

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF TEACHERS OF THE GIFTED AND TALENTED?

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Abstract

In this paper we present theoretical expectation of the problem of teacher's role in education of the gifted and talented. We try to answer several question like: to define the term gifted and talented children, to answer the questions what is the role of teachers of gifted and talented, what qualifications are needed to work with gifted students, what can regular classroom teachers do for gifted students, how can regular classroom teachers and gifted/talented program teachers work together...

Also, we will present the results of investigation of teacher's preparing and his professional training for education of gifted and talented, and what we must do to strengthening teacher's abilities to work with these children.

Key word: gifted and, talented child, teacher's roles, teacher's professional training

Exceptional children are doing strange things, make them early, they want to learn, explore, discover ... adults are there to them to achieve, to detect and allow them to discover all the secrets of the world

A global idea for the European dimension in education is the development of a democratic opportunity for their development according to their individual predispositions.

This complex and complimentary programme spans over the changes in education, with the priority on the intellectual potential as the highest national interest, their affirmation into mainstream schools through organised quality differentiated, individual and accelerated teaching.

The new curriculum model is coherent, flexible and relevant, aimed toward choice, organised and value driven to the experience of learning (what needs to be learned and taught, how to organise successful teaching, how to validate the experience of learning) starts from the individual differences amongst the students and gives the opportunity to satisfy the special needs of the talented and gifted on a certain other level more than the average children.

The differences must be accepted as an advantage and not as a negative. The teacher with their professionalism and emotional competence has an important role to identify, follow and stimulate the gifted and talented.

If we want to prepare the students for the challenges of the new millennium the school in our country has to undergo major systematic changes. The classroom has to be a true place where the opportunity for the development and nurturing of the individual in accordance with the current psycho-structural and humanitarian theories is practiced.

As to the role of the school in the quality of development of the gifted and talented, we can conclude that the school as modern microorganisation, has to be an inviting place of values, abilities, beliefs, in which the individual differences are respected, where the cognitive, socioemotional, personal values of the students in an environment

of stimulation correctiveness and creativity built upon interpersonal communication between all the subjects involved in the influencing over the maximum development of the gifted and talented students.

The new tendencies in education are reinforcing the need to change the traditional look of the teacher. Changing the old concept of the role of the teacher gives new ways of thinking about the complex role of teachers.

The modern school promotes a wide list of moral roles of the teacher that present a series of personal, professional, ethic and human qualities that will help them in teaching the gifted and talented. The interactive professionalism brings about the breaking down of the barriers of privacy and affirms the teacher as an advisor, mentor, planner, spiritual guide in the process of teaching.

HOW TO DEFINE THE GIFTED AND TALENTED

There is no one universal definition of the gifted and talented. Its concept has changed and developed, so that its complex phenomenon can be better understood. The traditional approach of the gifted and talented has defined it as a universal higher intelligence. (Terman, Ballerering & Koch, 1984)

Main criteria for the identification of gifted and talented individuals according to this quantitative approach is the achievement of high results in iq tests for intelligence, above 140.

A group of American authors (M, 1972) estimated that gifted and talented children are those with above average achievements in one or more fields of study (average intellectual abilities, independent scientific and artistic fields, leadership abilities, creative abilities, psycho-motor skills) according to these authors the identified children from the professional side get a differentiated programme to the normal teaching practice.

Many authors believe that the gifts and talents are a combination of inborn and acquired abilities, that allow above average achievements in one or more fields of activity, while integrating the motivational and creative sides of the individual.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER WHEN WORKING WITH GIFTED AND TALENTED?

The new process of changes in education is towards bettering of the workings of teaching. In the centre of all these reforms is the teacher as the carrier and modulator of the changes. The definition of a teacher in pedagogy literature is very wide. A teacher is an expert, with education in pedagogy, competent in the realisation of educational activities.

