

TEACHERS' EFFECTIVE ACTIONS THAT MOTIVATE STUDENTS' LEARNING

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Abstract

During the first steps of education, we see that students face many challenges that require solutions. Therefore, it is needed that the teacher be not only good in knowing the subject, but in teaching methodology as well. Effective results would bring the interactive teaching methodology and cooperation between teachers and parents about students' needs and concerns. This approach, will help students in further performance regarding the acquisition of knowledge towards the development of critical thinking and life skills. In order to analyze teachers and students perceptions regarding teachers' effective actions that motivate students for learning, besides reviewing the pedagogical - didactic, methodical and psychological literature, this research is grounded in practice. The total number of the respondents in this research is 246 respondents from Municipality of Malisheva. The representative group is consisted of 217 students and 29 teachers. The implementation of the study was carried out by selecting the research methodology. The obtained data have been collected through students' testing, students' survey, interviews with teachers and classroom observation. Using the statistical method helped in analysis and processing final results. The data system of the research from students' knowledge assessment test, students questionnaire, teachers' interview protocol and observations protocol in elementary classrooms leads us to the result that; learning development through implementation of interactive techniques helps students in acquisition of quality educational knowledge. The obtained results also show that transparent communication between teachers and parents motivate students to continue learning. From this perspective, students are more willing to accept teachers words (suggestions), which also affect the successful implementation of the class. Student-centered learning, interactive teaching techniques implementation in teaching, to successfully acquire learning contents, and regular meetings with parents to fulfill the educational needs should be improved in order to promote school functions, with integration approach of the students into the life of modern technology development. In this regard, we will contribute to interactive - effective teaching.

By keeping students motivated to learn, we achieve successful implementation of modern teaching objectives.

Keywords: *effective action, teacher, student, interactive learning techniques.*

Introduction

By going to school the students are happy, because they feel they are growing up. However, during learning they face many challenges that require solutions. Once they are enrolled in first grade, they think of the teacher who will learn them. That is, the child and parents together must agree which teacher to choose. The mutual trust among parents, students and teachers helps in solving problems, and brings excellent results during the learning process. Communication resulting in mutual understanding brings motivation to work. Respecting duties with responsibility while working at the school distinguishes a successful teacher.

Teacher's effective actions are those when we consider that in our schools there are different students “with different ways of learning, different experiences, different temperaments, different potential, hence with different behavior, which requires different approaches”¹. Therefore it is needed that teachers implement new teaching strategies, in order to help motivate students to develop knowledge. Thus, frequent necessary requirements when working with pupils makes the teachers distinguished and it is rightly said that “teaching can be easy, but good teaching is not easy”². Legal provisions say that the teacher is a qualified person employed for providing educational services for students, and has the right of organizing³. The teacher can organize learning by choosing “activity that is realized with the purpose of motivating students' learning using a wide range of methods appropriate to the learning styles of students”⁴. Teachers by choosing interactive teaching techniques for successful implementation of educational content manage to keep students active during the class, because learning “is not possible if the student does not contribute during the class (subject of teaching process) by being active”⁵. Thus, the teacher should look for various effective methods that would help in teaching and student learning. Regarding this, Bardhyl

¹ Zabeli, Naser (2008), *Strategjitë psiko – pedagogjike për reduktimin e sjelljes së papërshtatshme në klasë*, Libri shkollor, Prishtinë, p. 8.

² Garo, Sofokli (2008), *Mësimdhënia bashkëkohore*, Toena, Tiranë, p. 241.

³ See, Law no. 04/L-032 on Pre-University Education in Kosovo (2011). Article 2 and article 36.

⁴ MEST (2011). *Curriculum Framework of Pre-University Education of Kosovo*, Prishtina, p. 71.

⁵ Brezić, Krešimir (1987). *Smisao tehnoloških inovacija u obrazovanju*, “Inovacije u nastavi”, no. 4, Zagreb, p. 291.

