A DIDACTIC RESEARCH PROJECT: SERVICE LEARNING AND EXTENDED REASON METHODOLOGIES USING A STORY READING

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*T*his didactic research project aims to demonstrate the positive effects on the training of young people from diverse backgrounds, by using different learning methodologies and conducting joint training sessions. This research analyzes the effects of developing a symbiosis of two didactic methodologies: service learning and extended reason. The sample corresponds to two groups of students: some, second-year university students of the degree in social education from an urban environment, and others, students of a basic vocational training cycle in a rural environment. A methodology was developed consisting of hybrid sessions and a physical meeting with the students, in which a story by Flannery O'Connor was read from a multidisciplinary approach: Literature, Anthropology and Social Responsibility. As first conclusions, it was observed: the application of service learning and extended reason methodologies together offer better results than applied individually. The holistic analysis of the story allows us to delve deeper into topics such as human dignity, the meaning of suffering, love and forgiveness. Stemming from the methodological symbiosis, the young person becomes more interested in their learning, comprehensive training is facilitated and a purpose in education is projected beyond the classroom, pointing to their vocation of social service. Education should encourage the social service of future professionals and help us to recognise the dignity of others.

   Keywords: service learning; extended reason; Flannery O'Connor; existential issues; social service; human dignity.

INTRODUCTION

This paper highlights the achievements of a teaching didactic project, developed in the Social Education Faculty at Universidad Francisco de Vitoria (UFV) with second year students and another group of students in the basic cycle of Mechanics, at *Camino de la Miranda* Centro de Formación Profesional in

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Palencia (CIFFP). The UFV is a university with religious implications, for this reason, the study highlights more personal aspects of the individuals, and also is rather ideologicaly involved.

Two different methodologies are combined: a service-learning methodology, in response to a real need detected by a teacher at the vocational training centre, and a methodology of extended, or open reason, that aims to encourage renewed academical thinking, that maintains and develops sensitivity to truth, so that reason does not `succumb` to the pressure of interests and to the attraction of utility, as the ultimate criterion of validity in current society (Benedict XVI 2008). In order to unravel the truth, the whole human being must be brought into play, trying to provide answers to the existential questions that emerge from all scientific knowledge.

Within the service-learning methodology, activities and meetings between different involved parties are proposed – the students of CIFP in Palencia and those of UFV –, in order to address questions related to the meaning of human existence that respond to the concerns of young people, after reading the story *The Artificial Nigger* by the American author Flannery O'Connor (2000, 59–86). The innovation project is framed within the combination of the two methodologies, in order to achieve greater student engagement in such a way that their learning becomes transformative. The students of CIFP in Palencia are a group of young people at risk of school exclusion, who require innovative tools to engage them in their learning process, and to reduce their absenteeism in school. The objective of the research is to demonstrate that by using diverse methodologies for different student profiles, it is possible to engage students in their learning, to address existential issues in a suitable manner, and to eliminate some existing stereotypes about middle-level students. The data collection period spanned an entire academic year. The sample consisted of twenty-two men and eighteen women aged between 16 and 22 years, all of whom were part of formal regulated education: higher education, and other professional training.

The starting hypothesis is that the combination of methodologies and the multidisciplinary approach of the subjects, manages to interest the students more, and find a profound meaning for their current reality and their future vocation.

GENESIS OF THE PROJECT

The English teacher at the Centro de Integrado de Formación Profesional (CIFP) proposed to the students the reading of *The Artificial Negro* by Flannery O'Connor. The students, a group aged between fifteen and nineteen, began to question certain themes, which they did not know how to verbalise very well, but which pointed to the ultimate questions that all human beings, at some point, ask themselves: Are we all people the same regardless of sex, place of birth, etc.? Do we all face experiences that generate suffering, failure, death? Do love and

forgiveness allow us to overcome betrayal, disappointment, the feeling of emptiness?