The current traditional schooling is characterised with many weaknesses and inconsistencies. The style of work that was nurtured in the classroom was one of hierarchy, authoritative role:

- strict conventional academic environment
- isolation, formalism, improvisation, stereotype, the average
- absence in the input for the optimal use of the intellectual, emotional and spiritual potential
- bondage to traditionalism
- absence of professional development
- low expectancy of the students
- low levels of interaction
- the inability to answer to the needs of the gifted and talented students

Today's teachers are faced with some very complex tasks and problems, which bring about visual changes of the traditional style of work. If we want to achieve optimal results in working with the gifted and talented children we have to identify and separately integrate the different roles of the teacher: teacher as a mentor, teacher as a programmer, teacher as an educator, teacher as a model of ethical behaviour.

The priority of all of the above roles of the teacher when working with the gifted and talented are in the following components:

- Building of a colleague-friendly and emotionally stable climate for learning
- Making of a clear operational system of decision making
- Preparing of enriched differential programmes, individual programmes for different uses and interests of the gifted and talented and their adaptation
- Initiation of polyforms, polymethodics of work (work in small groups, homogenic groups, working in pairs, individual work, mentoring)
- Use of supplementary material, IKT, techniques of creative multimedial learning and stimulating games
- Building of a continual process of recognition, identification, leadership, following of the gifted and talented
- Creating the optimal conditions for the development of the talented and gifted and their promotion (participation in competitions, project-research activities, extracurricular activities, giving of diplomas and certificates, attendance at seminars, projects)
- Affirmation of the scientific, creative thinking, maximal development and use of abilities
- Affirmation of the individual, differential, accelerated work
- Permanent, professional development of the teachers
- Partnership and collaboration with the outside environment, parents, professional services, community, centres, funds for the gifted and talented

WHAT ARE THE TEACHERS RESPONSIBILITIES WHEN WORKING WITH THE GIFTED?

The professional studies dealing with the problems of the gifted and talented remark of indiscrepancies in the treatment of the gifted and talented in schools.

Mainly, the remarks referred to the traditional method of teaching which can not grasp the nature of this phenomenon, and the competency of the teacher in working with the gifted and talented.

- A unified way of thinking on the aspect of the gifted and talented at school are:
- Leveling with the so-called average in pedagogy
- Isolated, ignored and not accepted by their peers
- Stigmatised as “different” to the others
- Letting of high and unrealistic expectations
- The absence of challenge in learning

The teachers' abilities are rewarded with:

1. Teacher is the professional expert in his/her field

- the capacity to accept changes in the curriculum
- ability to better the work of the gifted
- teacher has to have a clear vision about their work with the gifted

- use of experimentation in the teaching
 - acceptance of new strategies of training
 - integrating new styles of teaching
2. Emotional literacy
- empathy-ability to point to the interests, needs, mistakes, encouragement and leading of the gifted
 - collaboration and continued communication with the gifted students and the external environment
 - self-control over one's emotions and influence over the emotions of the gifted students, strengthening of self-belief, belief in one's abilities, achievements
 - the teacher has the capacity to recognise their own abilities and affinity and the abilities and affinities of the gifted
3. The teacher as a leader in pedagogy
- ability for an interactive influence over the thinking, attitude, behaviour of the gifted
 - ability for optimal use of the emotional and spiritual resources
 - creation of a stimulating climate
 - motivation and creativity
 - solid pedagogical-psychological knowledge for the development of the gifted
4. Permanent professional development
- attendance of longer and more effective seminars, workshops, projects of current fields
 - support and implementation of ideas from the seminars in the classroom itself
 - introduction and bringing of new materials for teaching
 - teachers to accept new knowledge from the relevant field
5. Evolving and self-evolving of the achievements of the gifted
- ability to evaluate and validate the achievements of the gifted
 - use of diagnoses, formative, summative valuation
 - use of techniques of evaluation; scale of marking, summary of interests, semantic differentials, portfolios, list of evidence, check lists, anecdotal notes...
6. Partnership with the parents
- mutual acquaintance and involvement in the classroom
 - positive effects upon the development of the gifted and talented
 - educating the parents
 - Information-services
 - models of involvement, decision making, communication, study at home, parents as consultants, parent helpers, parents as partners

And in relation to the competences thus decided that you need to possess teacher to be successful in the work with talented and gifted pupils, we carried out this little and micro-research in order to see the situation on the ground, and to examine how and how qualified teachers of basic education to work with talented and gifted pupils, fields of views, comments and suggestions about their capability to work with the children keeping in mind the global dimension of European education and modern education model.

