

INFO- 982

Primljeno/Received: 2006-06-14

UDK: 371.213.3:372.87

Stručni rad/Professional Paper

## TRAINING IN METHODOLOGY FOR FUTURE PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS (GRADES 1-4) ON TEACHING FINE ARTS TO PUPILS

## METODIČKO OSPOSOBLJAVANJE BUDUĆIH UČITELJA U RADU S UČENICIMA U NASTAVI LIKOVNE KULTURE

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### *Sažetak*

Svako društvo stvara vlastitu obrazovnu politiku, koja je sastavnica odgojno-obrazovnog sustava te obrazuje potrebne kadrove: odgajatelje, učitelje i profesore. Socio-kulturološki i individualni preduvjeti utječu na elemente nastavnog procesa: planiranje, organiziranje, izvođenje i evaluaciju. Upravo je evaluacija metodičkog osposobljavanja studenata razredne nastave u metodičkom pristupu učenicima od 1. do 4. razreda osnovne škole predmet našeg interesa u svrhu unapređivanja istog. Na taj način ostvarujemo kvalitativne pomake u visokoškolskoj nastavi osposobljavanja studenata u radu s učenicima. Namjera nam je obrazovati učitelje za razvojni pristup poučavanja i učenja, čime se odbacuje tradicionalno poučavanje utemeljeno na sadržajnoj razini. Humanistička orijentacija osposobljavanja budućih učitelja za rad s djecom predstavlja pretpostavku kvalitete nastavnog procesa u osnovnoj školi. U istraživanju su sudjelovali svi sudionici metodičkog osposobljavanja studenata: učenici, učitelji-mentori, profesor metodike i studenti. Rezultati su pokazali da vježbe u osnovnoj školi iz kolegija Metodika likovne kulture imaju značajnu ulogu u profesionalnom osposobljavanju studenata i da su malo zastupljene u nastavnom planu i programu studija razredne nastave. Treba naglasiti da svi sudionici metodičkih vježbi imaju koristi: učenicima nazočnost studenata stvara dinamiku nastavnog procesa, učitelji-mentori dobijaju nove teorijske spoznaje, ideje, poticaje za cjeloživotnim obrazovanjem, dok profesor metodike prati rad svakog studenta i daje im povratne informacije tijekom njihovog osposobljavanja.

### INTRODUCTION

Training future teachers is a very responsible task since it refers to a specific type of work involving human beings in the process of development. Teachers' training competence will affect education of individuals that will shape the society. Therefore, we have considered

### *Abstract*

*Each society creates its education policy that provides the basis of the system of education and training, and trains staff needed for its implementation: pre-school teachers, teachers and professors. Socio-cultural and individual prerequisites have been merged with the stages of the education process: planning, organization, implementation and evaluation. The essence of evaluation is to express achievements related to pupils' development by identifying realistic teaching aims and tasks i.e. concretization. In addition, the tendency is to upgrade the teaching process. These teaching abilities are acquired in the higher education process and in the course of work with primary school pupils. The subject-matter of our research is the evaluation of methodology training of students in the program for primary school teachers (grades 1-4). The aim is to create teachers focused on development, putting traditional teaching behind us, and upgrading students' practical experience in methodology. The humanistic approach to training of future teachers for work with children presents a key prerequisite for the quality of the teaching process. We have conducted research on all actors of practical work in methodology: pupils, teachers-mentors, a methodology professor, and students. The results have shown that practical work in fine arts methodology has a significant role in professional training of students in the program for primary school teachers (grades 1-4), and that it has been under-represented in the curriculum and syllabus. It should be emphasized that all actors of practical work in methodology benefit from it: in terms of pupils the presence of students creates some dynamics in the teaching process; students are trained for their work with children; teachers-mentors obtain new theoretical knowledge, ideas i.e. incentives for work and continuous education; while a methodology professor follows the work of each student, and reviews his/her teaching.*

it important to review the problem of training students in methodology.

Some students possess these qualities, and methodology exercises should raise their awareness about them. Other students need to develop these qualities. Rarely students already possess teaching skills. In this case we deal with

gifted students that have been lead to the road of success by their environment due to the fact that:

- their family members are engaged in the same profession so they have enabled their children to start their professional development at an early stage;
- the student is naturally capable and motivated for high-quality work;
- the student has achieved relevant experience through previous work with pupils (scouts, fine arts associations etc.).