The choice of the story was not accidental; the teacher of the vocational school in Palencia, after attending a Great Books Seminar, discovers the potential of the southern writer Flannery O'Connor. The writer comments that the fiction writer can use his works to make a social critique, even a prophetic one. With her fiction novels, O'Connor wants to start from the realism in her novels to show `a truth` that her stories help to discover:

> *The fiction writer should be caracterized by thin kind of vision. His kind of vision is a prophetic vision (...). It is the realism which does not hesitate to distort appearances in order to show a hidden truth (1969, 179).*

The story showed a reality that in some points was similar to the lives of the pupils, and the outcome of the story could be a source of growth for them. As mentioned in the introduction, these young people are at risk of exclusion. In Spain, the child poverty rate is 28% (UNICEF, 2023), a factor closely related to school absenteeism. This is a deeply rooted problem, and part of this innovative teaching projects presented here includes the study of methodologies aimed at enthusing students about their education, and making them protagonists of the learning process, so that it can be transformative.

Initially, the teacher from CIFP in Palencia planned reading groups with some of O'Connor's stories that the young people could identify with. As Parrott and Cherry (2011) indicate, reading groups achieve satisfactory results in deep student learning. When starting the first session, the teacher observed the difficulty in achieving the proposed learning outcomes. It was then that, recognizing the need to address the limitations of the groups, she decided to switch from the reading group methodology to the service-learning methodology.

At the UFV, in the second year of the different degrees, the subjects of Anthropology and Social Responsibility are taught, which aim to discover the dignity of the human being and to experience social practices in order to understand the vulnerability of others (García Ramos *et al.* 2007 and Sánchez Palencia 2010).

After describing their needs, the convenience of combining the service-learning methodology and open reason was established, to respond to their demand: to accompany the students in their search for the honesty. In the service-learning methodology, education is provided both to those who present the need, and to those who offer a response, as both parties learn through the designed dynamics (Jouannet *et al.* 2023).

It was necessary to approach the project in a multidisciplinary way, to make a synthesis of the approaches, in order to rely on integral training, and to add a dimension of social service: now, in the specific project, and later, with a vocational perspective that works for a fairer and more caring world. The

O'Connor's story points to a felt life, that is, through the characters of Mr. Head and Nelson, the reader identifies himself with the content of the story. In this case, this had been the case with the students in Palencia and Madrid.

Some of the CIFP students have faced complicated situations, which have made it difficult for them to continue with their studies. However, like many young people, they need to find answers to those questions that sometimes arise from an original experience (Giussani 2007, 23); other times, as has been the case, well-chosen reading has confronted them with those needs that common sense considers thar are nestling in the human nature. O'Connor considers that fiction literature, being based on concrete observable reality, points to mystery in the religious meaning, and it is from there that the reader can respond to his or her vital concerns, and reach existential conclusions (O'Connor 1969).

Social Education students from UFV, vocationally, will dedicate themselves in the world of work in order to promote the dignity of vulnerable people (Arandia and Fernández 2012). They are called to recognise the dignity of the other, simply by being a person (Lucas 2023). All human beings are equal in dignity, however, since in practice this fails, it is often forgotten (Aranguren 2018). So, the project intented to connect vocational and undergraduate students, in order to begin to know and recognise each other as equals, to learn about the value of collaborating.

METHODOLOGY

Service learning, and open or extended reason

In order to achieve the objectives proposed in this didactic research project, the one about collaborative values, and that of helping socialy challenged undergraduate pupils to integrate and to learn, it was decided to use the two methodologies mentioned above.

First, the service-learning methodology, as this educational approach integrates teaching and learning with community service, two aspects that occur in this experience (Batlle 2020). Furthermore, this methodology is of great interest in the degree in Education, because, as can be analysed in the project by Mayor Paredes (2020), it favours the relationship between theory and practice in real contexts, and helps the future teachers in the process of reflection and analysis of reality. The selection of the method is based on the conviction that knowledge can be used to improve poor reality and promote action (Puig 2016), to work on different values through teaching (Martín García *et al.* 2023), and to strengthen ties between teaching and community development (Redondo-Corcobado and Fuentes 2022).

The Centre Promotor d'Aprenentatge Servei says that "service-learning is an educational proposal that combines learning and community service processes in a single well-articulated project, where participants learn by working on real needs in

their environment with the aim of improving it" (Batlle 2021). In this case, university students participate in an activity that provides them with academic knowledge, the theoretical part of the subject, and allows them to apply it in a practical way with CIFP students, thus acquiring skills, while working on real projects that benefit other people and respond to concrete problems.

This more participative and less individualistic way of learning makes the student the protagonist of their learning process, and fits in with the project promoted by the European Union, the European Higher Education Area (Martínez Martín 2008). To put this methodology into practice, we have followed the references of various authors (Pérez Galván and Ochoa 2017; Ruiz Corbella and García Gutiérrez 2019; Lucas and Martínez-Odría 2012).

