

## COORDINATES OF THE POSTMODERN DIDACTICS IN THE EASTERN SPACE

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### **Abstract**

*The paper analyzes the evolution of the instruction theory in Russia in the postmodern (contemporary) period, a historical context during which the curriculum paradigm is affirmed. Amongst the pedagogues with contributions at the level of general didactics, we chose the studies of four representative authors: I.K. Babansky, I.Ia.Lerner, V.V.Kraevsky, and M.N.Skatkin. In the analysis of their books, we followed the same coordinates: the axiomatic foundations / basic concepts that define the epistemological status of the general theory of instruction (which supports the foundations of pedagogy), their specific object of study, their specific normativity and their specific research methodology. The Russian pedagogy is concerned with the epistemic specificity of pedagogy as a specialized science in the study of education, and these concepts, which are found in general theories of the field, the general theory of education, the theory and methodology of instruction, the theory and methodology of the curriculum demonstrate its scientificity. The epistemological perspective of I.K. Babansky allows for the highlighting of the object of study and the specific norm. The object of study focuses on the interdependence between the actions of teaching, learning and evaluation. The curricular vision on the structure of the educational process concerns the relations between the component elements, both at the level of didactic actions and of the main links of the educational process (objectives, content, instruction methodology, didactic teacher – pupil interaction, evaluation). The normativity ensures the ordering of instruction by laws and principles of education. The epistemological foundations of didactics are fixed by I.Ia. Lerner at the level of links between goals – types of contents – methodology – teaching – learning and assessment methods, perfectible by involving the teacher's creativity (especially in the area of methods). The taxonomy of the methods, proposed by the pedagogue, combines the general purpose with the resource underlying the action of the method. The efficiency of the method depends upon the ability to achieve the optimal interdependence between the creativity of the teacher and the*

*pupil, through self-learning methods in the classroom. The didactics of M.I. Skatkin proposes a global approach, building an ideal model of a concentric curricular circuit, starting from the social practice and its needs to the new level of instruction. M.I. Skatkin analyzes, from the perspective of historical pedagogy, the specific object of study of didactics (studied through fundamental concepts) and the normativity of the didactics (studied through the principles and laws of the educational process, the laws of instruction). V.V. Kraevsky proposes to overcome the problems of pedagogy through a research methodology that takes into account the unity between the theory and practice of education, such a methodology can ensure the unity of pedagogy. The table at the end is a synthesis of the paper, demonstrating the epistemological maturity of the analyzed texts, epistemically essentialized by the capitalizing on the fundamental concepts.*

**Keywords:**

*postmodern didactics, normativity, research methodology, epistemological foundations, instruction*

**1. Introduction**

***Contributions at the level of general didactics (I.K. Babansky, I.Ia.Lerner, V.V.Kraevsky, Skatkin)***

From J.A. Comenius, who, in the “didactic century”, laid the foundations of pedagogy as a relatively autonomous science, with its own object of study, the pedagogues from the eastern space were busy creating the conceptual basis of the educational process. The epistemological foundations of a science, especially socio-human, aim at the fundamental concepts that define the object of study, the normativity and the research methodology.

These concepts are found in the general theories of the field, and therefore in the theory and methodology of instruction. *The fundamental concepts* are concentrated in a small number, forming *the discipline matrix* or *the disciplinary matrix* (according to the epistemologist Thomas Kuhn). Its basis is relatively stable, insofar as the fundamental concepts have an area of variability, in relation to the empirical reality, reduced to zero. (Cristea, 2015).

In the Russian postmodern general didactics, the pedagogues I.K. Babansky, I.Ia.Lerner, V. V. Kraevsky, and Skatkin provide, in their studies, ample spaces to the epistemological problem, a reason for which our work proposed an analysis of their books.

