CONTEXTUAL REFLECTIVENESS OF THE TEACHER IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF TEACHING FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS' SOCIAL COMPETENCIES

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Abstract

The paper is focused on the theoretical and empirical elaboration of the development of social competencies of students through contextual teaching by the teacher. In the theoretical part of the paper, issues related to the social competencies of the students and the contextual behavior of the teacher during the realization of the teaching are elaborated. In the empirical part, the paper is focused on testing the general hypothesis "Reflective teachers respect the context of learning and teaching more in the development of students' social competencies in contrast to less reflective teachers". By collecting data through the opinions of 247 teachers and 201 students from primary schools, we checked the two sub-hypotheses "Reflective teachers deviate more often from the planned activities when implementing a teaching for the development of student's social competencies based on the specific needs of students caused by the context of learning and teaching" and "Reflective teachers often adapt to the social needs of students brought about by the context of learning and teaching". The results of our research show that more reflective teachers have more courage in using the context in teaching through more frequent deviations from pre-planned activities and more frequent and greater adaptation to the social needs of students caused by the context of learning and teaching. The results will have an impact on better understanding and accepting of the personal, individual, and other social competencies of the students, being creative during teaching, and recognizing the quality of social living in the schools and society.

Keywords: teaching; social competencies of students; reflective teacher; contextual reflexivity; contextual teaching.

1. Introduction

In this paper, we will present the students' social competencies through two important aspects: communication as a basis for the student's social competencies and the essence of the student's social competencies. Communication between subjects is the basis of the social development of the individual. Bratanic M. believes that the better the relationship between the teacher and the student, the more likely it is to achieve better communication. And vice versa, successful communication improves human relationships. For her, "...extralinguistic non-verbal signs, such as kinesics (various movements in the position of the body) and proxemics, such as (physical proximity, i.e. distance between persons in the communication interaction, the spatial layout of the participant in the communication and the territorial behavior which refers to proceedings)." (Bratanic, 1993). Social competencies or the so-called social intelligence is a discipline that is studied in modern science from the perspective of a large number of newly created scientific disciplines. Kowert Rachel specifically describes social competencies through several approaches:
- "sociometric (status between equals),
- quality and quantity of relationships,
- functionality of the results and
- social skills as an approach." (More in: Kowert, 2015).

The functionality of results as a characteristic of social competencies is explained by Covert as follows: "While this approach examines the capacity of an individual to integrate a variety of abilities and create successful results in mutual interaction, it is only possible in a specific context, thus limiting the possibility of generalizing knowledge". (Kowert, 2015). Ludvigsen M. talks about creating a social framework which according to him: "...is focused on how social interaction is structured in the social sphere, in an attempt to see social interaction as a unity unto itself without focusing on the experiences of the participation of the individual. According to this structure, social space has a different character that we can place in a conceptual framework to better understand the present context and to create a better design of the Indian artifact." (Ludvigsen, 2006) For this author, the conceptual framework means: "...a tool for designers to gain a better understanding of the social context or social space for a design proposal and in a sense makes the social space material for active design" (Ludvigsen, 2006) For us, it means laying the foundations of the prerequisites for learning and the development of the students' social competences. For Margaret Semrud-Clikeman "Social competence is the ability to understand another's perspective about a particular situation and to learn from experience and apply it to the ever-changing social life. The ability to respond flexibly and appropriately defines a person's ability to cope with the social changes that are before each of us. Social competence is the basis on which expectations for future interactions with others are built and on which children build perceptions of their behavior. Social experiences are intimately related to emotional competencies. Social competence is rarely presented without a corresponding emotional function that is also presented." (Semrud-Clikeman, 2007)

After all, Hutchby I. and Moran-Ellis J. agree, which is in line with our thinking, that: "...competence refers more to the child's ability to deal with his social environment, to engage in social action that has meaning in a particular interactional context. Thus, we should ask how a child manipulates material and cultural resources to engage in contextually appropriate behavior: behavior that is appropriate at the participant level, while other children, adults, or some combination of the two. By material and cultural resources here we mean resources for social action that can be applied in any given context." (Hutchby & Moran-Ellis, Ed., 2005)