The reading groups were the means to achieve the proposed objectives in the research. Other authors have examined the benefits of using this technique (Herrera-Nuñez and Dapelo 2022; Yubero and Larrañaga 2015). In this case, reading served as the unifying element to achieve the objectives and the benefits detailed at the beginning of the research.

Initially, the matter was identified, together with the pupils (unanswered questions after reading the story). These issues were not resolved in the reading groups, which is why they required assistance, turning to us as educational agents from the university. After the initial contact between both groups of educators, preparation and planning with an intervention design (carried out by the teachers) were necessary. A series of sessions were designed; prior to these, surveys, questionnaires, and brainstorming sessions were conducted, and all data was collected with the informed consent of the students, in order to analyze it with a pretest and post-test, and to determine if the applied methodologies were achieving the intended objectives: approaching difficult-to-formulate and address existential questions. Then followed the implementation of the intervention plan (from the methodology of open reason) and, finally, the evaluation of the achievements. The subject studied by university students, Education for Responsibility, has an in-depth focus on social justice (De la Calle 2008), an aspect which can be worked on very well, thanks to the service-learning methodology implemented here (Aramburuzabala 2013).

In this first analysis of the study, the technique used was the observation about all participants. This technique consisted of the systematic analysis of behaviors, interactions and events in their natural context, it was carried out following an unstructured observation which allowed to capture unexpected aspects (all materials obtained preserved the anonymity of the participants as they contained sensitive information about the sample. It should be remembered that some of our students are at risk of exclusion, hence the confidential nature of everything obtained). This technique was used in the sessions developed during the project (Matos and Pasek 2008). During each session, observers used systematic techniques to record their observations, such as environmental conditions,

recording specific behaviours, and noting any spontaneous comments or structured feedback provided by participants (Campos and Martinez 2012). Various instruments were used to ensure accuracy and completeness in data collection, field notes, and audio and video recordings (Martinez 2007).

However, these methodologies cited above, did not guarantee that we would be able to resolve the issues that had aroused the students' interest, which is why we also resorted to the extended reason methodology (Lacalle Noriega 2014 and Cantos Aparicio 2015). This starts from a technical approach, in this case, the short story, to move up to philosophical aspects of existential nature. It was necessary to contextualise the work and the author, analyse the story narratologically, and delve into its background.

For the literary analysis, we followed the structure of Broncano (1992), the most knowledgeable expert on literature, and who completes the technical knowledge of the story. He analyses the work according to certain elements: the spatial-temporal framework, the characters, the process of the event and the narrator.

Then, from the approach of open reason, students try to discover the deep intentionality of the story, which is not possible without the previous analysis (Broncano). Open reason invites us to ask the deep questions of the human being, which is a method typical of anthropology, in order to enrich the vision of literary art, and, with it, the rest of sciences and knowledge.

The didactic project development

A priori, the samples seemed disparate, considering, the socio-cultural conditions of both groups. Moreover, in the open questions prior to the first session, the young people showed their prejudices, and did not believe that between the two groups it would be possible to find answers to the concerns raised by the reading. Sometimes teachers engage in novel methodologies, such as historical approaches, cultural approaches, new technologies, such as artificial intelligence applied to classical readings in order to provoke student interest. This time, they had resorted to something as classic as guided reading from a broad view of reality: both that which is outside us and that which is inside us (Giussani 2007, 31). An open reading of philosophy, with a holistic approach to reality, is what the methodology of open reason proposes. An experience of training between heterogeneous groups, one, in principle, more needy, and the other, in theory, more experienced, could develop a training action to enrich both groups, which is what the service-learning methodology proposes (Rodríguez Gallego 2014).

Gil and Sánchez Rojo believe that, sometimes, Universities forget their fundamental purpose of training young people to resolve the challenges of the future (2022, 34). In our view, universities have the role to educate people of integrity with critical thinking and solid principles and values who will contribute to the construction of a more just and humane world. For this reason, they propose

technical and humanistic content in different educational activities (p. 40). With this project, from the reading and understanding of the story, we would ascend to try to resolve those questions that require existential certainties.