## 2. Content development

**I. K. Babansky (1927-1987)** is the author of two important books for the evolution of *the general didactics*, from the perspective of *the curriculum* paradigm: *Optimizing the educational process* and *Optimizing the instructive-educational process* (Babanski, 1979, pp. 11-16). *The curricular vision* promoted by I.K. Babansky is confirmed at the level of the relations among:

a) *The instruction objectives*;

b) *The content of the instruction* adapted, according to the objectives, to the “specific particularities of the pupils from a certain class”;

c) The “optimal selection of forms and methods of activity” (instruction), taking into account the particularities of the system in which the educational process takes place”;

d) The “teacher – pupil didactic interaction”;

e) The action of evaluating the instruction, carried out through “the current control and self-control of the acquisition of knowledge and the formation of skills and abilities”;

f) “The analysis by the educator and the pupil of the results of a certain stage of the educational process” for “the detection of unsolved tasks in order to approach them in the new stage.” (Babanski, 1979, pp. 16-22).

**The object of study specific to general didactics** is established by I.K. Babansky at the level of *interdependencies* among:

1) The *teaching, learning, evaluation* actions (*analysis and self-analysis of the teaching-learning results*) subordinated to the instruction activity;

2) The “main links” that ensure the design of any instruction activity in the educational process are:

a) The instruction objectives;

b) The content of the instruction;

c) The instruction methodology, optimally achievable through a “*multitude of forms and methods of instruction*”;

d) The didactic interaction teacher – pupil, “the central link in the structure of the educational process”;

e) *The necessary evaluation* for “highlighting the weak points” and “fixing the final information regarding the results of the didactic interaction” that can be continuously improved.

**The necessary normativity** within **the general didactics** is analyzed by Babansky in the context of *the curriculum design* that takes into account all the “main links of the educational process” in “direct and mediated interaction between educator and pupils, oriented in all ways to develop independent pupil activities in learning, towards the formation of the self-leadership skills

in learning” (Babanski, 1979, pp. 21, 22). From this perspective, *the didactic normativity* ensures the ordering of the instruction through “*laws and principles of education*” (Babanski, 1979, pp. 9, 12).

*The “education laws” or the instruction laws* define the “structural links” existing in the educational process, related to *the types of connections* that can be identified in the context of “the research of any phenomena or processes” globally and openly:

- 1) The universal legal connection – “the interaction of all objects and phenomena”;
- 2) The cause-effect connection;
- 3) The functional connection – “in which the change of some phenomena determines the well-determined modification of other phenomena”;
- 4) The connection is based upon “a series of connections” which are:
  - a) *Hierarchical* – from top to bottom;
  - b) *Management – functional or development*, “the most characteristic for the formation of systems”;
  - c) *genetic* – “which define the origin of some objects through others”;
  - d) *Functioning* – “which maintain the existence of an object”;
  - e) *development* – “which causes changes in operation”;
- 5) The connection made in time:
  - a) Stable;
  - b) Unstable;
- 6) The connection made at:
  - a) Internal level – essential;
  - b) External level, on the surface of the object / phenomenon, etc. – non-essential;
- 7) The necessary connection – accidental;
- 8) The direct – indirect connection;
- 9) The positive – negative, external – internal connection (made at the level of positive - negative *feedback*, external – internal) (Babanski, 1979, p. 23).

“*The laws of education*” or *the laws of instruction* define “*the interaction-type connections*”, which are “the most general form of universal connection”. At the level of the instruction activity, *the interaction* represents the set of connections between “the one who *teaches* and the ones who *learns*” which gives to the educational process the quality of “*unitary phenomenon*”.

At this level of maximum generality we can build *the universal law of instruction* aimed at *the permanent interaction* between **teacher** and **pupil**, *necessary in any context of the educational process*. According to this, Babansky establishes two more *universal laws of instruction*: **a) “the**

*law of unity between instruction and education*"; b) *"the law of unity between learning and development"*. (Babanski, 1979, p. 27).