Methodology exercises are an aspect of student training requesting individual approach to each student with the aim of detecting a starting point for methodology work and their further development.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the course of February and March 2004 we have conducted empirical research on methodology training of students whose major is primary school education (grades 1-4) at the Teachers' School for Professional Higher Education in Rijeka. Methodology training for the course in Fine Arts Methodology has been implemented at the *Vladimir Gortan* Primary School in Rijeka. Therefore, we have conducted our research exactly at the respective primary school based on instruction implemented with grades 1-4.

### Aim of the Research

The aim of the research is to examine efficiency of methodology training of students with the purpose of their further training. Expected information need to depict a true state of affairs and problems in the implementation of methodology exercises. A fundamental starting point of this research is extreme importance and responsibility related to training students how to teach pupils, as a foundation of high-quality teaching.

### Respondents

Respondents include 40 fourth-year (senior) students with the major in primary school education (grades 1-4), 9 primary school teachers-mentors (one with a bachelor's degree and 8 with an associate degree), 169 pupils in the grades 2-4 (7 to 11 years of age) and 40 first grade pupils (6 and 7 years of age).

### Instruments

Questionnaires have been used for: fourth-year students, teachers-mentors, and pupils in grades 2-4.

Drawings have been used for first-grade pupils. (They were asked to draw their experience in reference to having students in their class.)

Due to the quantity of information, this article will focus on the results obtained from students.

The questionnaire for primary school pupils in grades 2-4 included four questions: 1) What do you like when students come to teach you? 2) Is there anything that you do not like about students teaching you? 3) What would you change or prefer in relation to students' teaching? 4) Do you want students to come to your class next year? The first three questions are open. We have received various answers that have been classified into certain categories. The fourth question is a closed one.

Answers have been classified into the following categories: desirable student qualities, undesirable student qualities, pupils' proposals for training students (targeted at: students, mentors – teachers, professor of fine arts methodology, pupils' classmates), students' presence in the instruction, messages from drawings done by first-grade pupils.

### Research Procedures

The questionnaire has included an explanation of research, as well as instructions for filling in the questionnaire. Respondents have filled in the questionnaire anonymously and individually. Since the first grade pupils are learning how to write, they were not requested to respond to the questionnaire in writing. Their task was to draw their experience related to the students' presence in the class.

## RESULTS AND THEIR INTERPRETATION DESIRABLE STUDENT QUALITIES

We have processed the answers to the question 'What do you like when students come to teach you?' as Desirable Student Qualities, and classified them into Personal and Professional Qualities (see Table 1).

Pupils want students to be cheerful, cordial, imaginative, patient, and gentle, with adequate and pleasant voice. These personal qualities are considered desirable in mutual communication.

Personal qualities that students may apply in their teaching are various skills to be demonstrated to pupils: playing an instrument, singing, dancing, physical exercise, painting, drawing, modeling,

Table 1. Desirable Student Qualities

| DESIRABLE STUDENT QUALITIES   |  |
|---|--|
| PERSONAL  | PROFESSIONAL   |
| facial expression – laughter, cheerfulness, playfulness, fun, youth, providing assistance, pleasant voice, inventiveness, adequate voice, cordiality, imaginativeness, patience, gentleness | playing instruments, singing, story-telling, acting, reading poems, answering questions, dancing in activities related to fine arts, funny stories, jokes,<br>competence in methodology - skilful transfer of knowledge, clear explanation of pupils' tasks (comprehensibility, clear explanation), prepared for work with pupils,<br>improvisation skills,<br>communication skills (manner of communication with pupils), partner relation among pupils and students, friendship (a pupil is providing assistance to a student, a student is providing assistance to a pupil, equality, consideration of opinions expressed by others, students and pupils are learning simultaneously, students and pupils perform tasks related to fine arts simultaneously...),<br>partner relation among students, original interpretation of a lesson, affection towards work,<br>encourage pupils to feel confident about student's work (overcoming fear of making a mistake),<br>inciting curiousness in pupils,<br>rare and "new" fine arts techniques (Indian ink, modeling), new motives, learning by playing (playing),<br>student's dedication to get trained successfully,<br>providing feedback to pupils' on their work, acknowledgment, various social aspects of work,<br>no homework in fine arts class,<br>easy-to read handwriting |

acting, story-telling etc. In this manner students enrich the instruction directing it to various forms of expression and the use of various languages of expressions. Thus, they leave a model of exclusively verbal instruction, they provide model and motivation to pupils for raising their awareness and developing personal inclinations. In addition, although methodology training is related to the course in Fine Arts Methodology, an interactive approach to various fields is desirable for instructing pupils.

Pupils perceive differences among students, as well as their competence in methodology. Some students are more successful in teaching students than others. Student's knowledge is not a guarantee that the student will be able to transfer it. This is exactly the reason why students work with pupils in order to test their teaching skills and obtain a feed-back on segments that need to be developed in the process of their training. Pupils want students to transfer their knowledge skillfully.