As Gil and Sánchez Rojo point out, it is a matter of proposing texts that say something, either to affirm it or to deny it, texts that teach us to see the constitutive force of reality in its essential meanings (2022, 34). Larrosa points to the value of working on texts in groups. The idea is to open up an individual experience (of each one of us), and at the same time a collective experience (of doing it together) aimed at making that spark of thought explode, by rubbing the words of each one with the words of others and, at the same time, the words with things, with the world, with what we see and what we feel (2011, 296).

The short story of *The Artificial Negro* is O'Connor's favourite. With two protagonists: Mr. Head, the grandfather, and Nelson, his grandson. Mr. Head has the experience of the years, but the passage of time has led him to be back to his old ways, his great `sin` is self-sufficiency. Nelson, on the other hand, wants to show his superiority over his grandfather, by arguing that he was born in the city of Atlanta; besides, as an adult, he no longer needs his protection.

After an initial individualised reading of the text, three virtual sessions are held, led by the teachers, in which they analyse everything that the story suggests to them: form and content. Finally, a personal meeting was held to present the reflections.

This essay aims to present the theoretical framework that underlies the didactic innovation project in which the two methodologies are combined, and with which we obtained very good results with the participants, and to describe it.

Existential questions provoked by reading the short story

First Session: Human dignity: recognising myself in the other and identifying the same longings

In these reading seminars, literary, historical-cultural and existential questions are explored in depth.

The objective was to recognize the value of a person for the simple fact of being and, therefore, understand the dignity of the other.

Thus, in the first meeting, a series of questionnaires with open questions were used to introduce themselves. The students answered the questionnaire online, and the results were projected on a wall with *Mentimeter*, a tool used in different studies (Jiménez *et al.* 2022).

We invited them, as Giussani says, to get to know their peers in a non-judgemental way, over and above the rootedness they had in their formed or inculcated opinions (2007, 57).

The success of this part is that, in order to achieve deep reflection, in the design of the set of questions, the teaching team introduced fragments of the story that were projected in the classrooms of Palencia and Madrid. The students thought, responded and saw the results on their screens using the Mentimeter application. This tool allows for the improvement of learning, because all students, even the shyest, participate in the activity (Rapún *et al.* 2018), and facilitates interaction (Català *et al.* 2021), a relevant aspect, as the sessions were virtual and the greatest possible participation and relationship was sought. Afterwards, the teaching team analysed and reflected on all the responses, and presented them to the participants the conclusions.

This session served to contextualise O'Connor's work, and to begin with the first set of the questions that had caused them concern: the dignity of the other. While this first question was analized, it was contextualised with the lives of the students and with useful lessons for their future.

O'Connor starts from a generational conflict between Mr. Head and Nelson. The family bond is one of grandson – grandfather. As Dr. Martin states, the most common conflicts within the family sphere arise in the parent – child relationship (2018, 213). In the story, in the relationship between Nelson and Mr. Head in the absence of parents (death of the daughter and ignorance of the father), the paternal and maternal figure is assumed by the grandfather. Our pupils in Palencia identify that they have experienced situations similar to those described, especially in adolescence, and this has led to an intergenerational estrangement between family members, which sometimes continues.

In the story there is a lack of recognition of the dignity of the other. This is something very noticeable in our society, and our students say they have experienced or know people who have experienced it: human beings with different disabilities, women who have not been able to study (in the CIFP class they are all men) or get a job because of their gender (in the rural area, feminine unemployment and the wage gap is greater than in the city) (Ministerio de Agricultura, Alimentación y Medioambiente 2013), forgotten lonely elderly people, etc.

The dignity of the person is based on his or her own nature. Therefore, it is something inherent to every human being that cannot be taken away, but rather enhanced, and respected. In the relationship with the other we identify ourselves as recognised and recognisable subjects. Only from an I – Thou relationship: we (Buber 2005, 82), based on the knowledge and recognition of the value of the self, can creative encounters be provoked that dignify and consolidate society as a just entity (Guardini 2015).

Second Session: The Mystery of `Evil`

After having studied dignity through this knowledge and recognition of the other, the next session dealt with the mystery of `evil`. Human beings long for a

happiness that is unattainable. A piece of the puzzle is missing in order to feel fulfilled (Manglano 2009, 34).