At another *level of generality*, the following can be identified: a) *the laws* that define the "cause-effect type connections", existing in a micro-structural pedagogical space and time, capitalized in the empirical, experimental, quantitative and qualitative research; b) *the laws* that define the "genetic links", capitalized in the historical research, achievable at *macro-structural* level, but also at *micro-structural* level (in *local history, recent history*, etc.).

*"The principles of education* form a system in which each principle contributes to the optimization of the *instruction* activity by special ordering of some existing or necessary relations between *the various components and links of the educational process* (Babanski, 1979, pp. 30-41):

*The normativity*, defined by *the laws and principles of education*, is *the necessary premise for the optimal design and implementation* of any instruction activity. The *optimal* design capitalizes on all the laws and principles of the level of interdependence between *objectives and basic contents*, between *psychological requirements (skills, abilities)* and *social requirements (basic contents imposed historically by the society)* (Cristea, 2010, 2015). The *optimal* achievement implies the observance of *all laws and principles* within the *curricular* process, necessary for the selection of *instruction methods, forms of organization, ways of control and self-control of the results of teaching and learning processes* (Babanski, 1979, pp. 41-58).

**I. Ia. Lerner** (1917-1996) is the author of a reference book at the level of *the historical pedagogy*, *"The didactic bases of teaching methods"* (1981). The author establishes *the epistemological foundations of Didactics*, which are significant, in his vision, in the conditions in which he analyzes "the situation of the problems of teaching methods and the logic of its research", promoted from a curricular perspective, according to the "learning objectives" which determine form a pedagogical viewpoint the "composing of the modern content of education" (Лернер, 1981, pp. 8-70).

In *praxiological* terms, this author is concerned with developing the most effective "ways of learning the types of educational content", building "the system of general instruction methods", which provides "the theoretical basis for interpretation and regulation of the phenomenon of learning" in a school and extracurricular context. (Лернер, 1981, pp. 70-132).

At this level, it clarifies the historical problem, launched since the establishment of *the general pedagogy* (Herbart, *General Pedagogy*, 1806, *Pedagogical Lectures*, 1835), of the relations between *the general didactics* and *the private didactics* (applied in *teaching-learning* of various educational disciplines, on stages of education), reflected, in operational plan, in the area of optimization of "*general and specific instruction methods*" (Лернер, 1981, pp. 157-172).

I. Ia. Lerner intends to solve two *epistemological* problems, approached in the spirit of the historical pedagogy:

- 1) “To what extent do pedagogical concepts, related to the practice of instruction, contribute to achieving the goals of learning”?;
- 2) How can we capitalize on the “nomenclature of instruction methods”, by:
  - a) Advancing new, “modern” methods;
  - b) Eliminating certain “traditional” methods;
  - c) Emphasizing some instruction methods, considered to be superior in the context of optimizing the educational process;
  - d) Keeping the entire nomenclature, approached pedagogically, in relation to *a new didactic vision*, imposed by the *axiomatics* of the curricular design (Лернер, 1981, p. 10).

The solution suggested throughout the book leans, in a *constructivist* spirit, towards:

- 1) The valorization of the concepts of pedagogy (general didactics), within any *curricular* project conceived as *a global project* (at the level of links between goals – types of contents – methodology / *ways or forms of instruction, teaching-learning methods and evaluation*) and *open* (at the level of *the teacher's creativity* that allows the permanent adaptation of the activity to conditions of change);
- 2) The epistemological consolidation of the concept of *didactic method (instruction, teaching)* which defines “a construction of action” integrated within the instruction activity, achieved “through a succession of didactic sequences”, articulated “according to the existing conditions and with means appropriate”, which lead to the achievement of the purpose of the lesson (Лернер, 1981, p. 28).