Musai says, “the process of teaching and learning, which aims to meet the qualities of the citizens with all the above skills, in all countries with an advanced education, is based on constructivism”⁶. In this regard, it must be consider the learning of students, based on learning styles, and so finding solutions to the challenges that students face during their education. From here, are set the foundations to help students to activation and motivation for learning.

Research Methodology

The goal and objectives of the research

The goal of the research is the analysis of the perceptions of students and teachers for effective actions that motivate learning and verification of actions of the teacher that help in knowledge acquisition. From this formulation, we set the research tasks, which are:

- Exploring the perceptions of students and teachers that motivate learning activities;
- Getting the advantages of effective actions that affirm the students in learning;
- Statistically processed and analyzed the data obtained;
- Bringing conclusions and suggest recommendations.

Research hypotheses

The main hypothesis of the research from which we started is: students accept unquestionably the words (suggestions) of the teachers, which also affect the successful implementation of the class.

From this main hypothesis arises these auxiliary hypotheses:

- Application of interactive techniques helps students in the acquisition of knowledge.
- Collaboration between parents and teacher motivates students to learn.

Research methods, techniques and instruments of study

We used the method of theoretical analysis, descriptive method, discussion method, comparative method and statistical method for the research. During the research we used the technique of surveying, testing, and monitoring. While the instruments used were:

⁶ Musai, Bardhyl (2005). *Mësimdhënia dhe të nxënëit ndërveprues*, Pegi, Tiranë, p. 12.

questionnaire for students, the teacher interview protocol, test for assessing students' knowledge and observation protocol.

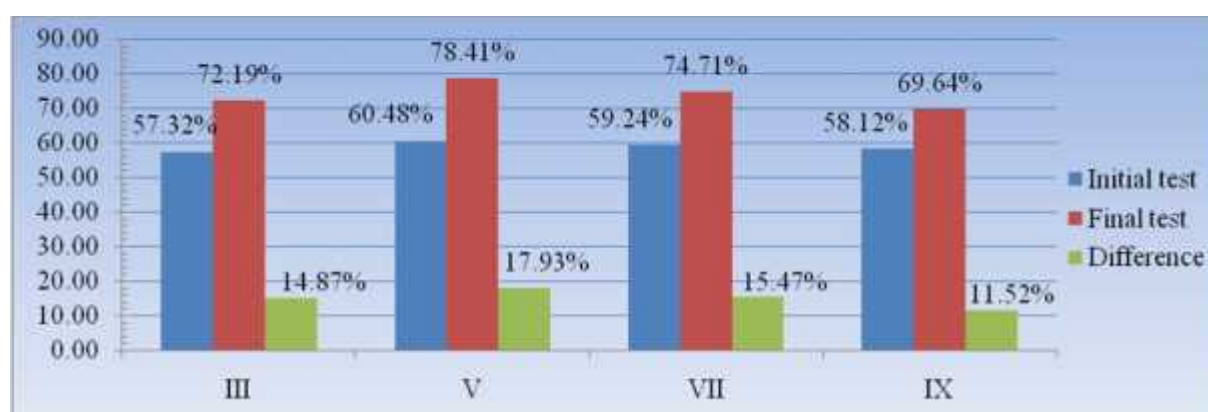
Representation group

The representative group consists of 246 subjects in Malisheva. The first group is consisted of 115 pupils from primary schools "Ibrahim Mazreku" in Malisheve, and 102 pupils from primary school "Naim Frasheri" in Banje. The total of students involved in classes III, V, VII, and IX is 217, approximately the same number of from each classes. The second representative group consists of teachers from Banja, Drenoc, Mleqan (rural environment) and Malisheva (urban environment), a total of 29 subjects.

Analysis of survey and discussion results

A successful teaching is when the teacher chooses interactive strategies and techniques. From this perspective, the research was conducted in Albanian language subject, by an initial test and final test. The initial test was conducted after 9 classes held by everyday performance. Then, to verify the effectiveness of learning through interactive techniques, the teachers were recommended to practice interactive teaching. After 9 classes of interactive learning was conducted the final test. Results obtained are as follows:

Chart 1. Results of initial and final test



The data in the figure no. 1 shows that third grade in the initial test has achieved 57.32% points, while in the final test has gained 72.19% points. Fifth grade in the initial test has 60.48%, while in the final test gained 78.41% of the possible points from test scores. Grade seven in the initial test has 59.24% points, whereas in the final test gained 74.71% points.