Margaret Semrud-Clikeman makes a significant contribution to the study of the elements of students' social competencies in her book Social Competences of Students. According to Semrud Klickeman: "Social competencies develop over time. Tasks that are critical to the development of social skills appear at different points in the developmental plan and build on previously learned skills and knowledge. Thus, a disruption in certain parts of the process will have a ripple effect on the next development. As the child learns appropriate social skills, emotional maturation also occurs. These parallel developmental tasks for the social and emotional development of competencies re-emphasize the importance of both abilities to understand each." (In: Pickett, 1980)

Oppenheimer elaborates on the two models of social competencies: Greenspan's Proposed Model of Social Competence and Dodge's Scheme of the Conceptualization of Social Interactions. Describing Greenspan's model, the author states three approaches: outcome-oriented approach, which refers to "... the individual's ability to achieve the desired social goals", content-oriented approach in which the essence is in the attempt to "... identify challenges in behavior that can contribute to successful social results" and the orientation towards the ability of the students (skill-oriented approach) whose essence is in the "social awareness of the individual". (Oppenheimer, 1989) According to Greenspan (Greenspan, 1981a), social competence is "...that part of an individual's perceived effectiveness in interpersonal situations and social role that can be attributed to qualities of temperament, character, and social awareness". (Ibid)

The reflective teacher is the paradigm that can create assumptions for the successful and complete development of students' social competencies. Through the action of the teacher as a reflexive practitioner, good practices will be established to nurture social uniqueness, social integrity, and the quality of social living in these spaces. Contextual teaching is one of the skills of the modern teacher. The teacher considers the teaching context in each of the didactic elements: planning, preparation, realization, reflection, and evaluation. In his book Didactics for Parents, Iliev indicates "...that the teacher's working environment consists of students, the

curriculum (curriculum), the context of teaching and learning, parents, but also fellow teachers." (Iliev D., 2021) We would emphasize the importance of context that Hines gives in planning instruction, which he says "...is dynamic...", after which he concludes that context is "always local to some extent" and "...is formed by compounding factors over time." (Haynes, 2010) Contextual teaching is flexible, based on institutional conditions, interpersonal relationships, the number, structure, and characteristics of students, and everything that affects the work environment. One of the professional abilities and skills of the teacher in the area of teaching and learning and the sub-area of competencies implementation of teaching is that "teaching and learning adapts to the situation and the context" (Basic Professional Competencies of Teachers, 2016)

2. Methodology

The general hypothesis "Reflective teachers respect the context of learning and teaching more in the development of student's social competencies in contrast to less reflective teachers" has been tested by collecting data through the opinions of 247 teachers and 201 students from primary schools. We have collected data for testing the general hypotheses by checking the two sub-hypotheses "Reflective teachers deviate more often from the planned activities when implementing teaching for the development of students' social competencies based on the specific needs of students caused by the context of learning and teaching" and "Reflective teachers often adapt to the social needs of students brought about by the context of learning and teaching". The questionnaire was the main technique for data gathering.

We believe that in this part we should explain the processes of identification of the reflexivity of the teachers. We created an instrument in which we asked questions with which the teacher assesses himself whether he is reflective, the teacher assesses which of the other colleagues is reflective and the teacher gives a qualitative description of his characteristics that make him a reflective teacher. The purpose of this questionnaire was to examine the teacher's perception of his reflexivity, and the teacher's perception of the reflexivity of his colleagues and to discover the characteristics that make a teacher reflective. It helped us to make two strata of respondents: more reflective teachers and less reflective teachers.

With the wording more reflective teachers and less reflective teachers, we wanted to indicate the need to respect the teacher's autonomy in making decisions, respect the teacher's need and desire to be or not be reflective, and perhaps cause the need for the teacher to think about the promotion of its reflexivity.

