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The influence of the simulation strategy over the improvement of the classroom climate

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Abstract

The school climate is a process, structure of values and norms that canalize the teachers and the pupils in a direction of successful teaching and learning, increasing the effectiveness of the organizational set of the school building. The main aim of the simulation strategy is creating as much as possible closer situation to the real life or the pupils’ life experience. Through this strategy the pupils learn certain principles, skills of understanding and cognitive thinking, psychomotor skills and values/ways of behavior, connected with certain certification, influences, readiness, alertness and empathy. The aim of this research is directed to assessment of the influence of the simulation strategy over the improvement of the classroom climate. From the actions, in this research were used observant field notes, that enabled an insight of the event through direct listening and looking by the pupils, and conceptual field notes that enabled making conclusions from the observation. From the instruments for registering the data was used a protocol for observation, aimed to the students, the pupils were observed during the classes and during the break. Another instrument that was used for the research is the questionnaire, aimed to the teachers and the experts. The use of the simulation strategy has a great influence over the creation of a positive climate in the class that it isn’t limited only in the process of classes realization, but it has broader and deeper dimension. It influences the positive dimension of the pupil’s personality too as well as the development and straightening of the educational function of the school. That is why; in the future the teachers should continue to use this strategy and to specialize in this field so they can qualify the present and the future generations, in a quicker and easier way to solve the problems on personal, interpersonal, local and global level.

Keywords: Simulation strategy; classroom climate; influence; pupil; teachers.

1. Introduction

The climate as a part of the organizational processes that lead to successful function of the systems is regularly present in the school as well as in the classroom and it represents something that it doesn’t only associate to their exterior appearance, but it is much deeper. The school climate is one of the components of their internal structure. It is actually a process, structure of values and norms that canalize the teachers and the pupils in direction of successful
teaching and learning, increasing the effectiveness of the organizational set of the school building. Actually, it represent a set ambience in some school, on which basic can clearly be seen how the staff, pupils and other personnel feel in it. For changes to be made first should be certified the values and expectations from the change as a final aim. The need of changes appears as a result of the need of establishing new relations and different climate in the school, and it should start in the classroom.

The creation of the classroom climate for motivation of the studying is one of the most important questions in the educational process. It can be felt in the way of interaction between the pupils, their way of listening and talking. The environment in which the teaching process takes part can be the main indicator through which the efficiency of the teacher can be seen. The modern teacher will be successful only if he set adequate interaction-communicational relations with his pupils.

The basic aim of the simulation strategy is creating a situation as much closer as it can to the real life or pupils’ life experience. Through this strategy the pupils learn certain principles, skills of understanding and thinking in the cognitive area, psycho-motor skills and ways of behavior, connected to certain assurances, influences, readiness, alertness and empathy. The simulation actually is a kind of learning through experience, where through previously made scenario the pupil is put in so called “world” defined by the teacher. The teacher controls the parameters of that “world” so he can get the wanted results from the pupils by critic thinking and assessment. Actually, the good educational simulation strategy should be authentic to the reality and the pupils should learn by making decisions through practical examples from the life. Because of that, they should be in accordance with the age and the pupils’ abilities that should have some pre-knowledge of what they are doing.

1.1. Advantages of the simulation strategy

- Motivating the pupils, enjoying the activity;
- The element of reality is compatible with the principles of the constructiveness;
- Greater respect between the pupils from different aspects and
- Instigation of the critical thinking.

1.2. Disadvantages of the simulation strategy

- Complex simulations that ask longer preparation;
- Too much competitive simulations when there’s a reality distortion;
- Finances can be a matter and
- The evaluation is more complex contrary to the other traditional methods.

The simulation can have different forms. It can contain elements of game, role acting, dramatization or activities that contain metaphors. The basic element of this strategy is to have a context, and the pupils have to get an attitude or to make some decision on its basic. The aim of this strategy isn’t winning the other but understanding and getting new knowledge. The way of implementation of this strategy includes the following steps:

- Preparation of the work place and
- Preparation of the pupils for simulation. The teacher should be sure that the pupils have understood the procedure before the beginning. The teacher should also know what he wants to achieve by the simulation. Because there are some types of simulation that have more aims, a good step would be making a heading for evaluation, by which the pupils would become aware of the results expected from them.
- Playing simulation and
- Discussing and summing (assessment and evaluation)
The nature of the simulation strategy actually shows that the experiences are more real contrary to many other strategies and techniques. A disadvantage of this strategy is the evaluation of it. The teacher should overlook the whole process of simulation so he can be sure about the understanding and the acquisitions from it. Because of that it would be good to be made a heading as a guide with many questions, like this:

- Does this simulation offer an appropriate real picture for this group of pupils?
- Are the expected results well defined?
- Does the group have managed successfully in the different roles?
- Has the pupil played his role clearly?
- Were the forms of the technique for solving evident?
- Has the cooperation between the participants been evident?
- Was the pupil able to make a decision for a question?
- Was the pupil giving logical answers to the questions? etc.