Teaching skills partly refer to clear explanation of pupil's tasks. Students should be easy to understand and capable of explaining contents clearly. It means that students are expected to speak in an articulate manner, with clear diction. The condition is that students understand the ultimate goal of their work with pupils, tasks used for the implementation of that goal, and methodology. The assumption is that under these conditions pupils will learn more easily.

Therefore the stage of student's preparation for instruction is extremely important. The preparation includes teachers-mentors and a methodology professor. They should check a preparation done in writing by each student, as well as talk about the classroom environment (class structure), and methodology principles of teaching (aim of the lesson, tasks, methodology, fine arts techniques, motives, social aspect of work, blackboard plan, articulation of teaching etc.). In the course of preparation students design various media to be used as sources of teaching

by pupils. When using the blackboard students must use handwriting that corresponds to the shape of letters used for teaching pupils. Students are referred to Croatian language textbooks with the alphabet model that needs to be acquired by students.

During students' preparation professors develop students' „emotional literacy“. While working with students they should not strictly stick to the prepared protocol but show sensibility in “reading” pupils' needs. Their improvisation skills may assist them since they are requested to react immediately as requested by pupils' needs, if it furthers pupils' progress. Students are taught that a concept of written preparation should be understood in a flexible manner since the emphasis is not to achieve its full implementation but on the pupils' orientation. Improvisation skills are used when students do not use the class preparation entirely since it is impossible to foresee the needs of all the pupils in the class. Eventually it can enable students to achieve more efficient teaching. One should be careful that the teaching does not come to mere improvisation without any goal since this type of teaching would have no methodological justification.

Another student quality is communication skills. Students differ in character: some are more outgoing than others. Some students have pronounced suggestiveness, able of attracting attention. They use non-verbal communication and their communication is efficient no matter whether they are „calmer and more quiet“ or „dynamic, loud“. Desirable communication skills in students are those related to animating pupils since they attract pupils' attention, and they are a basic prerequisite for external motivation of pupils for learning.

Pupils see their relation with students as partnership, friendship, and refer us to the equality of roles: pupils are providing assistance to students, a student is providing assistance to pupils, they respect each other's opinions, they learn simultaneously, students perform tasks related to fine arts simultaneously with the pupils etc.

Team teaching is an aspect that we had to organize due to insufficient number of classes in relation to a number of students. A good side of this problem is that students have been trained for team teaching. Students liked this type of teaching and requested to carry out instruction in pairs.

Pupils liked it as well and responded favorably to a concept of instruction being delivered by two teachers.

Pupils perceive original interpretation of a lesson as dismissing one-sided instruction. Creating various manners of delivering instruction stimulates various approaches to teaching and learning, as well as solving various difficult situations. In addition it incites curiosity in pupils since they are eager to see what students have prepared for them this time.

Affection towards work is a foundation of high-quality students' work and the efficient professional approach. It triggers true values and pupils have „sensors“ to recognize it. Affection towards work motivates students for making an effort to get a successful training. It means that their approach to pupils is not mechanical, aimed at fulfilling the requirements of the course. They work with pupils for their own sake because of their future progress.

By encouraging self-confidence in pupils we eliminate a possibility of fear of making a mistake. Pupils often develop a fear of making a mistake due to negative authority, unclear expectations from pupils, and inappropriate communication (belittling, punishment, shouting, mocking a pupil in front of classmates, unclear grading criteria etc.). Students must be trained to acknowledge pupils' quality continuously, to give pupils feedback, and encourage pupils' confidence about their work.

Students found rare and “new” fine arts techniques (Indian ink, modeling) desirable in teaching. Their answers show that pupils want to choose fine art techniques by themselves, and that one fine arts technique is not appropriate to all of them since pupils may be classified into various fine arts types. It means that some pupils prefer fine arts techniques related to a specific artistic field since their capabilities are pronounced in that field. Pupils propose that they use various fine arts techniques and various motives at the same time; they request a greater variety of fine arts techniques according to their needs. Pupils request a greater variety of motives and more playing during the instruction.

Students develop social skills in pupils by using various social types of work. In addition to frontal and individual type of work, pupils are taught how to participate in pair and team work. Pupils like group work since they exchange information



and have a possibility to observe activities of their classmates.

Pupils like the absence of homework in fine arts class. It means that they carry out everything at school. On the other side, this prompts us to think that pupils do not like homework (lack of motivation, inability to grasp its purpose or too much homework that reduces their free time).

