

**THE PROBLEMS OF CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION:
CHALLENGES AND POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS**

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Abstract

The issue brought into discussion allows, in our opinion, increasing the quality of educational services, reducing early school leaving by children at educational risk, opportunities for the participation of teachers and members of management teams, in continuing education programs, development of teaching and professional skills, activities such as teacher mentoring and exchanging of good practices. In other words, our approach is about how teachers can optimize their teaching activity, so as to reduce school dropout and cause students to be permanently prepared through lifelong learning.

Keywords: continuing training courses; avoiding dropping out the school; creativity; conflict mediation techniques; school environment;

Introduction

Quality in education is a subject with many values. What does quality in education mean? Providing quality education means offering an education with programs in which the information is current, always up-to-date; in the same time this has to be correct, always verified and synthetic, in order not to terrify the child when he comes in contact with it, but to determine him to discover its

importance and want to know more, to document himself in addition. Another value of quality education is to provide the student with an educational system that results in a competent graduate in the field in which he or she was trained, taking into account the fact that by competence we mean a set of knowledge, skills, attitudes or values. Just as a school curriculum is based on general skills, specific skills, values and attitudes, so is the training of

the student as a future graduate who has information that he is able to apply in concrete situations, according to a set of principles.

In order to prepare the graduate for a concrete future in the field in which he / she was trained, a lot of practice and standards are needed that are as close as possible to what happens in a profession or trade, as well as an emphasis on what is related to cross-cutting skills: communication, logic, thinking, learning to learn, personal development, creativity, self-esteem, self-confidence, the ability to work in a team, to be a good organizer, to do leadership, etc. The most difficult to complete are the last six cross-cutting competences.

In this case, the importance of the teacher's attitude is huge. Assertive, positive communication from the teacher can work wonders, just as the aggressive behavior, which shows frustration, insufficient self-knowledge, confusion, etc. it can also cause a lack of confidence in the education provided by the classical education system, a distorted behavior, a lack of authenticity, the distortion of values into vices, etc.

Another value of quality in education is the continuous need for improvement, the need to be creative in education and to "blow in the wings" of

the student, to determine him to overcome the fears imposed by his family, society, community part and to unlock their potential, realizing their dreams. Creativity has always led to inventions and innovations, to extraordinary discoveries that we use today and without which we do not conceive life.

Without creativity, it is increasingly difficult to break through in everyday life. Quality in education means giving the child the opportunity to express himself in his own way and through extracurricular activities. Maybe one doesn't excel in math, but he can play in a pantomime show and he can be really expressive and funny. Maybe someone else hates sitting in a bench on the bench and reading historical texts or following a route on the map, but loves to watch an action movie and watch the main character's strategy for making his dream come true. So, as teachers, we cannot force them to learn from a textbook or notebook the features of the asymmetric conflict in the Romanian Middle Ages, but based on a well-chosen historical film, the history teacher can determine the student to discover these features, to debate, learn with pleasure and retain long-term information. Maybe a student fails to express a point of view on a topic given by the teacher in class, does not find his

words, as we often say, but expresses himself excellently on the football field and, as a team captain, he leads his colleagues to the championship trophy.

Quality in education also means a decrease in standardization and a permissiveness of communication through creativity, assertiveness, etc. Students supported in this way by the quality of the didactic act can easily complete the courses of a high school, even if the temptation to drop out of school has often knocked on their door.

The quality of learning is, in fact, the quality of life itself. The teacher does not have to behave in one way at the department and in another way at home, in the family. Consistency in his behavior is given by the quality of his own life, a good self-knowledge and an assumption of his own personality. For thousands of years we have been striving to find the best possible way of education, because we want the generation that comes after us to have a better life. In school and education, humanity should put all its best: soul, passion, care, bird, etc., because the most beautiful and important gift we can give to the young generation is to give the best of us in every learning opportunity and then the result will be, as far as possible, the best possible.

Our students want to see this in us: passion, the belief that what we say is true, logic and coherence in expression, so that they can follow our speech with interest and learn something from it. The teacher's involvement in the educational act is also seen in the stories he tells his students, stories from which each of them extracts what interests him, the conclusion being different from student to student. The life stories inserted in the class determine a humanization of the educational act, a "warming" of it, but also a form of free, creative expression, from which everyone learns something involuntary. Properly covered, it will withstand a great deal of adverse conditions, such as history, geography, mathematics and chemistry. Stories can be moralizing and educating as Jesus educated the world through parables. Some students do not drop out of school for such times in the classroom when the teacher tells stories or tells his story.

In order to be able as competent teachers to tell our story and to detach ourselves from the classic model of the rigid teacher, mounted on the pedestal of the department, in front of the students, not with the students, we need continuous training courses.