***The analysis of the didactic method***, at the level of fundamental pedagogical concept, is conceived by Lerner, in relation to three epistemological criteria:

- 1) *The reference sphere – action* within the instruction activity carried out at the level of the educational process;
- 2) *The general function* – is the construction of “an image of the project (A/N of the lesson), underway”;
- 3) *The basic structure* – involves the optimal interaction between:
  - a) *The didactic creativity of the teacher* (who builds and proposes *the method*)
  - b) *The “subject of the activity”*, which becomes the pupil when he or she accepts *the method* (proposed by the teacher) and capitalizes on it at the level of *learning / self-learning method* in the classroom (Ibidem, see pp. 29-30).

**The efficient method** is the one built by the teacher and capitalized by the pupil as a model for designing *the didactic action*, necessary for fulfilling *the purpose* and *objectives of the lesson*. At the level of *an ideal model of action* within the instruction activity (lesson), *the method* effectively capitalizes on *the knowledge* that:

- a) Anticipates the results of the activity (the stage reached by the pupils in learning, the existing didactic resources);
- b) Support the teacher's design activity focused on the objectives of the lesson;
- c) Lead to the optimization of the relationship between the proposed objectives and the necessary means for their fulfillment (theoretical and applied knowledge, didactic means, external and internal conditions necessary for classroom learning);
- d) Ensures the transformation of *the object of the activity* (the pupil) into *the subject of the activity*, involved in the action of learning / self-learning in the classroom, by fully capitalizing on *the basic method* proposed by the teacher.

In conclusion, the efficient method is the method that capitalizes pedagogically:

- a) All the resources of the teacher and of the pupil, necessary to reach the general purpose and the concrete objectives of the activity (lesson);
- b) The action of the teacher (the teaching) which "should not be seen outside the action of the pupil" (the learning) – in this perspective the methods considered to be only for teaching or learning "are not teaching methods");
- c) The necessary permanent correlation between *the action of the teacher of teaching* and the *action of the pupil, of learning / self-learning*, which supports the "objective mechanism of assimilating new knowledge" (Ibidem, pp. 29-33).

**The curricular construction of the instruction** is grounded at the level of the necessary relationship between "**the objectives of the educational process** and *the composition of the modern contents of the education*" (Ibidem, p. 37). At this level, Lerner proposes as a common pedagogical denominator the notion of *learning experience*, launched by the initiator of the curriculum paradigm in the USA, John Dewey (*The child and the Curriculum*, 1902) and his disciple, Ralph Tyler (1949, *Basic Principles of Curriculum and instruction*).

This notion is used by Lerner at the social level, as a foundation for the construction of objectives and the basic contents of instruction. The key concept is that of *social experience*, which can be capitalized pedagogically at the level of:

- 1) The theoretical knowledge (notions, concepts, theoretical models, formulas) and the normative knowledge (paradigms, axioms, laws, principles, rules), as the main source for selecting instruction contents;

- 2) The applied knowledge (skills, habits) and “the means of activity necessary for the composition of the social experience”, achieved by solving problems (skills);
- 3) Creative knowledge, necessary for notifying and solving new problems or some problem situations;
- 4) The socio-affective knowledge, necessary for optimizing the pupil's relationships with the world and with himself or herself, possible by capitalizing on the resources provided by the emotional intelligence, the internal motivation, the volitional and consistent attitude of character, stabilized in value.

**The system of didactic methods** provides to the pupil, in interaction with the teacher, *the efficient ways* necessary to fulfill the objectives, by *assimilating* the basic, theoretical and practical knowledge, capitalized in creative sense, supported the (affective-motivational and volitional-character) attitude. In Lerner's didactics, *the classification of teaching methods* takes into account:

1. The specific objective predominantly employed in the instruction activity, expressed in terms of *competence*, built at the level of the interdependence between *the social experience* (which substantiates the contents of instruction) and *the type of knowledge* (which psychologically supports the pupil's learning action):

- a) *The informational-receptive and reproductive instruction methods*, which relate to the social experience of theoretical and practical knowledge;
- b) *Instruction methods based on notifying by “creating and solving problems”*, which relate to the social experience of applied knowledge;
- c) *instruction methods based on reporting and solving new problems and problem-situations*, which refers to the social experience of creative knowledge, involving the learning through research;
- d) *Instruction methods based upon noticing and solving problems that require the affective-motivational and volitional-characteristic resources* of the pupil (and the teacher), which relate to the social experience of socio-affective knowledge.

