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PREPARING FUTURE TEACHERS FOR IMPLEMENT THE PRINCIPLES INCLUSIVE SCHOOL - A NECESSITY OF THE MODERN EDUCATION

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Abstract

The present paper wants to prove that in order to successfully implement the inclusive education in the initial training of the teachers. This objective is very important because the students with disabilities receive insufficient assistance for their educational needs. Our proposal provides a series of arguments and ways of achieving inclusive education principles in the undergraduate curriculum. In this sense, we have come up with some working strategies which can be applied during the courses and the seminars, and also with some specific topics which can be introduced in the curriculum of the classes focused on didactics and on the management of the class. We demonstrated that without these adaptations curricular the student teachers will be trained to handle these problems. The future teachers will be aware of the means through which they can identify the particularities of their pupils and how they can be used in order to achieve an efficient and qualitative education.

Keywords: Inclusive education ; teaching ; disabilities

1. INTRODUCTION

The contemporary society is more and more confronted with the problem of the attitude towards those that are different: should it accentuate the differences in order to pinpoint the potential of each individual or should it emphasize the common aspects so as to diminish the differences? Both attitudes must be approached with caution as they may easily be turned into extreme behaviors which will affect the democratic principles lying at the base of the free world. Therefore, the issue regarding the differences between individuals has become also a permanent subject for education; the school training from the perspective of the differences is one of the many directions needed to ensure the quality of education in Romanian schools. So, the differentiated education has started to incorporate both the concepts of pupil focused education (based on seeing each pupil as an unique individual) and of inclusive education (based on the need to integrate in schools even the persons with disabilities). In this way, the differentiated education allow to adapting the learning content and to varying the educational and management strategies for to offer students the chance to develop their personality (Crețu, 1998), respecting the individual particularities and encouraging the use of one’s own potential. Thus, the main goal of differentiated and individualized education targets (from O. Oprea’s opinion):

• discovering each student’s resources and by helping him to be aware of and to use them, so as to make him show what he knows, to understand the level he reached and what he must do next;
• offering some more classes for the gifted students and for those that posses special abilities for certain disciplines;
• preventing and recuperating the students that present forms of retardation or show signs of school maladjustment.

A special attention was also given to the inclusive component which is trying to solve the problem of those pupils which because of their potential and developmental level cannot succeed to easily do normal activities (A. Ghergut, 2006). The present paper will focus also on this aspect.

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2. HYPOTHESIS, OBJECTIVES AND OBSERVATIONS

Our research emphasizes this need of the present-day school and it reiterates that its accomplishment can be done with the help of some basic abilities developed in the new teachers. In consequence, the teachers’ training consists in their capacity to identify each pupil’s potential and to adapt their pedagogical actions according to it. The emphasis falls also upon the socio-professional integration of those who need a special pedagogical attention as a consequence of some dysfunctions or deficiencies of an intellectual, sensorial, physical, psychomotor, physiological nature.

Starting from the premise that each pupil is a unique person, differentiated education, especially its inclusive component, funds its existence within the democratic principles. So, in its interest there is the need to implement the following principles:

- an equal chance to education is something meant for everyone, no matter his/her born and acquired abilities;
- an equal chance to access education to allow the chance to respect the aptitudinal possibilities and needs off each pupil.

In order to enumerate these aspects, our proposals were based on the observation and analysis of the training needs of the students preparing to become teachers for technical and socio-humanistic disciplines. The data has been collected through a questionnaire filled in by 68 students that were using their personal reflections, and also through the talks had during the evaluation of their practical activities taking place in school. In this sense, we have focussed on how students understand the idea of integrating pupils with disabilities, how well prepared they are to put to practice the inclusive education, and what experiences they have gained regarding the adaptation of their activity to the special needs of some pupils. Based on the problems found, we have tried to analyze their need for training and to come up with some activities that will help them reach some specific abilities needed in order to implement an inclusive education. We tied this issue with the need to sustaining the democratic rights of actual society.

Of course, the success of their implementation depends on the teachers’ training in order to adapt their teaching environment, the curricula and their teaching-learning strategies. Taking this into account, during our research we have noticed that:

- 84% of them have made the link between inclusive education and universal rights of man and citizen;
- 16% of them have extended this correlation by explaining it in connection with the legal and judicial perspective.

If under the theoretical aspect, the need for a differentiated education was felt by all students; there were still differences at the practical level:

- 43% of the students were convinced that special education would solve better the problems of the people with disabilities;
- 56% were in favor of including them also in schools, but out of them, 70% declared that they are not emotionally and professionally prepared for such pupils;
- 1% hope to come up with solutions different than inclusive education (over 60% have explained their decision by means of the rejection reaction coming from the normal pupils and their parents; approximately 40% were convinced that such an education would affect the activity of the normal pupils).

These situations prove that during their initial training to become teachers, the students need to be more involved in activities which are specific for the differentiated education. To better illustrate its accomplishment, next we will offer some examples of abilities specific to the differentiated education.