Ninth grade has 58.12% points in the initial test, while 69.64% in the final test. We can conclude that the best results are shown when learning through the selection of interactive strategies and techniques. The percentage of points achieved in the final test is with this difference: the third grade for 14.87% of the points, fifth grade 17.93%, and grade seven 15.47%, ninth grade for the 11.52% of the points gained. These results indicate that interactive teaching techniques motivate students to get engaged in learning and thus achieving more knowledge.

Using interactive techniques provides opportunities for students to achieve learning goals by interacting with each other. On this issue the authors Irida Hoti and Njazi Kazasi, among others, state that “students through these ideas present, their views and information they have”⁷. We had such opinions also from teachers who were involved in research. Thus, to the question “*How important are interactive teaching techniques in teaching?*”, answers of some of the teachers were as follows:

- Interactive teaching techniques are very important because they help in the socialization of students and make students express freely;
- Implementation of interactive techniques in teaching is the key to success. Teaching techniques, assist in developing the learning, enabling familiarity, cooperation, help each other and competition among students in the classroom;
- Interactive techniques help students acquire learning easier. Motivate them to learn and help for expressing knowledge.

From the test results and teachers' opinions, we conclude that interactive teaching techniques in developing the learning process are very important. The above data shows that interactive techniques are considered as strategies that enable socialization, competition and help motivate students in the acquisition of knowledge. For the selection of interactive techniques during the research in the subject of Albanian Language was reviewed the contemporary-interactive teaching literature by authors: Bardhyl Musai, Arqile Kosta, Charles Temple and others. Applied techniques during the learning process were: brainstorming, Experts groups, roundtable alphabet, I know - I want to know - I learned, directed reading, summarizing statement / support, a question brings the question, network discussion, notes on notes etc..

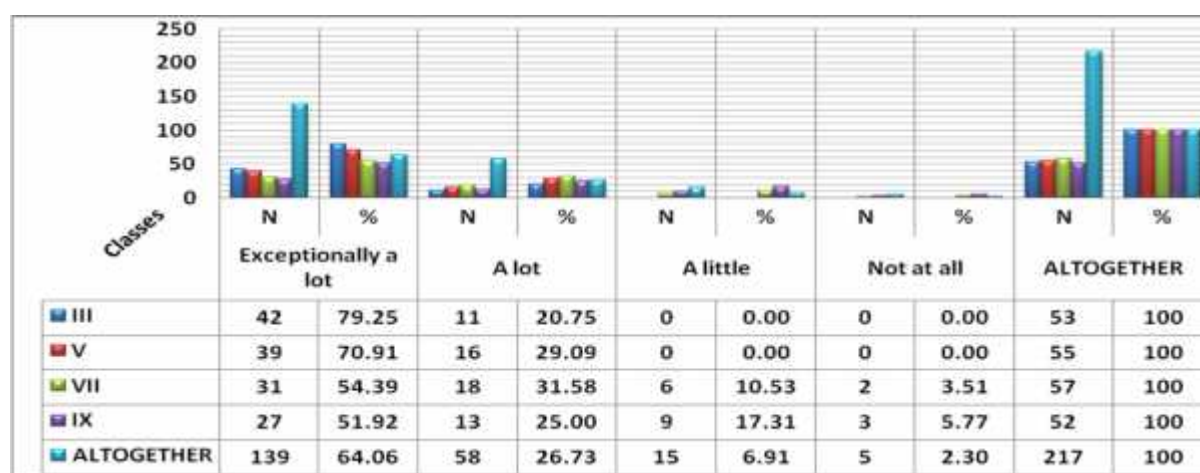
In these work techniques was noticed that students were very active. They expressed what they knew, asking questions and giving answers. The techniques were evaluated as highly

⁷ Hoti, Irida & Kazasi, Njazi (2009), *Didaktikë e gjuhës shqipe*, Libri Universitar, Tiranë, p. 117.

effective. In applying these techniques whilst teaching was driven collective creativity of the class. Students used to read and converse with one another, expressing their opinions freely and not hesitating to ask questions. During the presentation of the opinions of groups, all students managed to find questions that can be asked about the manner indicated. Students were activated and stimulated that the material becomes more understandable, in order that the lesson can be remembered easily.