The didactic purpose of the session was twofold: to understand that, once "the evil" had been detected in Flannery O'Connor's short story, the attitude of human beings in the face of this reality can be quite different. For this part, we resorted to a classification that studies the seven human attitudes to suffering that can be extracted from O'Connor's stories. These attitudes were explained by one of the teachers at the beginning of the session. Thus, it was explained that it can be the object of causation, denial, flight, surrender, resistance, domination and transformation (Miró 2012, 162 and following). Each of these concepts was presented with O'Connorian characters, and the students used their own case studies to understand the diverse ways of dealing with vulnerability. The presentation of the characters was intended to allow each student to identify with one of them. They were asked, anonymously, to answer with which one they did. Statistical tables have been drawn up to see the referents of O'Connor's stories, and to be able to study the existence or not of behavioural and behavioural patterns.

Some paragraphs of the story in question were read out in the classroom, those fragments that show a situation that is far from happy. A daughter leaves home when her mother dies, and when she returns, she does so with a child only a few months old. Soon after, she dies, and the character *Nelson* is left with his grandfather.

The human being is vulnerable and experiences pain, suffering, death; sometimes it is caused by natural causes, but sometimes it is the human being himself who causes them (Journet 1965, 207–241). In a few pages O'Connor presents one of the themes that shows the weakness of the human heart: betrayal (O'Connor 1971, 264).

In the second part of the session, participants narrated situations in which they had felt betrayed or had betrayed. Or some other painful situation: illness, death of a loved one, dropping out of school, etc. Cases that became known because of the precise lexicon that O'Connor uses to identify her fiction with the reader's life experiences. Phrases such as "Seen me lost?" (250) "You ain't as smart as you think" (250). "The boy's look was ancient, as if he knew everything already and would be pleased to forget" (251), "It's no use in you yelling" (253). "Ignorant as the day he was born" (254), "You're just ignorant, that`s all" (255), "He would be entirely alone in the world" (257), etc. All the pages contain expressions that show this constitutive weakness for the characters' insecurities. They all function as a forecasting of the grandfather's final betrayal.

In the dynamics of the classroom, this participation of human beings in the suffering of others can be seen. Spontaneously, it is verbalised with respect, because we are all responsible for some evil. This didactic session ended with an evaluation that was completed by the participating students of the two educational centers. The evaluation consisted of a questionnaire where they were asked about

their satisfaction with the session, and the learning obtained. In order to analyze these data, the specialized software for qualitative data analysis, *Atlas Ti*, was used. The students showed a high degree of satisfaction, 83% would participate in sessions like this one, because they feel it has been very useful to them. The words most repeated by them were: *trust* and *openness*.

Third Session: The Mystery of Love and the Power of Forgiveness

The last virtual session posed a challenge. To present love not as a mere feeling, but as the ultimate expression of freedom (Lucas 2005, 184). Faced with young people who live their sexuality separately from love, who have faced tricky situations at home, the subject was complicated to tackle. To do this, some questions were asked beforehand: to think about one's own painful experience; how one overcame it; and to analyse whether the frustating relationship, or the wounds it caused had healed. Because it was so intimate, the responses were collected anonymously, and the questionnaire was completed ten days before the classroom intervention. Before the meeting, the teachers prepared a presentation with fragments of the answers, maintaining the anonymity of the pupils throughout the process.

O'Connor's literature invites us to open up our eyes, metaforically. In this proposal, the author identifies the main objective of the methodology of open reason: to transcend the literary analysis of the story, not only to delve into the depths of the story, but also to open it up to other sciences, including philosophy, and even theology.

In order to analyse O'Connor's story thoghourly, using the methodology of open reason, the subject of faith cannot be ignored, but, on the other hand, the aim of the class was not catechetical. We are at the university and in a vocational training centre, but it is precisely the integral formation, the honest search for truth, the synthesis of knowledge that leads us to focus on the theme of the possibility of loving and forgiving others from the heart.

Since our companion from Palencia contacted us, she had detected a need: restless and suffering hearts that had been touched by a story. O'Connor's stories reflect that broken heart: "he has only reflected our broken condition" (1969, 168), and proposes to all its readers, regardless of their beliefs, a invitation to respond to the incessant search for meaning. Through the sensitive experience of reading, it brings students closer to the mystery in a biblical meaning.