We have started from the belief that from the inclusion perspective, the differentiated education focuses both on a wide and complex adaptation of the learning activities (IRadu, 1978), and also on organizing the interactions so as to have a constructive and optimistic effect” (Vrășmaș, 2010).
Table 1. The competences of the differentiated education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field event, Selectable unit</th>
<th>Competencies setting</th>
<th>Specific competencies</th>
<th>Observations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational partnerships and learning environment</td>
<td>to assure the access of all children to the normal school’s program and resources; to implicate the local community in the development of programs and of the educational.</td>
<td>adaptation the learning spaces and the school buildings and creation new spaces for learning outside the school; decoration and individualization the class rooms as per the pupils' preoccupations.</td>
<td>it is important to involve the pupils in arranging their learning space and to encourage the pupils with disabilities to express their needs; it is important to ease up the teacher’s access to new and different professional occasions which will help the development of inclusive practices.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Knowing the students and the psycho-physical- bio potential of each student</td>
<td>to identify the potential and the interests of each pupil so as to develop them and to stimulate the inner need for learning.</td>
<td>identification of the differentiated teaching strategies will optimize learning at the individual level (learning by means of personal development, collaborative learning, working in a learning group or team, etc.).</td>
<td>it is necessary to avoid emphasizing the difference existent between pupils in order to avoid others’ prejudices and the labelling of pupils; to permanently evaluate the differentiated education program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude and interrelationships within the group of student</td>
<td>to develop positive emotions between the all children in the class / school.</td>
<td>cultivating students’ tolerance for those that are different than they, understanding and accepting their differences; manifestation of positive attitude, optimistic, compassionate and flexible from teachers. ensuring to individualized support programs for all the children with special needs; adoption the learning content from a quantitative perspective (the volume of knowledge), and from a qualitative one (inter-disciplinarity, the cognitive processes involved, the speed and learning style of the pupils).</td>
<td>the differentiated and individualized learning must be organized for all types of activities during the whole teaching-learning-evaluating process.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizing the learning content, Curriculum development and adaptation</td>
<td>to correlate the demands of the learning/educational programs with the structure of the school organization.</td>
<td>special needs; adaptation the learning content from a quantitative perspective (the volume of knowledge), and from a qualitative one (inter-disciplinarity, the cognitive processes involved, the speed and learning style of the pupils).</td>
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In this table results that the differentiated education means to discover each pupil’s resources, especially of those who have special needs, and to help him/her to become aware of and to use them so as to develop their learning and social abilities, to understand the level he/she has reached and what to do next. In order for a teacher to manage to do these with his/her pupils and to also develop the competences named earlier on and which focus on inclusive education, it is needed to also train the teachers towards this pedagogical direction (I. Neacșu, 1990). This problem we will be representing in the following table:

Table 2. Pedagogical competencies from inclusive education perspective.

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<tr>
<th>Didactic competencies</th>
<th>Derivatives competencies</th>
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<tr>
<td>A clear, concise and realistic formulation of the learning objectives.</td>
<td>The differentiation of the learning objectives according to pupils’ different levels of knowledge and understanding, of their individual rhythm to pass from one objective to the next. The pedagogical objectives must focus on the concordance with the preliminary conditions observed and the motivational learning factors. The learning activities should take place in accordance with the pedagogical expectations and those of each pupil. The use to differentiated teaching strategies that will optimize learning at the individual level.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The use the didactic strategy that best fits the educational needs required by that specific lesson.</td>
<td>Adaptation the educational strategies: collaborative learning, didactic game, problem solving, discovery learning and other interactive methods, working groups with themes but differentiated, independent work, differentiated. The facilitate the teaching-learning in an inter-, pluri-disciplinary way so as to allow each pupil to study thoroughly the subject from different perspectives. The contents of activities are important, but they will not overshadow the need for individualization of education. The selecting and implementing the content of learning in a form adopted by the pupils of the class/school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The plan of the didactic activity according with the scientific and methodical rigors.</td>
<td>The elaborate of some multiple evaluation tools (instruments which involve students in actions of self-evaluation). Adaptation the performance standards and evaluation (descriptors / assessment criteria).</td>
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<tr>
<td>The adaptation the evaluation of students (by project, by written or oral examinations, demonstrating knowledge gained by means / practical activities).</td>
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By analyzing the competences numbered earlier, we can state that differentiated education represent a difficult process which needs special training, openness towards such a problem, time and dedication, perseverance and exercise, and the capacity to create educational partners in order to reach it.

3. CONCLUSION

To include a module in the initial training program of teachers which is reserved to inclusive education represents the best solution in order to individualize the educational act. If this solution is hard to implement, then we must at least expand the scientifically content of the specialty disciplines, especially the didactical ones, with vast subjects concerning the differentiated and inclusive education.

In order to implement in schools the principles of differentiated education, we need to address the following aspects:

- the planning, organizing and individualization of the activities as per the developmental needs of our pupils;
- the variation of the didactic material so as to allow all pupils the access to discover the information and to use it;
- the assuring of a supplemental support for the pupils that require it;
- the adapting the learning environment;
- the focusing on the pupil in the teaching-learning activities.

In conclusion, the differentiated education from an inclusive perspective presupposes the development of the autonomy and responsibilities of each pupil in his/her learning process, a fact that reaches implicitly the personal success and the growth of the level of trust in one’s own strengths. Obviously, the teacher must also adapt in order to correlate the pupils’ interests and potential with the curricular objectives, to create the necessary conditions to support the pupils in their learning process, to encourage pupils to use their abilities and their motivation so as to progress.

4. REFERENCES