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**CULTIVATION OF THE PUPILS' SPEECH WHILE ACHIEVING
TEACHING-LEARNING OBJECTIVES OF HISTORY**

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Abstract

The first impression of what we see, hear, taste, smell or touch has a major impact on our memory. If this first impression is deep enough to arouse interest, the information will be easily committed to memory. That's why in the teaching-learning process the didactic strategy of knowledge transmitting is very important. It offers the basic support for enriching one's universe. Explanation is the key-side of understanding while understanding is necessary for integrating the new into the already acquired structures. Yet, the context used for enhancing all these processes is decisive. Formative aspects have gained precedence over the informative ones. Those activities carried on outside the educational environment come to revigorate the common curricular activities. Enhancing pupils' interest in the study of history and discovering other cultures in the context of achieving the objectives of history teaching-learning for example, requires that choice of teaching approaches that lead to strengthening the active and conscious character of knowledge acquisition. Extracurricular activities used to arouse students' interest in culture/history (visits and trips for example) are auxiliary forms of history teaching-learning process, and they are perfect opportunities to speech cultivation, an objective achieved through other activities besides the compulsory ones dedicated to language education. They foster an emotional climate of free and civilized verbal communication between children and reinforce the act of communication in its most varied forms. Thus, within different curricular areas, activities that come to support speech development can take a large variety of embodiments with often unexpectedly proficient outcomes.

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1. Introduction

The pedagogy of experiential learning is largely promoted nowadays as a post-modern good-practice receipt especially with the adults. The key-significant of the educational process in this approach will be autonomy, empowerment, self-expression and personal accomplishment. (Illeris, 2014, p. 306). Learners are given more importance, they are set free to follow and take into possession those things they are particularly interested in. Pleasure, desire, life style are all adopted into the educational process in order to facilitate identity expression, raise interest and guarantee permanent involvement into the instructive activities designed.

If we seriously and objectively analyze the way the new generations of pupils and teenagers approach studying and learning, we shall discover their manifest self-confidence and an acute need/sense of autonomy, free-expression and short-term life project building. In the absence of these “facilitators” they lose interest, get bored, unmotivated, discouraged and even rebellious. Under the alarming circumstances created by these obviously largely spread forms of manifestation, we appreciate that experiential learning can intervene as a “pressure relief valve” by means of which, from time to time, the rules can be partially eluded. In this context, “educators are forced to assume the role of commentators and interpreters rather than the one of legislators and “enlightened” educators (...) instead of being the source/producers of knowledge/tastes, they become facilitators, helping interpretation of general knowledge and opening possibilities for new experiences.” (Illeris, 2014, p. 310)

Didactic approaches based on “intellectual teaching” and inspired “methods/procedures” choice can still be implemented successfully but not in outnumbered situations. Classroom teaching-learning is mainly tributary to this approach, which is neither inappropriate nor outdated. The other resourceful learning contexts remain however unexploited because too much “technology” tend to damage to the whole edifice. Pupils need space to move, space and time to express themselves; they need new and exciting experiences, educators who actively listen to their comments/points and even to their silent periods. Twenty years ago the American pedagogue Jerome Bruner underlined the distance between curriculum contribution to the way pupils relate to culture and the social context itself: “It is surely the case that schooling is only one small part of how a culture inducts the young into its canonical ways. Indeed, schooling may even be at odds with a culture’s other ways of inducting the young into the requirements of communal living.... What has become increasingly clear... is that education is not just about conventional school matters like curriculum or standards or testing. What we resolve to do in school makes sense only when considered in the broader context of what the society intends to accomplish through its educational investment in the young. How one conceives of education, we have finally come to recognize, is a function of how one conceives of culture and its aims, professed and otherwise.” (Bruner, 1996) The most effective learning approaches should therefore be tightly connected both to the life contexts outside the classroom and to the inner reality of the pupils inside it. Without systematically considering these variables, no instructional progress will turn out. “Language and speech develop in the social environment. Starting from the first nucleus of society, the family, and extending to the larger groups, verbal communication develops and acquires new and new values. School provides an organized framework for the development of communication skills, and it gives the individual the opportunity to transfer them to a much larger scale.” (Cretu, 2008, p. 73)

2. Language Learning - An Overview of The Primary School Approach

In any language learning process, conversation, storytelling and commenting abilities represent the basis for achieving a better and better level of oral expression. It is therefore compulsory for any primary school teacher to promote oral communication taking into consideration all its aspects: disciplined dialogue, coherent discourse, grammatical accuracy, logical clarity and, beyond them all, inhibitions overcome. Pupils should be taught not only to produce accurate oral structures, but also to assess the received messages and identify possible accuracy deviations.