2. The resource underlying the didactic action proposed by the method:

- a) The word – *verbal-informative methods*;
- b) *The image* – visual-informative methods;
- c) The practice – practical-informative methods. At this level Lerner considers *the three models of learning*, which are *symbolic* (based upon concepts), *iconic* (based upon images) and *enactive* (based upon the *action with objects*), proposed by J.S. Bruner. (Bruner, 1970)

*A global model of instruction methods* combines the two criteria, highlighting the fact that in the educational process the teacher can propose to pupils several ways of effective learning, depending on four *general purposes*:

- a) Explanatory-illustrative – illustrative-informative methods; verbal-explanatory methods and practical-explanatory methods;
- b) Problematizing or analytical: verbally-problematized methods; visually problematized methods and practically-problematized methods;
- c) Theoretically – verbal-heuristic methods; visual-heuristic methods, practical-heuristic methods;
- d) Research – verbal research methods, visual research methods, practical research methods (Лернер, 1981, p. 143).

A special problem approached by I. Ia. Lerner is that of the relationship between the general didactics and the applied didactics, to different specialties, on different levels of education. From this perspective, the author talks about:

- 1) *General instruction methods*, promoted by the general didactics (the general theory of instruction), which can be used by all educational disciplines, at all levels of education;
- 2) *Instruction methods* promoted by *particular didactics* that include:
  - a) *General didactic methods*, adapted to the specifics of each discipline and levels of education;
  - b) Methods specific to each discipline and levels of education.

**M.I. Skatkin** (1900-1991) proposes a global approach to *General Didactics* as a “theory of education and instruction”, in collective works (M.A. Danilov, M.I. Skatkin, under editorship, “*The Middle School Didactics*”, 1975) (Данилов, Скаткин, 1975) and (V.V. Kraevsky, I.Ia.Lerner, under editorship, *The theoretical Basics of Educational Content*, 1983). (Краевский, Лернер, 1983). Following the analysis of the relationship between (scientific) *knowledge* and (pedagogical) instruction an “**ideal model**” is created, which epistemologically sets the general lines of a *curricular circuit*, achievable concentrically, by capitalizing on *resources* needed in any pedagogical design activity:

- 1) The social practice and its needs;
- 2) Knowledge of the fields of science, socially (academically) validated, taken over and pedagogically processed at the level of curriculum and school programs;
- 3) The instruction that ensures the acquisition of knowledge in the educational process;
- 4) The practice of instruction, as an element that ensures the application of knowledge;
- 5) The new needs of scientific and pedagogical practice and knowledge;
- 6) A new stage of knowledge, capitalized in pedagogical design;
- 7) The new level of instruction. (Краевский, Лернер, 1983, pp. 13-28).

From the perspective of *the historical pedagogy*, we emphasize the author's contribution to clarifying the status of *didactics* based upon two *epistemological criteria: the specific object of study* and *the specific normativity*.

**The specific object of study** of “*the didactics*, as part of *pedagogy*”, is identified at the level of “the instruction process that is closely linked to education as an integral part”. Its analysis involves the notions (concepts) or *the basic categories of didactics*:

**The educational process pedagogically** reflects “the social experience in all its complexity”, at the level of the interrelationship between *the objective* (scientific knowledge) and *subjective* – the pedagogical processing of scientific knowledge, “transformed into knowledge, skills and abilities that ensure the personality formation” of the pupil, the intellectual development through general and specialized culture.

**The general goals** define the directions of evolution of the educational process, reflected in the curriculum, in the school curricula and textbooks, in methodological guides, etc. Based upon them, *the specific and concrete (operational) objectives* of the lesson are elaborated, as “the main form of organizing the educational process in school”.