In the application of interactive techniques, the teacher had an important role in organizing the learning. Regarding this, we asked this question in the students' questionnaire, “*How do you like the words (suggestions) of your teachers?*” and the answers are as follows:

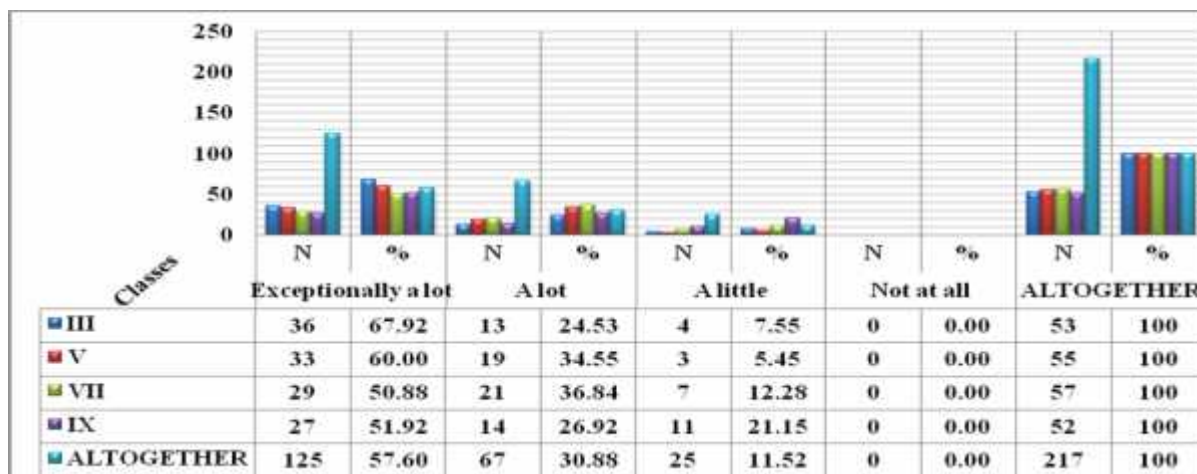
Chart 2. The impact of teacher's words



In presenting the results in figure no. 2 we notice that from all students surveyed, 139 or 64.06% were declared that they accept the suggestions of their teachers, “exceptionally a lot”, 58 or 26.73% said “a lot”, 15 or 6.91% said “a little”, and 5 or 2.30% said “not at all”. Based on the opinions of the majority of students from four classes in two schools in Banja and Malisheve, we may conclude that students like the words of the teachers. The trust that students have on their teachers obliges them for continuous help during learning. Furthermore, the teacher should make continuous efforts to adapt the teaching material to students’ level of knowledge. To make it easier for students to gain knowledge in teaching, among other things teachers must find the way that most helps in concrete learning. In this aspect, learning tools help and “transform the objective reality making it easier and more accessible the knowledge and learning in the learning process”⁸. To become more familiar with the influence of the tools in teaching practice, in the questionnaire we asked the question: “*How effective are the tools during learning in the classroom?*”. To this question the students gave the following answers:

⁸ Pletenac, Vladimir (1990). *Osnove metodike nastave prirode i društva*, Zagreb, p. 70.