As far as the oral communication area is concerned, in the first two grades of curricular development cycle, the below mentioned guiding lines are recommended to be followed: dialogue communication components - adapting to the peculiarities of the interlocutor; main ideas formulation; oral narration of a fragment of a narrative; oral narration of some texts or messages previously heard; disturbing factors of communication; dialogues built in concrete or imaginary situations; elements of nonverbal communication (gestures, mimicry) are updated

Shaping and developing the skills of oral communication in primary school contribute to the development of pupils' oral communication ability, turning them into "professional" receptors and emitters of the oral message, able to value the qualities of active listening. (Norel, 2010, p. 67)

Curriculum education conducted within the "inside-school" educational process is by no means the most important approach, but it cannot cover all the formative influences needed for a pupil to fully relate to that huge amount of knowledge. That's why instruction/education cannot stop inside the narrow space of the classroom. It should be naturally extended to the whole universe of pupils, where many other factors have a positive or negative influence on their general development. "It is also common knowledge among teachers that the progress made by students who learn languages only in the classroom tends to be limited, especially in their ability to use the language for spoken and written communication as contrasted with receptive skills. Well-rounded communicative proficiency, it seems, depends to a large extent on the learner's efforts to use and learn the language beyond the walls of the classroom." (P. Benson et al. (eds.), 2011, p. 2)

Extracurricular education has its well-established role and place in shaping the personality of the pupils. Education through extracurricular activities, aims at identifying and cultivating optimal correspondence between the skills, talents, and cultivating a civilized lifestyle as they stimulates creative behavior in different areas. Extracurricular activities are attractive at any age. They arouse interest, produce joy, and facilitate the accumulation of knowledge. Pupils are developing practical spirit, each of them having the opportunity to manifest according to his nature. The more intuitive the character of the lessons, the more gain the child will be offered.

Work outside the classroom and the school offers wide possibilities for educating pupils, for the rational use of their free time, for developing moral qualities. In addition, these activities contribute to the practical application of knowledge; they form skills and abilities necessary for the pupils' further activity: "If, traditionally, the objectives were focused on assimilating knowledge, today it has become more and more important to adopt another hierarchy that targets, first, forming attitudes and spiritual capacities, then acquisition of skills and abilities, followed by assimilation of knowledge." (Albulescu, 2008, p. 17)

The purpose of extracurricular activities is to develop special skills, engaging pupils in varied and rich in content activities, the growing of interest in socio-cultural activities, facilitating integration into the school environment, providing support for school success as a whole and taking advantage of their personal talents. From the earliest age, children accumulate some knowledge putting them in direct contact with objects and phenomena from nature. In these activities, pupils learn how to use various sources of information, to prepare collections and systematize data. Because in such activities they voluntarily obey the rules, assuming responsibilities, pupils get self-discipline. The teacher has, through such activities, the opportunity to know pupils, to direct them, to influence their development, to achieve easier and nicer the primary goal of school and of primary education that is preparing children for life.

Extracurricular activities provide, for example, various possibilities of learning the elements of local history. Through tours and visits to museums, by collecting historical items, by visiting exhibitions, organizing school festivities of historical interest pupils enrich their knowledge and cultivate their feelings of national pride and belonging to a people. The school can only have a certain amount of museum material in general, materials that reflect the historic past of the village/town in particular. Instead, in museums, objects that represent material traces of the past, from the earliest times to the present day, are expected to be found in a large number and a large variety. The most representative objects, most significant for the general history of the homeland and for the local one, illustrate each historical epoch. Therefore, the lessons generally conducted inside the classroom can be continued happily with visits to museums.

Extracurricular activities are appreciated by both pupils and teachers to the extent that they value and develop the pupils' interests and skills; organize in a pleasant and relaxing manner the free time of the children, helping in optimizing the educational process; participation is freely consented, unconditional, forming a strong support for a sustained activity; pupils have a chance to express their initiative freely.

The objectives to be pursued through the study of history in the 4th grade, for example, aim at developing: a good representation of time and space in history; the pupils' thinking and ability to analyze, compare and interpret historical events; the knowledge and use of sources; a positive attitude towards themselves and towards the others; the pupils' understanding of the basic ideas of history such as unity, continuity and causality of events. Inside the classroom, achieving the objectives of teaching and learning history requires, in addition to selecting an appropriate content, and the choice of appropriate teaching methods and procedures that would lead to increased active and conscious character of knowledge acquisition. The most used methods are: conversation, work with textbook, demonstration, didactic game, systematic exposure, which is used in two versions in teaching history: narration and explanation, along with other methods and procedures designed to increase the formative value. The teaching strategy as a whole must provide a judicious joint of independent work of pupils with collective activity. Their effectiveness depends on respecting the historical truth, on the duration and on the adequate expression while emphasizing the emotional elements as well.