**The content of education** – the objects (subjects) of education in which the bases of sciences, but also of some arts, technologies, philosophies and so on are pedagogically systematized.

**The teaching** – the teacher's action of transmitting the knowledge that provides pupils with *the material and reasons for learning*.

**The learning** – the pupil's action based upon the activity of sensory and logical knowledge processes, especially on the resources of *thinking*, but also of motivation, affectivity, will and *character*.

**The teaching and learning methodology**, which also fulfills docimological functions for evaluating pupils, includes:

- a) *Instruction methods*, promoted by the teacher at the level of “learning paths” of pupils in the classroom;
- b) Didactic materials or means, taken from nature or specially elaborated by using traditional and modern technical resources (see audio-visual didactic means, and so forth).

**The instruction** – instruction and development activity, carried out within a directed process that involves four stages:

- a) *Learning* the objective facts established by the general purpose of the activity;
- b) Integrating of the general purpose in programs and textbooks, in methodological guides and means of education, at the level of specific objectives;

c) Establishing concrete objectives and fulfilling them in conditions of “conscious learning” during *the lesson*, and so on.

**The normativity** of *the didactics* orders the instruction activity within the educational process, not only through the “principles” historically affirmed (stated by Comenius and Rousseau and modernized by Pestalozzi, Lomonosov, Novikov, and so forth), but also through the “legitimacies of the educational process” and the “laws instruction”, which must be developed following a fundamental pedagogical research activity, focused on the analysis of the variable factors involved in instruction, on the background of the existence of stable general functions and the design of long-term general goals (see, for example, “the law of pupil activation”, “the law of qualitative relations between all components of the educational process”, etc.). (Ibidem, pp. 146-182)

**V. V. Kraevsky** (1926-2010) has important contributions in the field of pedagogical epistemology. We consider the analysis of the research methodology specific to pedagogy, as a socio-human science with autonomous status. In *The Pedagogical Methodology. Handbook for pedagogical research* (2001) (Краевский, 2001), the author tries to clarify “one of the concepts with several meanings”. The lack of clarity comes from the area of the definition of the methodology “as a system of knowledge and as an activity”.

The association of **the methodology** with the pedagogy generates other critical problems. Thus, to the extent that pedagogy is promoted more as “*the science of educational practice*,” a trend highlighted by the uncontrolled epistemological expansion of the “sciences of education” we can see that “there are as many methodologies as we have pedagogies”.

That is why it is necessary to reconstruct the unity of pedagogy, possible, “despite the differences” by capitalizing on the fundamental concepts epistemologically fixed at the level of the general theory of education and instruction: education, instruction, education system, educational process; the finalities of education, the finalities of instruction (objectives of the educational process), the general contents of education, the contents of instruction, objectified within the curriculum and school curricula, the general forms of education and instruction, the methodology of education and the methodology of instruction, and so on.

Thus, *the “science and practice”* of education and instruction are approached within a unitary system, which ensures the “autonomy of pedagogy”, but also “the transparency of borders”, necessary in the conditions of inter-disciplinarity relations existing especially between pedagogy and philosophy, on the one hand, and pedagogy and psychology and the socio-human sciences, on the other hand.

“*The unity of pedagogy despite the differences*” requires ensuring the “methodological bases of pedagogical research”. It is the “unique problem” that the methodology of pedagogy must solve. It consists in the ability to “succeed in expressing the essence of *the discipline of pedagogy*”. It is what fundamentally distinguishes it from the methodology of other disciplines (socio-human sciences) that research only some aspects of the problem of education, either theoretical or practical.

*The pedagogy*, as an autonomous science, investigates *the essential, theoretical and practical aspects* of education, identified, defined and analyzed through the fundamental concepts that epistemologically fix the studied pedagogical, *unitary* and *specific* reality. None of the “sciences of education” approaches the unitary (global) and specific pedagogical reality as pedagogy does.