1.3. Elements of the successful educational simulation

The most important elements for developing a successful educational simulation by the teacher are the following:

1. Clear picture of what the pupils should learn.
2. Clear picture of what the pupils should experience. The experience is the main reason for activity simulation.
4. Keeping to the details and accuracy.
5. The physical characteristics of the simulating environment should stimulate the pupil and motivate his imagination.
6. Provision of a secure environment with access to the exit.
7. Possibility for creating a concept and a level of conceptual understanding.
8. Provision of adequate means for realization of the simulation (clothes, objects, etc) for the pupils to play the roles.
9. The simulation should be a kind of fun, not a sacrifice.

There are many types of simulation that can be used during the process of teaching: group simulation, skills simulation, virtual simulation, strategic planning...etc.

The simulation strategy used in the teaching enables a different access to the work with pupils, more relevant ways for authentic development of their responsibility and skills, respect of their rights and acceptance of the pupil and his ability for active participation in the process of creating a health and thought life within the framework of a democratic society.

The consistent change of the simulation strategy during the classes implies:

- The strategy to match with the subject processed;
- The strategy to be used in the right part of the class;
- The sequence of the steps of the strategy to be kept;
- Appropriate teaching aids for the strategy to be used and
- Giving tasks that come out from the strategy, adequate to the pupils’ age.

The aim of this research is directed toward fortifying the influence of the simulation strategy to the improvement of the classroom climate.

As indicators for this research the teachers and experts opinions were taken on mind as well as the field notes made by the pupils.

From the actions, in this research were used observational field notes that enabled an access to the events through direct listening and watching by the students and conceptual field notes that enabled making conclusions from the
observation. From the instruments for registering data was used a protocol for observation, intended for the pupils. Another instrument that was used for the research was the questionnaire intended for the teachers and experts. There were included categories of the pupils’ behaviour during the classes and during the break i.e. the influence of the simulation strategy to their behaviour.

When it comes to the way of providing effectuality and reability of the research the model of intern triangulation was used (sum of techniques), where through use of a specific types of proofs the same could be compared.

The population of this research was consisted of the pupils and teachers from second, third and fourth grade from four primary schools from Bitola. 32 classrooms were observed, and 32 teachers and 4 experts (2 experts of Pedagogy and 2 Methodic experts) were interviewed.

The exemplar of this research was intended. These schools, classes, teachers and pupils we choose on the following way. On the base of previously made research about “whether the simulation strategy is used by the teachers” we concluded that for this research would be necessary those teachers that already use the strategy, because in that way we could affirm what is its influence to the improvement of the classroom climate.

4. Conclusion

The simulation strategy affects:

1. The independent estimation of the pupils;
2. The pupils’ stimulation for showing empathy;
3. Getting over the conflict situations between the pupils during the break.

Because the simulation strategy affects these categories positively, it can be concluded that its use during the classes straightens the understanding skills and thoughts of the pupils in the cognitive area, but also it has a little influence over the stimulation of the concert between the pupils during the break.

From all this we can conclude that if we create a positive climate in the classroom and give the pupils space in which they would be able to express their thoughts, standpoints, attitudes and feelings the possibility that they would be able to create attitudes that will contribute for their active participation in a democratic society is bigger. The positive climate in the class and in the school as a modern tendency is getting more and more certain, because the school is not just a place where knowledge is get, but a place where personalities are being created and formed. The use of the simulation strategy has a great influence on the creating a positive climate in the classes that isn’t just limited to the process of teaching, but it has broader and deeper dimension. It affects the positive dimension of the pupil’s personality as well as the development and the consolidation of educational function of the school.

That is why; in the future the teachers should continue to use this strategy and to improve so they can qualify the present and future generations, on a quicker and easier way to solve their problems on personal, impersonal, local and global level. The simulation strategy enables a different access toward the work with pupils, more relevant ways for authentic development of the responsibility and talent of the pupils, respect of their rights and acceptance of the pupil and his ability for active participation in the process of creating a healthy and thoughtful life within the framework of a democratic society.

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