Since childhood, pupils accumulate some knowledge putting them in direct contact with objects and phenomena of nature. The first impression of what you saw or read has a major impact on memory. If the first impression is deeper, the information will be memorized and more easily stored. This is one of the laws of memory, called the law of the strong impression. As we previously mentioned,

effectiveness of education is not only appreciated in terms of quantitative acquisitions, but it mainly depends on the degree to which it prepares the child to adapt to the increasingly diverse demands of the society and the extent to which it takes part in the formation of children's personality.

Besides the usual curricular activities, the ones carried on outside the educational environment foster an emotional climate of free and civilized verbal communication between children; reinforce the act of communication in its most varied forms, generated by the diversity of approaches and the creativity of each participant. Such activities have great formative influence and they are based on all forms of tourism. In the activities organized in the middle of nature, of social life, pupils are faced with reality and perceive actively through direct actions objects, phenomena and some historical sites. Being fixed primarily on outdoor life, in the tourism activity, pupils can form a sense of respect for what they visit, patriotism, team spirit and love of nature, love of man and his achievements (Păun, 2001, p. 113). The trip helps develop intellectual and physical growth of the child, his civil and patriotic education. It may have decisive importance in thorough and conscious assimilation of knowledge. Outdoor activities foster the perceptive faculty of children and increase their interest in learning. Lot of knowledge, which seems difficult at first, can be understood easily when one resorts to direct contact with their various embodiments of the notions that are taught inside the classroom. The more intuitive the character of the lessons, the more gain the child will be offered. "As an object of study, oral communication contributes to the development of the oral communication ability and the formation of a communicative attitude; it develops active listening, cooperative learning, and critical thinking of students. Oral communication is characterized by freedom of expression, possibility of reconsidering and correcting, use of nonverbal or Para-verbal codes, spontaneous construction, obvious subjectivity of the speech (this emotional sign), the possibility of deviation from the correct speech (usual speech), (....). Activities promote various forms of interaction (teacher - pupil/student, student - student/student, student - student, student - teacher), they propose concrete workloads: answering to questions, presenting an idea, the story of a fragment or of a small text, expressing an opinion about facts and figures, narration of an event etc." (Norel, 2010, pp. 65-66)

Cultivation and nuancing of the pupils' speech in the context of extracurricular activities designed to achieve the teaching-learning objectives of history become a double-bladed sword in the context described above. We mean the language is both a means of transmitting knowledge of History and a subject to be deepened in itself. "To endow a small child with the main instrument of knowledge - language - it is equivalent to preparing him for any kind of information accumulation. All fields of knowledge are expressed through language - from the most banal to the most sophisticated communications theories of science." (Cretu, 2008, p. 63)

3. Extracurricular Learning Opportunities

In the following we are going to mention a few types of extracurricular activities specific to History learning by means of which language acquisition, cultivation and accuracy are expected to improve on a large scale and to a great extent as well.

Visits and tours are educational activities organized and designed as study trips that can be used successfully for pupils to acquire new knowledge about the history of the village/their town or to strengthen and systematize the knowledge acquired earlier. They will perceive directly, under natural circumstances, the objects and phenomena studied, and traces or replicas of them kept in museums. (Tănasă, 1996, p. 109) For visits and excursions to help achieve the didactic objectives pursued by the teacher, they must be well organized. Good organization involves the following steps: preparing the visit or trip; conducting it; valuing the results achieved during the visit or trip. Organization and conduct of visitors or tours consistent with the pupils' level and training is a combination of usefulness, teaching activity and pleasure, multidimensional development of pupils. These trips are an excellent way for the teacher to get to know better his pupils, the opportunity to develop relations of cooperation, mutual understanding and respect. Communication barriers are gradually removed and conversation (didactic conversation) can take place almost simultaneously in all directions following specific teaching-learning tasks: questions and answers, expressing a point of view, narration of short text, of a legend etc.