As an autonomous science, it studies the pedagogical reality at a level that is:

- a) *Unitary*, theoretical (through *the general theory of education*) and practical (through *the general didactics*);
- b) *Specific*, through *the fundamental pedagogical concepts*, capitalized also in the context of interdisciplinary relations, necessary with *the philosophy, the psychology and the social sciences*, for the construction of *the education aims, contents and methodology of education*, developed within the education system and process (Краевский, 2001, pp. 20; 49).

The comparative analysis of the fundamental concepts used by the four pedagogues, meant to demonstrate the epistemic valences of the Russian pedagogy, can be found in Table I.

Table I

**THE EVOLUTION OF *PEDAGOGY* IN RUSSIA  
IN THE *POSTMODERN (CONTEMPORARY)* ERA  
AT THE LEVEL OF *GENERAL DIDACTICS*  
(*THE GENERAL THEORY OF INSTRUCTION / EDUCATION*)**

<b>Axiomatic foundations / Basic concepts that define:</b>	<b>I. K. BABANSKY,</b> <i>Optimizing the educational process, 1979;</i> <i>Optimizing the instructive-educational process, 1984</i>	<b><u>REPRESENTATIVE</u></b>	<b><u>PEDAGOGUES</u></b> :	<b>V.V. KRAEVSKY</b> <i>Theoretical foundations of the educational content, 1983</i> (under the editorship of VV. Kreaevsky, I. Ia. Lerner); <i>The pedagogy</i>
		<b>I. Ia. LERNER</b> <i>Didactic foundations of teaching methods,</i> 1981	<b>M.I. SKATKIN,</b> <i>The secondary school didactics,</i> 1975 (under the editorship of M.A Dunilov, M.I. Skatkin), 1975	

				<i>methodology. Handbook for pedagogical research, 2001</i>
<b>1. The general didactics (The general theory of instruction / education)</b>	THE THEORY OF THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS OPTIMIZATION	THE GENERAL DIDACTICS based upon Private Didactics	THE GENERAL DIDACTICS as “The theory of education and instruction”	THE METHODOLOGY OF PEDAGOGY as “the science about the practice of education” at the level of instruction
<b>2. The specific object of study of the General Didactics (The General Theory of Instruction / Education)</b>	The <i>educational process</i> approached <i>globally</i> , at the level of the <i>connections</i> between: a) the didactic actions subordinated to the objectives of the training activity: teaching - learning - evaluation of the results; b) the main links: the socially determined objectives - the content - the methodology (didactic conditions, activity forms, didactic methods) - the evaluation achieved through methods and procedures of control and self-control; c) “central link” – optimizing <i>the correlation</i> between teacher and pupil	<i>The general teaching methods</i> that support “a construction of the didactic action”, necessary for the fulfillment of the purpose and objectives of the lesson. The classification of methods according to two criteria: the specific objective – the resource underlying the teaching action (verbal, visual, practical) – methods: a) <i>illustrative-explanatory</i> (verbal, visual, practical); b) verbal, visual, practically <i>problematized</i> ; c) verbal, visual, practical <i>heuristic</i> ; d) <i>research</i> (verbal, visual, practical)	”The training process closely related to education”, analyzed by <i>the basic categories of didactics</i> : - general purposes - the contents of education - the teaching - the learning - the teaching and learning methodology - the instruction that includes the teaching-learning carried out according to the general purpose and the concrete objectives, fulfilled in conditions of the “conscious learning” throughout the lesson	- The analysis of general pedagogy in the context of the epistemologically uncontrolled expansion of the “sciences of education” - The reconstruction of the pedagogy unit by capitalizing on the fundamental concepts established epistemologically by the general theory of education and instruction (especially necessary in the general didactics)
<b>3. The normativity specific to the General</b>	a) <i>The laws of education</i> : the universal law of the teacher – pupil	- The principle of capitalizing the existing resources at the level of the	“The laws of instruction”: - the law of activation of	- The principle of unity between the “science and practice” of