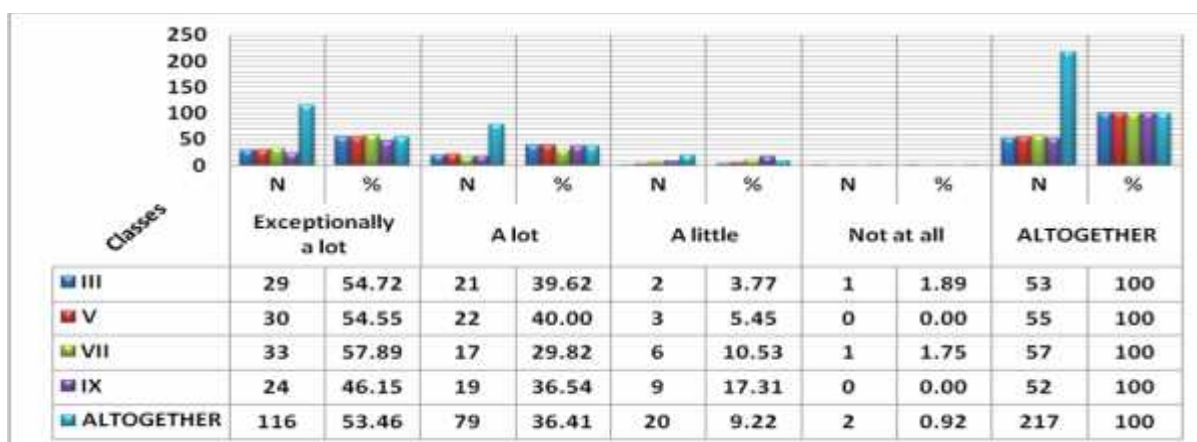
Chart no. 3. Importance of teaching tools



The chart no. 3, of all the students surveyed, 125 or 57.60% agree that teaching tools help them “exceptionally a lot” while learning in class, 67 or 30.88% of students are stated “a lot”, 25% or 11.52 stated “a little while” whereas no student stated “not at all”. From these results obtained we may conclude that teaching tools help in achieving the learning objectives. Using learning tools enables students to be more engaged and successful in learning. To further stimulate and motivate students, an important role has the cooperation school - family. Communicating between parents and teachers should be continuous in order to assist students in educational activities.

Students' answers in the question: “How motivated are you when the teacher is in touch with your parents?”, are shown in the chart.

Chart no. 4. Students' motivation



The chart no. 4, shows that 116 or 53.46% of the students said they feel “exceptionally a lot” motivated when the teacher communicates with their parents, 79 or 36.41% said “a lot”, 20 or 9.22% said “a little”, and 2 or 0.92% said “not at all”.

9.22% said “a little”, and 2 or 0.92% said “not at all”. Based on 89.87% of the responses of students we conclude that communication between parents and teachers motivate students to learn. In this way, it is also assisted in organizing learning that affects teaching and learning. In this regard, the teacher's interview protocol to the question: “*Which of the tasks / your actions are shown effective in working with students?*” the answers are as follows:

- Activities that I have practiced and have motivate students to learn are numerous and some of them are: pre-preparation of lessons thinking about many questions that may be asked by students, preparation of tests based on the taxonomy of Bloom, and duration of teaching time;
- Some of my actions that affect students' motivation are when speaking quietly and clearly, using tools necessary for teaching, making a list of rules in class in order not to make a mess during the learning etc;
- Setting learning success criteria, topics with extra material, helping to clarify the tasks, presentation of works or completed tasks, tasks regular checking and evaluation of assignments, discussing more positives and less negatives, these are what motivated students;
- Respecting classroom rules, guidance on giving more importance to good behavior and less criticism, finding successes in smaller things, praise and stimulation for result, has made the students feel better and desire to stay in school to learn;
- Meetings with parents for student success and behavior, (direct contact or by mail in monthly, or even weekly basis), motivate the class in general;
- Competitions among students in the classroom, and in between classes at school, presentations of student achievement separately, and rewarding students motivate them in learning;
- Using the expressions: please, well done, great, wonderful, you're the best and so on impact on raising learning motivation also add confidence to the students;
- The application of new teaching strategies, mutual questions, self-evaluation etc. motivated students to create stories, and express freely their opinions. The publication of assignments on the school board was a good example;