At the same time, the more reflective teacher stratum included those teachers who declared themselves to be reflective, those teachers who were simultaneously assessed by other colleagues to be reflective, and those teachers who were assessed to be reflective by the majority of students in their class. The results of this process were the creation of two stratums of samples. The reflexive teachers as stratum is elaborated through the statements: "I plan reflexively; I respect every student; I always cooperate with my colleagues; I share experiences with colleagues; work closely with parents; I am involved in school activities; I am involved in local community activities; I attend courses and seminars; I make teaching aids; I use contemporary literature to prepare the lecture; the students realize the teaching themselves; I share materials with colleagues; I conduct internal trainings for colleagues; I study constantly; I plan according to the program; I cooperate with colleagues; I go to seminars; I use other learning sources; I am constantly improving myself; the students help me in the implementation of the lesson; participate in the planning of the school plan for professional development; I plan my own professional development plan; I learn from the students; I learn from my parents; I learn from colleagues; I work on school projects; apply in projects of an international character; I collaborate with colleagues from other schools; I officially contact colleagues from other municipalities; I work in expert committees; I respect the characteristics of students; I take care of consistent implementation of the curriculum; I apply modern teaching aids and aids; I use teaching methods in a modern way; I use the forms of teaching work in a modern way; I pay attention to the creations of the students; the personal characteristics of the students are my priority in my work; I help in the professional development of colleagues; I cooperate with

the professional services in the school; I respect my fellow students; I give professional advice from colleagues; I receive professional advice from colleagues; I write professional papers; I respect the work of everyone in the team."

3. Results

To test the general hypothesis, we tried to obtain data and insights regarding the sub-hypotheses. For the examination of the first sub-hypothesis, *Reflective teachers deviate more often from the planned activities during the realization of teaching for the development of the social competencies of the students based on the specific needs of the students caused by the context of learning and teaching*, we asked the teachers for their opinion. They answered the question bearing in mind the context of teaching and learning during the realization of the teaching, while deciding on one of the indicated intensities Never, Very Rarely, Sometimes, Often, and Always for each of the offered activities of the students. The table below presents the summary processing of the data for the opinion of the more reflective and less reflective primary school teachers about the deviation from the planned activities during the realization of the teaching for the development of the social competencies of the students. This is done by calculating the weighted value of the arithmetic mean of the students' responses for each of the intensity categories.

Table 1 Opinion of the more reflective and less reflective primary school teachers about the deviation from the planned activities during the implementation of teaching

	More reflective teachers in primary school 103		Less reflective teachers in primary 144	
	χ	σ	χ	σ
I respect the pre-planned.	4.835	0.443	4.590	0.803
I respect what is planned, but I also consider the needs of the students.	4.544	0.694	3.743	1.262
I respect the plan, but I also consider certain changes in the classroom.	4.379	0.726	2.750	0.786
What I have planned is only a draft orientation, and the activities are based on the entire context of learning and teaching.	4.417	0.549	2.854	0.986

The results of the responses of the *more reflective primary school teachers*, tabulated in the table above, show that:
- The value of the arithmetic mean (4,835) of the responses of the more reflective primary school teachers shows that the largest number of teachers respect the transition plan. In other words, most teachers always do it. The value of the standard deviation of the responses of the more reflective primary school teachers 0.443 shows that about this statement, the teachers are the most unique.
- The range of values of the arithmetic means of the answers (from 4,379 to 4,835) shows that the more reflective teachers do not differ much in the answers for each of the statements, with small variations, most of them very often or always take into account all the listed options. On average, the smallest number of the more reflective primary school teachers, which is seen from the value of the arithmetic mean of 4,379, very often

respect the plan, but they also take into account certain changes in the classroom, they have the plan only as a sketch-orientation.

- The range of values of the standard deviation (from 0.443 to 0.726) of the responses of the more reflective primary school teachers show that about all the statements, there are no major differences between the opinions of the teachers.

The results of the responses of *the less reflective primary school teachers* shown in the table above, show that:

- The value of the arithmetic mean (4,590) of the responses of the less reflective elementary school teachers shows that the largest number of teachers always respect the previously planned.

- The value of the arithmetic mean (2,750) of the responses of the less reflective primary school teachers shows that the smallest number of teachers sometimes respect the plan, but also take into account the specific social needs of the students that arise under the influence of the teaching context.

- The value of the standard deviation of the answers of the less reflective primary school teachers 0.786 shows that the statement They respect the planned, but also take into account certain changes in the classroom, the teachers are the most unique in their answers.

- The value of the standard deviation of the answers of the less reflective primary school teachers 1.262 shows that about the statement I respect the plan, but I also take into account the needs of the students. There is the biggest difference in the answers of the teachers.

We also asked the teachers to test the specific hypothesis *Reflective teachers often adapt to the social needs of students caused by the context of learning and teaching*. They answered the question of The social needs of the students in a given context while deciding on one of the indicated intensities Never, Very rarely, Sometimes, Often, and Always for each of the activities offered to the students. Table No. 2 presents the processing of the data on the opinion of the more reflective and less reflective primary school teachers about the adaptability of teachers to the social needs of students. This is done by calculating the weighted value of the arithmetic mean of the students' responses for each of the intensity categories.