<p><b>Didactics (The General Theory of Instruction / Education)</b></p>	<p>interaction; “The law of unity between instruction and learning”; “The law of unity between learning and development” b) <i>The didactic principles</i> (1-12, form a system that orders the existing relations between the didactic actions and the links of the educational process</p>	<p>activity (lesson), within the proposed didactic method - The principle of capitalizing on the method at the level of the optimal relationship between the action of the teacher (teaching) and the action of the pupil (learning) - The principle of capitalizing on the social experience of the pupil (and the teacher) at the level of theoretical – applied – creative (in solving problem-situations) – socio-affective knowledge</p>	<p>pupils” - the law of the qualitative relationships between all the components of the educational process ”.  The principles of instruction - historically affirmed (through the work of the classics Comenius, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Lomonosov and Novikov) - built in relation to the “laws of instruction”</p>	<p>education and instruction, between the general theory of education and the general theory of training (general didactics) - The principle of “pedagogical autonomy” ensured by the construction of fundamental concepts - The principle of “border transparency” that allows for the development of general pedagogy / didactics in conditions of inter-disciplinarity (pedagogy – psychology, etc.)</p>
<p><b>4. The specific research methodology of General Didactics (The General Theory of Instruction / Education)</b></p>	<p>a) fundamental, engaged in optimizing the educational process at the level of interdependence between teaching-learning-evaluation actions, between objectives – contents – methodology – evaluation; b) operational, empirical, experimental, necessary for the improvement of the educational process, at the level of</p>	<p>a) <b>fundamental</b>, focused on the system of general instruction methods, defined and analyzed at the level of general didactics  b) <i>operational, empirical, experimental</i>, necessary for the improvement of the general methods applied to different levels and disciplines of education and of the methods specific to each educational discipline (elaborated by the particular didactics)</p>	<p>a) <b>fundamental</b>, involved in the construction of <i>the laws of instruction</i>, based on the analysis of the reports, the general functions of the instruction and the aims and objectives of the instruction, which allows for the ordering of the activity in the context of the existence of a large number of variable factors  b) <i>operational, empirical, experimental</i>, necessary for the improvement of</p>	<p>a) <b>fundamental</b>, necessary to: consolidate the “unity of general pedagogy / didactics, despite the differences”; to epistemologically establish “the essential, theoretical and practical aspects of education and instruction through the basic concepts of the field  b) <i>operational, empirical, experimental</i>, in the context of capitalizing on interdisciplinary</p>

	methodical training of teachers and knowledge of pupils		the instruction activity on the background of the knowledge and capitalization of the instruction laws and principles of the educational process, affirmed historically, adaptable in the current context.	relationships that contribute to the improvement of the teaching activity (the lesson, etc.)
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### 3. Conclusions and suggestions

The research is involved in the direction of the historical interpretation of the epistemological valences of pedagogy in Russia, conceptual, normative and methodological valences, identified and argued at the level of *pedagogical sciences* or *fundamental education sciences: the general theory of education, the general theory of instruction, the general theory of the curriculum*. The four pedagogues analyzed in the paper illustrate: the theory of optimizing the educational process (I.K. Babansky), the general didactics, which are the base of private didactics (I. Ia. Lerner), the general didactics, as “Theory of education and instruction” (MI Skatkin), the methodology of pedagogy, as “a science about the practice of education” at the level of instruction” (V.V. Kraevsky).

The paper, engaged in the knowledge of the values coming from the level of a universally researched culture, provides information and methodological suggestions necessary for the reconstruction of the applied didactics. The study capitalizes on research strategies typical of educational sciences (historical and hermeneutic research), ensuring the interpretation of fundamental texts, academically legitimate, which provide epistemological stability of the field (dictionaries and specialized treatises), not education policy texts objectively subject to historical perishability.

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