Research, we realized in Eastern Macedonia, more precisely in the municipalities Stip, Berovo, Kocani, Probistip, Sv. Nikola, Vinica, Radoviš, bearing in mind the possibility of co-operation with researchers and academic institutions from the municipality. Sample was intentional, or were included teachers from several elementary schools in the above municipalities. Once established cooperation and

discussions with managers and professional service in schools, and on the basis of their previous talks with the teachers from the first cycle of education were assignment to us 15 teachers with whom we have provided free interview. On the basis of completed interviews we came to the knowledge that we have identified the attitudes, thinking of teachers from primary education, more accurately from the first cycle of education, about their experiences, which have a role in the education of these students and their proposals and suggestions in regard to education in this area. Interviews with subjects were in the months April, May, June 2009

Interviews with teachers interviewed was previously agreed, what the signs were familiar with the objectives and topics about which is the same, worked. The interviews, which were implemented in a separate room, took place freely and strengthening with the recorder. In this way we come closer to the data about their previous education, their initial education, and their capability to work with talented and gifted children, and their cooperation with professional services, their cooperation and communication with families-parents and children. Interview with teachers to begin with some general information for them, for example, how their work experience, such as initial education completed, whether they are in employment can successfully perform the work with children from different age categories and different educational needs whether they were needed further training and seminars to be able to successfully fit in the collective and to successfully conduct their work ...

From the answers we received from teachers can concluded the following:

- working experience of teachers is 15-20 years which indicates that they are relatively young, but with solid work experience;
- their initial education are acquired in the Pedagogical Academy, faculty, the department for class teaching, some of them acquire college degree, which indicates that the desire for education and their permanent duration, and further refinement by teachers;
- during their initial education had general and professional knowledge and skills that allow them to fit in work with children from primary school age, but said that their support and assistance they have received from the older / experienced colleagues was of great importance for the success of that have to work with children this age;

In the further course of the interview go on the issues that are related to their attitudes and opinions to work with gifted and talented children and the way in which accomplish the same in their class.

A, the answers respondents can be presented in the following way:

- During their initial education knowledge to work with talented and gifted children had with the subject Methods of work with gifted children as an optional subject in the pedagogical faculties and knowledge that are gained in the field of psychology and knowledge that are gained through independently learning and reading professional literature in this area and exchange experiences with other colleagues and experts. But fully knowledge in this area havent and so as they need. All this points to the fact that primary teachers education required training in this field-work with children of special educational needs in which frame is assimilate and this children.
- For the answer to the question on the basis of which they found in their classes is talented and gifted children, stated that they found themselves on the basis of achieving ucenikovih or professional school service strucmna announced that watches them as such children.

S. J. (teacher in III class-Berovo). I view that I have in my class gifted child on the basis of his personal achieve. Before, about the same pupil, my colleagues, pedagogues and psychologist at our school, said to me to follow them in the next period. So, I have carefully followed their achieving. Which I set a task to all students, on them is the first solved, give answers, set additional questions, is fast perceive, revealed correlations, reasons-ensuing connection. First of all, he internalizes curricula. I was delighted with his answers and questions. Then I talked with his parents, who also recorded his fast progress and sought to establish communication with me.

D.G. (teacher in the II class- Vinica). In my class I have two talented students. One possess musical talent, and other students have expressed art skills. To see every day, especially in art classes. I advised with pedagogues and psychologists in our school, as is their parents, to help the children to develop their potential, where to include them, what tasks to set

- On the question of what is needed for teachers to be successful in working with the children, the teachers agree about the following:
 - need them fully knowledge in this field;
 - organizing various seminars, training from the pedagogical faculties or other institutions,
 - workbook to work with the children;
 - dissemination of knowledge that some colleagues have acquired their single participation in some training;
 - team work;
 - cooperation with families;
 - small groups of students in grades.