The importance of continuing training courses for pre-university teachers

The continuing training courses have a very special impact on the various categories of teachers. For some it is a chore that teaches them nothing special, a disruption of personal comfort and a source of stress, why not admit. For another category it is a school game, a return to school as students, not teachers, a form of entertainment from which they learn something new. For others, continuing education is a way to fill a gap they feel they have, but I don't know why, where and what they should do to get rid of it. They "taste" the course, then enjoy it to the end and put it into practice whenever the opportunity arises, to the satisfaction of the man who reinvented himself in his workplace. For this category of teachers, continuing education courses are „mouths of fresh air”, a kind of change of look, a rebirth of the pleasure of being in the teaching chair again and again.

And there is, in my opinion, a category of teachers who refer to continuing education courses with the phrase: "Well, I'm not crazy. Think of someone like me.", I.e. the trainer who explains the importance of creativity in education, which suggests that one can

learn through play and play, which argues that multimedia in education means using forms of communication within the reach of the new generation and not being anachronistic or maladapted, that we all have conflicts with ourselves and others and that it is good to recognize, because this is how we learn to discover their causes, to look for solutions, to mediate conflicts, to look from the perspectives of both parties, to be empathetic and to personalize the educational act.

Therefore, continuing training courses are needed to provide our students with a quality education. The courses keep us up to date with innovations in the field of instructional-educational process, anchor us in the present and prepare us for the future of education. We must always be informed, always up to date with the news, if we do not want to be overwhelmed as teachers. Our students have countless sources of information and very easy to access, so they can overcome us very quickly.

Continuing training courses help teachers to get in touch with other teachers, benefit from their experience at the department, socialize, get to know each other and collaborate through various partnerships and volunteer activities. The ideas of teachers gathered in a continuing training course can be transformed into

short-term or long-term projects, become concrete achievements and determine their adoption as models for other educational institutions with a similar or identical profile.

Each training program focused on certain competencies. For example, for the training program: COMMUNICATION, NEGOTIATION AND MEDIATION IN EDUCATION, the didactic competence I aimed at was to create a good mood in the classroom, so that the class takes place in a particular affective, secure climate, developing students' personality by strengthening self-esteem, through the need to belong to a group and acceptance from them, mobilizing students to become a whole, members of a team working together. For the training program: SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP, the didactic competence aimed at me was to ensure the optimal communication conditions in order to improve the quality of the educational process and the education of the students, by involving and making the participants responsible.

For the continuing education program CREATIVITY IN THE INSTRUCTIVE-EDUCATIONAL PROCESS, the general competencies of the program are: acquiring complementary skills that expand the category of activities

that can be performed in current activities such as creative education, career guidance of students and their motivation, the development and extension of transversal competences regarding the interaction and communication with the social and pedagogical environment, self-control and reflective analysis of one's own activities, innovation for overcoming difficult situations.

The psycho-pedagogical competencies targeted are the design of school and extracurricular activities, using creative and innovative techniques; organizing and leading teaching activities using creative techniques; monitoring the training process using innovative techniques-professional-scientific skills; adapting and optimizing the educational process by integrating creative and innovation techniques; the use of knowledge of the history of human creativity in the field of subjects taught in order to attract the interest of the class to study and motivate students; the use of appropriate models, methods, techniques for knowledge, counseling and differential treatment; teamwork management. The info-documentary competencies targeted are: communication and relationship with students, parents, colleagues using creative techniques; efficient management of the processes of use of intellectual property.

Each continuous training course within the E-PROFI project, through the targeted competencies and the internships, provided me with working tools to improve the quality of the instructive-educational act that I carry out every day at school.

During the MULTIMEDIA IN EDUCATION course I managed to improve my communication with students through multimedia. We organized groups on various social networks with the students of each class, so that we could communicate easily and with maximum efficiency. We announce each other's program changes, share various sequences from documentaries on history, make photo collages of local history and prepare exhibitions on various topics: from winter customs and habits in Bucovina to memories from the communist period of some elderly locals, we interview these people in order to write articles on recent history - oral history - lived history - told history, we make Power Point presentations to denote the creativity of each student, but also the study of various sources of information in the multimedia area with critical and responsible spirit.

THE SCHOOL-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP was a very beneficial course for me. I have been participating in volunteer activities for a long time, but I was not an organizer. After completing

this course, I learned how to make a partnership and a volunteer project and now I am part of concrete teams that promote local history integrated into national and universal history through a partnership with the "Nicu Gane" National College in Fălticeni, as well as organizing teams of students to participate in volunteer activities such as "Help Autism" and "Giving, you will acquire", two volunteer projects for charity that I recently participated in. I have always believed that assertiveness is not an asset in teacher-student communication. At one point I saw it as a form of weakness.

The continuous training course COMMUNICATION, NEGOTIATION AND MEDIATION IN EDUCATION, changed my way of reporting to assertiveness and made me see it as a quality. I have always communicated assertively with students and those around me, but my opinion is clear: you cannot be assertive if you are not good at heart. No matter how professional he is, a teacher cannot learn assertiveness, because it is not a technique, it is an attitude, a value.