Based on the responses of interviewed teachers we can conclude that students are motivated to learn when student-centered teaching technique is applied, when during class is applied interactive teaching, use of selected strategies for the realization of educational objectives when applying forms and interactive techniques and when practicing learning tools in teaching. The short way of it, the application of teaching in accordance with modern teaching methodology motivates many students to further learning. Meanwhile, to the question “*What*

are the reasons for the failure of students during teaching practice? ”, interviewed teachers mentioned the following reasons: students poor health, disengagement of the family with the child, family problems, not respecting daily plans, unwanted teacher for the student, low level of teaching, the old facility, lack of school space and learning materials, the large number of students in classes, short time to stay in school, not using visual aids, application of traditional learning, physical and psychological violence to students in school and family, lack of complementary and additive learning, lack of consulting classes, insufficient various activities for students as, trips, picnics, games, competitions etc..

Based on the statements of the teachers we may conclude that there are numerous reasons that hinder the learning process. Therefore, the teacher should not only be the qualified on a certain subject, but also should be a good methodologist. Teachers must consider students as their children, being close and giving the best for them, thus, they will help motivation for learning. Not imposing to learn, but conversations with the student and convincing them to learn, would really make students interested and committed to learning.

Practical learning, and choice of activities related to the topic of learning enables memorizing of the content, it also develops critical and creative thinking. As it is said “the teachers should be successful in order to be successful the students, and students should be successful in order to be successful the society”⁹. Teachers told numerous cases from their experiences that have helped in solving problems encountered during teaching. One of these cases told by an interviewed teacher is:

***Case 1.** One of my students had a decline in success. I talked to her parents, and they could not imagine their girl's falling success. Then, after my attempts I made the parents to be transparent in conversation, and tell everything that can be linked to the child's life. I realized that student's family was in conflict with their neighbors. Now I realized that she had a family problem. I thought, and tried to figure out different methods. The first results were by asking her to learn by heart a short poem. When she learnt the poem I appreciated it very much, and rewarded her. Thus, each day she showed more and more interest and increased her commitment to learn ...*

This confirms what is said, that in order to achieve better results with students, the teacher should collaborate with parents. This helps in solving problems. Teachers know easier what steps are necessary to meet the teaching needs. Based on the cases told by interviewed teachers we conclude that actions that can help solve the challenges and motivate students to

⁹ Fullan, Majkëll (2010). *Forcat e ndryshimit*, Cde, Tiranë, p. 70.

learn are: application of contemporary - interactive teaching; conversation with the students considering them in separate personalities; creating classroom rules along with the students and respecting them; observation of providing assistance to students during learning; using stimulating words, more conversations about books; use of didactic tools and musical instruments etc.. If teachers would recall their childhood would make it easier for them to help students.

Conclusions

Based on the theoretical analysis of the role of teachers in modern - interactive teaching, and results obtained, they show that teachers' effective actions that motivate students to learn bring out the following conclusions:

1. Students receive exceptionally a lot teacher's words (suggestions), which also affect the successful implementation of the class. In this regard, for the results of research we verified that 91.25% of students receiving suggestions exceptionally a lot from teachers, and that they help in the acquisition of learning contents.
2. Based on the comparison of the results of the initial test and final test, we conclude that there are differences in success. Higher results were achieved when learning took place through interactive techniques. Using interactive techniques during lessons helps students in acquiring qualitative knowledge.
3. From the opinions of teachers, and the statements of 73% of students who stated that they feel motivated when the teacher communicates with their parents, we conclude that cooperation between teachers and parents motivates students to learn.

Based on the research results and conclusions mentioned above, **we recommend** that teachers should create suitable work environment in their classrooms, which will affect students' motivation to learn. Teachers with appropriate actions during teaching, practicing student-centered interactive learning can contribute to the development of habits, skills and personality formation of students. In the end, we believe that cooperation between teachers and parents helps overcome the challenges that may occur during schooling, and advances modern teaching encouraging student for self-evaluation, and lead them toward their preparation for life and work.

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