the learning process artfully finds the proper balance between rhythms, intonations, emotional stimuli, etc.

### **Seventh Law: Application of classical art and aesthetics**

Classical art and aesthetics are used in suggestopedia as particularly effective mediator. Suggestopedic art creates conditions for optimal psychosomatic relaxation and harmony which help create a condition of spontaneously increased

Acquisition state and enhance the capacity to tap psychic reserves in a pleasant atmosphere. It helps reach the condition of inspiration and distract attention from the 'sore spot', where there is learning-related anxiety. Classical art is introduced by means of specially selected classical musical pieces, songs and arias, literary works, reproductions of art masterpieces, etc.

### **Concept of organizational culture**

The concept of culture adopts the idea that there is a model, a cultural matrix of ideas, rules and norms that unite groups of people giving them identity as communities. Cultural identification organizes public life and creates order, consistency, security and predictability of human life. [iii]

The significance of organizational culture as a major effectiveness factor and a prerequisite for prosperity makes its research one of the exciting and topical matters of management science in the end of the last and beginning of the new century. Scientific literature points to different years when the concept of "organizational culture" was first used. According to some claims, Andrew Pettigrew first used this term in 1976. [iv] According to others, the term was coined by American scientific journals in 1983. What is more significant in this case is the trend of combining the economic and humanitarian area and the quick appearance of ethical and value elements as part of the criteria to evaluate the success of teams and organisations, along with their functional and professional characteristics. The concept of "organizational culture" was established with the publication of the monograph of T. Deal and A. Kennedy "Corporate Culture" in 1982 and of R. Waterman's bestseller "In Search of Excellence" in 1982. [v] In 1989 Deshpande and Webster, following analysis of the predominant definitions in scientific literature in the field of sociology, anthropology and organizational behaviour defined organizational

culture as: "The models of shares values and believes that help people understand the organization's functions and thus adopt the behavioural norms in the organizational structure." [vi]

When applied to school as a specific organisation, organizational culture is a system that comprises and connects different elements of school life. It embraces all aspects and levels of functioning of school organisation, activities and processes. The culture builds the system as a living organism with its own value system, motivation for common efforts and understanding to achieve aims. Therefore, the school is not just a structure, but a more elaborate whole. "A mechanism may be split into its constituent parts without being destroyed, but an organism needs to stay whole in order to life. While the former is self-sufficient, the latter needs care and real food from its environment and is dependent thereon. A mechanism is nothing more than the sum of its part, while an organism is created on a higher level of meaning, aim and purpose that exceed its constituent parts [vii] This is exactly how a school exists – as a living organism.

### **Applying Prof. Lozanov's model to school organizational culture**

The need of organisations and people in the modern world to find ways to combine their individual and collective interests provokes the development of the humanitarian line in management. There is increased need of observing ethical values resulting from the new outlook of people's role within an organisation. The modern values seek to harmonise organizational efficiency and people's individual development needs. In the light of this new view, an individual is no longer assessed only based on their professional capabilities; a higher focus is placed on regarding them as a complete personality. The prominence of trust, empathy and collaboration grows in interpersonal and professional relations. More

importance is placed on qualities such as creativity, risk taking, responsibility. Different opinions are more and more seldom the object of denial and resistance, they are welcomed with good intent and understanding, a variety of viewpoints is sought after and stimulated. The internal communication style is getting more and more democratic, free and informal, without compromising qualities such as openness and decisiveness.

It is exactly in this dynamic of management models and organizational trends that Prof. Lozanov's model would organically fit, as regulated through the Seven Laws of Suggestopedia. If we dare to extrapolate this model from the suggestopaedic cycle and apply the laws to the organizational culture of a school /being the organizational structure closest to Prof. Lozanov's initial concept/, it would only be logical to identify clear values in the functioning of the organisation and the interrelations between stakeholders in education.

We will consider the 7 main role relations directly related to a school's cultural domain, namely:

- Teacher <-> Student
- Student <-> Teacher
- School <-> Society
- Parent <-> Parent
- Student <-> Student
- School <-> Family
- Parent <-> Child



Scheme 2

Innermost heptagon: Laws of Suggestopedia/Reservopaedia

Adjacent triangles: Characteristics of organizational culture

Star beams: Interrelations in the school community

The beauty and potential of this model are extremely tempting for a mind eager for prosperity of school culture. The mutual resonance of laws, the graph of synergy, the holistic impact develop a hypothesis of a multiplied effect on the benefits and advantages for all participants in the processes.

Here is a specific example of formulation of the values of a school environment at a school where the model is applied:

*"We believe that learning through participation in real life is the most valuable, and getting to know the world goes hand in hand with getting to know oneself. We study and interpret learning content through a wealth of cultural and historical, logical and emotional threads. We are supported by the unique school environment – it is alive and beautiful, sparks creativity, collaboration,*

responsibility, and ethics.

#### Values

- *Honesty, tolerance and mutual support*
- *Cleanliness and beauty of the emotional and physical environment*
- *Care and encouragement for everyone's growing potential*
- *Lifelong learning*
- *Balance between freedom and responsibilities*
- *Creativity in any aspect of life*
- *Inclusiveness and connectivity, irrespective of people's social status and capabilities*
- *Protection of cultural heritage*

*When such culture is in place, at least three significant differences can be identified:*

1. Each member of the community is considered to be a unique personality with their own needs, and is free to develop their full potential.
2. A favourable climate and a creative environment are established that turn learning into an attractive activity, and the school – into a sought-after place for interaction and growth.
3. Growing trust between the process participants (students, teachers, parents), who share an active role, rights and responsibilities in the school's life.

There are already quite a few attempts at similar applications in the modern practice of Bulgarian schools. It is a matter of time and research energy to use appropriate tools to measure the results and prove the reliability and development potential of the model.

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  - [viii] Excerpt from Mission, Vision and Values of Roerich School – excerpt from School Regulations 2018-19
- [1] The introduction is a regulated part of the four-part structure of suggestopaedic knowledge. The other three elements are concert session /active and passive/, development and presentation /by learners/. The introduction aims to create appropriate information and emotional charge to motivate and facilitate learners to enter the topic and wish to explore it.