Table 2 The opinion of more reflective and less reflective primary school teachers about the adaptability of teachers to the social needs of students

	More reflective teachers in primary school 103		Less reflective teachers in primary 144	
	χ	σ	χ	σ
At the core of my teaching.	4.971	0.168	3.479	1.014
One of the essential aspects that I focus on during teaching.	4.835	0.371	2.896	1.104
A part that I pay little attention to.	1.194	0.576	2.389	0.994

The results of the responses of the more reflective primary school teachers, tabulated in the table above, show that:

- The value of the arithmetic mean (4,971) of the responses of the more reflective primary school teachers shows that for the majority of the teachers, the social needs of the students are always the focus of teaching. One of the essential aspects to which I am directed in the course of teaching was also declared by a large number of teachers, which can be seen from the value of the arithmetic mean (4.835). From the value of

the arithmetic mean of the answers of the teachers, it can be seen that the smallest number of teachers declared that the social needs of the students are a part they pay little attention to.

- The values of the standard deviation of each of the statements, which ranges from 0.168 to 0.576, show that there are no big deviations and differences between the teachers in the answers for each of the statements.

The results of the responses of the less reflective primary school teachers shifted in the table above, show that:

- The value of the arithmetic mean (3,479) of the answers of the less reflective primary school teachers shows that for the majority of the teachers, the social needs of the students are always the focus of teaching. A large number of teachers also declared that it is one of the essential aspects that I focus on during teaching, which can be seen from the value of the arithmetic mean (2,896). From the value of the arithmetic mean of the answers of the teachers, it can be seen that the smallest number of teachers declared that the social needs of the students are a part they pay little attention to.

- The values of the standard deviation of each of the statements, which ranges from 0.994 to 1.104, show that among the less reflective primary school teachers there are greater deviations and differences in the answers for each of the statements.

4. Discussion

From the above, it can be seen that there are differences between the responses of more reflective primary school teachers and less reflective primary school teachers regarding the influence of the context on the planning of the teacher's activities. One of the differences is that more reflective teachers take each of these statements into account equally when planning their teaching. At the same time, more reflective teachers are unique in their responses to each of the listed planning options taking into account the teaching context. Among the less reflective primary school teachers, the observance of pre-planned activities dominates, which is a form of poor application of the elements of situational teaching.

It can be seen that both for more reflective primary school teachers and for less reflective primary school teachers, the social needs of students in a given context are the basis of teaching. At the same time, it can be seen that the social needs of students in a given context are more significant and are always the focus of more reflective primary school teachers, while for less reflective primary school teachers, the social needs of students are only sometimes taken into account. To make the conclusion stronger, we would also say that the more reflective primary school teachers are almost all convinced that this is so, while the less reflective primary school teachers have the greatest dispersion in the answers.

From what we have seen from the processing, analysis, and interpretation of the teachers' answers regarding the two questions, we can state that this is in support of the acceptance of the two sub-hypotheses. Based on the analysis of the responses of primary school teachers about the sub-hypothesis "Reflective teachers deviate more often from the planned activities during the realization of teaching for the development of social competencies of students based on the specific needs of students caused by the context of learning and teaching" and the sub-hypothesis "Reflective teachers often adapt to the social needs of students caused by the context of learning and teaching" we came to the knowledge that for teachers there are differences in the attitude and treatment of the context of teaching on the activities of more and less reflective teachers to respect and develop social students' competencies.

These findings do not point to the acceptance of the general Reflective teacher's respect for the context of learning and teaching more in the development of student's social competencies in contrast to less reflective teachers.

5. Conclusions

Respecting the teaching context was an indicator of the courage that teachers have for taking actions and activities that have both the contextual characteristics of learning and the contextual conditions of learning. Our findings from the research point to the conclusion that more reflective teachers have more courage in using the context in teaching through more frequent deviation from pre-planned activities and more frequent and greater adaptation to the social needs of students caused by the context of learning and teaching. The acting of the reflective teacher should be supported and promoted in the professional community because such acting provokes and develops different aspects of the social competencies of students.

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