CREATIVITY IN THE INSTRUCTIVE-EDUCATIONAL PROCESS is my favorite course. The general culture of each of us can explode through creativity. I applied all the exercises to stimulate creativity to my

classes of students, on various groups and I had very pleasant surprises. The students of class X A, real profile, mathematics-informatics specialization, intensive informatics, through a brainstorming exercise associated creativity with: originality, childhood, valuable work, design, sacrifice, talent, architecture, imagination, spontaneity, intelligence, innovation, invention, self-education. I was struck by the association of creativity with spontaneity, sacrifice and self-education. The students' creativity was also stimulated by the competition between them for the realization of the best Power Point presentation on the topic of inventors and their inventions. They were extremely creative in presenting Thomas Edison, Benjamin Franklin, Alfred Nobel, and so on. In the 11th grade F, humanities profile, social sciences specialization, intensive English, to demonstrate the contribution of Romanians to the development of universal science and technology, the students showed an extraordinary level of creativity. Original presentations were made about Grigore Antipa, George Emil Palade, Ana Aslan, Victor Babeş, Horia Hurmuzescu, Traian Vuia, Henri Coandă, etc. Their way of expressing themselves, the information accessed, the suggestive images, the design of the presentation

showed that our students like to be creative and to be given the opportunity to express themselves. These exercises to stimulate students' creativity had a huge impact on the quality of the educational act, as they gave students the opportunity to express themselves freely and make their mark on their work. Evaluation no longer seemed a chore, but a form of expression and communication student-teacher, teacher-student, student-colleagues. Some students managed to improve their average in history, others to promote, although they were in a situation of correction. In the 11th grade, the temptation to drop out of school is huge. Students want to be independent, already have their first part-time jobs and do not cope with school obligations, while, after classes, they go to work. Some are seriously considering retiring from classes, especially after taking possession of a ten-degree diploma. Assessment based on exercises to stimulate creativity leads students to find hope that they can pass in all subjects at the end of the semester or school year. Through extracurricular activities, volunteering, partnership, students were given good opportunities to show that they can be good organizers, that they can be generous and that they can attract other students in their charitable actions, that they can promote their passions through

exhibitions of paintings for sale. , paintings painted on glass or canvas, that can be discovered through what they think and put on paper in the form of essays, poems, reviews of books they have read, photographic art exhibitions, etc. A theme like Cemeteries can cause a real explosion of color, creativity, design, perspective on life and death, through photographic art. An 11th grade student took her own photos in various cemeteries in the area and told the story of that photo in original verse, in English, proving that she can make art in a cemetery.

The satisfaction of organizing Christmas fairs by students and teachers has led to a real involvement of the whole school and community, proving that the school-community partnership is not a story, but a reality.

The last continuous training course I participated in with my colleagues was "MEDIATION OF CONFLICTS IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT". The teaching competence most often sought is, of course, mediation of conflicts between students, prevention of bullying situations by practicing assertive communication, creating a friendly classroom environment for the activity. Everything that was worked in various types of workshops was very engaging and interesting, I was attracted by the Forum theater, as a form

of conflicts mediation and discovery of possible solutions to various problems. The teaching materials presented by the trainers in the courses created real disputes and very constructive debates to discover the real causes of the conflicts. In the Forum theater, teachers were taught to exercise empathy, to put themselves in the place of various characters and even to feel frustration, the helplessness of the victim or the apparent power of the aggressor .

They discovered real talents as actors, and the activities left a feeling of something else in the hearts of the participants. Other exercises proposed by trainers such as "Individual Star", "I give you two of my qualities, even though you have a lot.", "Travel luggage", etc. determined the participating teachers to know themselves, to interact, to know each other, to become friends, but also to discover how they relate to life, to generosity, to the willingness to change, to improve themselves. I think that the exercise with the line of life was the most relevant, because it has made us to find ourselves on that imaginary axis of time and to realize what we have done so far with our lives and what we can do in the future, in terms of our presence in the lives of our students. The exchange of good practices often leads teachers to change their vision of teaching profession.

Conclusion

Continuing training courses can increase the quality of the instructive-educational process, but it also depends on the category of the teachers who follow it. Those eager to reinvent themselves will implement what they learn new in their training courses. But there will also be teachers who will find the new ideas too difficult to apply and will stick to their personal style of teaching what is important is to find a way for teachers to choose which of the continuing training courses they want to take, and the range to be as varied and accessible as possible to all.

Some believe that nothing is accidental in life and that we are challenged to learn in life all the time, because life is a constant challenge and the little ones expect us, the teachers, to offer them solutions to the problems of the contemporary world. Conflict mediation courses taught us that we are not omniscient and that we must not offer solutions to our children and students, but to teach them how to find each way and the most appropriate solutions to their own problems.

The improvement of teachers in the pre-university environment is not an easy-to-organize approach, but quite the contrary. Contemporary problems are of

continuous diversity and are reinvented every day. I like to tell my students that "Attitude is everything, that they are and will be what they think, and that everything that is challenged, at some point to learn, is another opportunity that they should not miss. All they know and will know will make them better for themselves and for society."

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