Visits to museums, exhibitions, monuments and historical sites, memorial houses constitute a means to awaken pupils' interest in cultural and historical values of our people, giving them the opportunity to see works of original art, moments related to past local history, national life and work of leading personalities from science and national or universal culture. These visits to the museum can be organized at any moment of the educational process: at the beginning of the school year, during the teaching period or at the end of the school year. After these extracurricular activities are over, data and observations obtained are processed together with the pupils. Teacher may ask them what has impressed the pupils the most and why. Recalling the route followed to that destination, short descriptions of the places and of the objects exhibited there, storytelling about the personalities' life experiences are all resourceful modalities of language practicing. In addition, children can be encouraged to enrich the museum's collection of objects with other old items that they find in their attics or in courtyards following a short real or invented story of the history of those relics.

Trips and holiday camps help enrich children's knowledge about the beauties of the country, educate love, respect for the beauty of nature, art, culture. Through trips, children can learn about the achievements of people, the places where they were born, lived and created works of art. Watching historic movies, theatre performances stimulate the desire for knowing the historical past. Curiosity achieves high levels and it needs satisfying. Message structuring, conversation, openly expressed surprise, amazement, concern, fascination come to accomplish the largely educational perspective offered by the respective circumstances.

Competitions on topics of local history are also forms of completion, enrichment, deepening and strengthening the knowledge on topics of local, national and world history. A feature of the competitions is that they can be organized based on consulting a minimum bibliography on local history. They are usually attended by the most prepared pupils, those who show a keen interest in knowing and understanding historical facts. The choice of themes for the contest should envisage the fact that they start from a motivation of high civic value. It is good to be dedicated to the celebration, knowledge, strengthening and deepening of historical events that have strong emotional effects, contributing to the patriotic feelings development.

Celebrations and anniversaries develop in pupils a sense of belonging to the activity in which they take part, and help them master the emotions caused by the presence of spectators. Good answers imply not only rendering exact and scientific information but also practicing the two roles of any communication process: listener and speaker. Pupils develop and value the qualities of an active listening; they tell the story of the events while manifesting a positive attitude in terms of flexibility, tolerance, patience, avoiding those factors that disturb communication. "The students' participation in extra didactic activities is voluntary, but the teacher can intervene by suggestive directing to engage students in some of these activities. Content is established according to the wishes and preferences of students, conditions and possibilities of achievement. The forms are more resilient, ingenious and entertaining. It thus provides the open manifestation of the spirit of initiative from students." (Nicola, 2003, p. 36)

Arranging the museum corner, engaging pupils in the purchase of relics of local history under the guidance of the teacher help develop their interest in knowledge of the history of the area their community live in. These materials are used in lessons just by those who have collected them, having the opportunity to have not only answers evaluated, but efforts in collecting objects of historical value as well. Job satisfaction is higher when the teacher considers that through the exemplary way of compiling teaching materials and through the utility of historical sources collected, they meet all the conditions to enter the heritage of educational means used for equipping the cabinet of history, and so they will be very important for the generations to come. Pupils are the founders of the museum corner and they have certain responsibilities: collect, select, order, and keep the inventory of the testimonies of local history. The exhibition can be permanent or it may be organized for a certain period, following different topics: "Grandma's photos", "Memories of War", "Traditional Clothing", "Yesterday and Today' Childhood" and others (Beşliu, 2006, p. 134).

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, work outside the classroom offers multiple possibilities for the local history recovery. Items of local history are the same in essence, but, unlike classroom work, the activities conducted outside it acquire larger amplitude, get richer and richer in significance. Getting back to Jerome Bruner, we could say that pupils can be taught any topic successfully, in an appropriate intellectual form, on condition that the methods and procedures are specific to the respective stage of development, if the information is presented in a simpler form, or in a relaxed and even entertaining context so that the learners can process it and progress more easily and more thoroughly to a full and long lasting grasp of knowledge.

Speech learning is a complex process. It starts early in childhood and continues to develop beyond school cycles. Lexical volume, semantics aspects, phrase syntax acquire qualitative values with the evolution of the whole process of mental development, under the influence of educational factors. (Cretu, 2008, p. 72) Extracurricular activities develop the perceptive faculty of children and increase their interest in knowledge. Lots of information, which seems difficult at first, can be easily understood when one resorts to direct contact with their various embodiments. Watching a screen adaptation or some historical documentaries, visiting a history museum/mausoleum, meetings with people who participated in the great

historical events may however constitute inestimable sources of learning, the results being generated by the diversity of approaches and the creativity of each participant. Effectiveness of education is no longer appreciated in terms of quantitative acquisitions, but it depends on the degree to which it prepares the pupils to adapt to the increasingly diverse demands of the society, and the extent to which it takes part in their personality's shaping. This is the main direction imposed by most of the theoreticians of education and instruction, and the teaching practice comes to confirm and reinforce it.

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