M.V. (teacher in IV class- Kocani) Everyday before me are the questions: What is my role in the work with this child? How do procedures? Whether the work properly, my findings were sufficient for successful operation? How do I do with this child? I find answers independently- I respect all children in the class, all for me, my children, taking into account their specific interests, encourage them to expand their knowledge, organize complex activities, use different materials encourage and encourage their creative and productive opinion, do not expect them to cut all know, do not burden them with unnecessary activities, do not allow gaps in their knowledge. For those students preparing called anecdote notes and keep them in their individual files.

But what I believe and the other teachers lack the training, organization workshop, seminars for the so-called emotional literacy for which today have a lot of talks, and we have read or heard some of the trainings and seminars that are related to the new skills and abilities to manage transactions with the challenges that face which has teachers in achieving educational goals, the ability to acclimate relation to some of us unacceptable situation with the use of selfregulation strategy. We think that such emotional literacy help in the adoption of appropriate decisions in the creative problem solving and establishing good relations with others.

- All the teachers agree to work with this students looking for their particular investment and additional activities.

G. A. (in the IV grade teacher- Sv. Nikole) Working with the children looking for special individual approach. Every child the right to form and educate compliance with its potential is inviolable. Therefore, looking to help as much as I can. Gives them all the help and support. Working with the children looking for my special preparation, work for their specific tasks, allocate other activities, and seek more

reading from additional sources of knowledge from various fields. How to say, these students in this our modern, European oriented school curricula and conceptualized modern, have not yet found their own right place. It all depends on the efforts of teachers, they still working on creating a positive climate in class, emphasize the and their socialization, strengthening love, respect and friendship between children I do not like to expire and students, there is jealousy in others and feeling less value, but that all attention to be moderate. Yet all of our children, our students

- Often applied differentiated approach in the work of individual independent making flexible programs to work with the children, aimed at developing their creativity or the same they are in cooperation with psychologists, pedagogues, sociologists, teachers, and to enable to advance with different speed and a variety of content

The work with the children using different methods and forms of work, using all modern techniques and learning strategies and teaching, particularly strategy and critical thinking, strategies for solving problems that have learned to visit the workshop, different training and reading professional literature.

- In his paper mostly receive help from professional services in the school-mostly psychologists and pedagogues. But emphasized that it is them, especially the talented and gifted pupils, required the assistance of experts-art, music pedagogue, mathematician, physique ... that would direct them to proper work.
- Cooperation with the family at the high level

A.G. (the teacher in class II- Radovis) In contrast to the former traditional schools in regard to relations with their families, today the situation differently. Always communicate with parents, realize various forms of cooperation carried out visits to families ... Strive to include parents in the class work. Some of them organized a special workshop, engaging parents of students with grade-known professional and scientific workers, as a lecturer in this field in the direction of identification, recognition of gifted children, as well as help parents who have children this Joint decision-making regarding advancing these children.

- What regards to their proposals and suggestions, they are related to the widening capacity in the frame of school and its better equipment; to collaborate with colleagues - only team work is the perspective of; advancing cooperation with families; the need of continuous education in this area-effective and long-term seminars; lectures adequate experts; during the initial education to gain more knowledge in this field, especially introducing new objects as mental health counseling and to work with children of special educational needs; inserting contents of this field in the frame of existing subjects; preparation of special books for children with this work; employing special pedagogues in schools; developing new models and strategies for working with children of special educational needs; cooperation with local authorities.

Conclusion

The analysis of the teoretical discussions of this problem as the empiric data to which we came in the exploring using technique interview leading us to the next facts:

- The questions that were asked previously, in the introduction, during the examine, had found their answer in the teoretical discusion and in the data as a result of the examine.

- The conclusions in this examine should not be accepted as categorical because they refer to a concrete example, in actual time. Meanwhile the same should be regarded in a direction of finding approachable ways of realizing education of gifted and talented pupils. Teachers from elementary schools have permanent need of training necessary for teaching process realization with this child.
- Develop a cadre of educational personnel trained in effective teaching and learning strategies to work with gifted students, talented and a cadre of technical personnel to provide on-going support to ensure effective implementation of these strategies;
- Increase community involvement in disability awareness, by creating parent support groups and establishing and training community working groups that will work for the achievement of the European global ideas for improving education

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