CONCLUSION AND PROSPECTS

After having shared three such profound virtual sessions, we concluded with a physical meeting at the university, and, as could not be otherwise, the colophon around a table was fruitful. Kass in his essay The Hungry Soul explains the

different angles of the scientific views of eating, but questions what it entails: "gathering to eat'' in the face of a society that forgets everything about eating, conversing, etc" (2005, 47). With this innovation project it was proposed that the experience of eating also goes beyond what the empirical sciences explain. The one who shares the same bread, becomes a companion (207), establishing a dialogue through what can be fully shared: the word (257). It all began with reading, now, from those words, it points to a mystery. O'Connor had always sensed it, hence the title of her work: *Mystery y Manners*.

Although other innovation projects in social education are known (Martínez de Miguel *et al.* 2020; Domínguez Fernández and Llorente 2009) and have used a similar methodology (Ríos 2010 and Solís and López Andrada 2021), we have not found a project that, from the humanities, delves into concepts presented, by means of the literature, and responds to two such different educational realities. This multidisciplinary approach (Literature, English, Philosophy and even Theology) was the project`s innovation in itself. It recovers the university and general educational role of searching for the meaningful values, through a synthesis of knowledge, and committing to integral education with a social dimension. Classical tools, such as guided reading, and more innovative ones, such as the use of the Mentimeter application have been used. So far, there is no bibliography of similar projects with a joint approach of the two methodologies for this type of integrative approach. For all these reasons, it is hoped that this project could inspire the rest of the scientific community.

The methodology of extended reason, from the sensitive reading of a story, provokes the search for answers that are not only technical, but also existential, and they open students to the question of transcendence. To achieve this, in addition to reading groups, guided sessions are needed, with preparation of tools before classroom interventions, and analysis after the sessions, in order to modify what is necessary for the next session. It is advisable that the teachers who make up the co-teaching group belong to different areas of interest, so that the approach is as multidisciplinary as possible.

This training experience culminates in a successful project that demonstrates how methodological symbiosis, recovering the university essence, integrating disciplines culminates in a richer and deeper analysis of reality, and responds to the restless hearts of young people, thus preparing them not only for their professional, but also their personal challenges.

The objectives of the project were achieved. Thus, prejudices between the diverse groups were eliminated, allowing the recognition of the other in their dignity. We responded to the needs demanded by the CIFP of Palencia after their reading sessions. The service-learning methodology was put into practice, allowing the Social Education students to learn *in situ* about a probable future intervention with students at risk of exclusion, providing the service they required at the time. And, not only was it possible to raise existential questions that underlie the story

and the life of each person, but, with the methodology of open reason, possible answers were raised with which the young people approached reality more conscientiously.

In the future, we would like to complete the article with qualitative and quantitative studies, but first we needed this theoretical presentation of the praxis carried out, in order to understand the potential transformative power of this initiative.

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*A*cest proiect de cercetare didactică are ca scop demonstrarea efectelor pozitive asupra pregătirii tinerilor din medii diferite, prin folosirea metodologiilor de învățare variate și prin sesiuni de învățare combinate. El analizează efectele dezvoltării unei simbioze între două metodologii didactice: învățarea prin servicii și gândirea extinsă. Eșantionul este format din două grupuri de studenți: un grup de studenți în anul II din cadrul unui departament de educație socială din mediul urban și celălalt, un grup de elevi din mediul rural din cadrul unei școli vocaționale. A fost creată o metodologie consitând din sesiuni hibride și o întâlnire față în față cu studenții, în cadrul căreia a fost citită o nuvelă de autoarea americană Flannery O'Connor. Nuvela a fost citită utilizând câteva unghiuri de abordare diferite: literatură, antropologie și responsabilitate socială. Ca primă concluzie, s-a observat că aplicarea celor două metode combinate, învățarea prin servicii și gândirea extinsă, oferă rezultate mai bune decât aplicate individual. Analiza holistică a nuvelei ne permite să analizăm mai în profunzime subiecte ca demnitatea umană, înțelesul suferinței, dragostea și iertarea. Rezultatul din simbiozei metodologiilor, persoanele tinere devin mult mai interesate în procesul lor de învățare, facilitându-se un proces de pregătire mai empatic și o foră a educației proiectate și în afara clasei de curs, indicândspre vocația serviciului social.

Cuvinte-cheie: service learning; rațiune extinsă; Flannery O'Connor; probleme existențiale; serviciu social; demnitate umană.