### UNDESIRABLE STUDENT QUALITIES

We have processed answers to the question 'Is there anything that you do not like about students teaching you?' as undesirable student qualities, and classified them into Personal and Professional (see Table 2).

Undesirable personal student qualities are: seriousness and frowning (student that never laugh), inappropriate voice (too loud or too quiet), strictness and over-indulgence.

If we were pupils we would probably find these qualities repellent, feel distance from such a person, not to mention questionable or reduced motivation for learning in comparison to desirable student qualities.

Undesirable professional approaches are based on many methodological propositions to be elaborated in the following text.

The reference to introductory activities that are too long includes overlong explanation of elements of a fine arts language, adequate use of fine arts techniques or motivation. Since pupils

have prepared their desks for a task in fine arts, they are impatient and they want to start with their work as soon as possible. We find a solution in the fact that students attribute adequate time to introductory activities.

Insisting on repeating contents that pupils already know tells us that students do not have adequate knowledge on how far have the teachers come in their teaching. This lack may be resolved by frequent visits to schools by student, and not only at the single occasion when a student delivers the class.

Suggestions imposed by students in reference to pupils' artistic expression reflect self-censorship by students that perceive pupils' artistic expression through the glasses of their perception. It results from misunderstanding children' problem-solving abilities.

Lack of knowledge in developmental psychology and children's needs leads to designing tasks inadequate for children's age. These tasks are either too easy or too difficult, imposed etc. The solution lies in multi-layer teaching that will satisfy the needs of each pupil in the class. Pupils state student's „naïve stories“ and imply that their expectations from students include various approaches to teaching that correspond to children's age.

A real problem arises when the purpose of the lesson has not been made clear to the pupils. A student should ask herself/himself: What is the

Table 2. Undesirable student qualities

| UNDESIRABLE STUDENT QUALITIES  |   |
|--|---|
| PERSONAL   | PROFESSIONAL  |
| seriousness and frowning (student that never laugh), inappropriate voice (too loud or too quiet), strictness and over-indulgence | introductory activities are too long<br>insisting on repeating contents that pupils already know<br>imposed suggestions for correction<br>the purpose of the lesson has not been made clear to the pupils<br>lack of variety in artistic fields<br>students do not walk in the class<br>monotonous, boring<br>insecure teaching<br>inadequate distribution of time for pupils to carry out their tasks<br>inability to communicate with pupils in an appropriate manner<br>lack of knowledge in developmental psychology and children's needs („naïve stories“, inadequate tasks for pupils' age – too easy, too difficult, imposed...)<br>presenting ready-made solutions as a consequence of misunderstanding teaching methodology and children's problem – solving ability |

purpose of the lesson that I have been assigned to teach? In case that a student is not sure how to explain the purpose of the lesson to the pupils, and what is the ultimate goal, pupils will not understand the student, and the instruction will be reduced to the formality – pupils will carry out their tasks for the student, and not for themselves.

Lack of variety in artistic fields is a problem related to the teacher-mentor since his/her task is to assign a lesson to each student. It means that students are not in charge of selecting either a lesson or an artistic field.

Pupils like students to walk in the class. It adds to their communication with pupils, they can monitor pupils better while they work, and pupils like constant feedback on their work from students. In case that students teach exclusively „ex cathedra“ these positive qualities are absent.

Monotony produces boredom, and boredom results from dull repetition: monotony in terms of verbal communication, stereotype performance, tasks that are too easy, constant repetition of fine arts techniques, similar artistic motives etc.

Pupils can feel insecure teaching immediately. In that case students are under a threat that pupils misuse the situation and direct it into an undesirable course. It is extremely important to train students for correct methodological behavior in teaching. At this point we may emphasize a pupil's remark that some students are incapable for creating appropriate communication among pupils.

Inadequate distribution of time for pupils to carry out their tasks was present in answers by pupils that need more time for their artistic expression. It should be mentioned that students have no time limits for certain parts of their teaching. The only problem is that pupils hurry up with their tasks as the time of their recess or lunch approaches.

## PUPILS' SUGGESTIONS FOR TRAINING STUDENTS

Pupils have proposed interesting suggestions in their answers to the third question: 'What would you change or prefer in relation to student's teaching?'. Unconsciously these answers are addressed to all participants in the process of training students so we have classified them into:

- 1) suggestions to students;
- 2) suggestions to mentors – teachers;

- 3) suggestions to the professor in fine arts methodology;
- 4) suggestions to classmates.

### Suggestions to Students

Suggestions addressed to students in terms of their further practical training in methodology have referred to simultaneous artistic expression by both students and pupils, all-day visit by students to their class, raising awareness on students' personal qualities (inclination to musical, visual, acting endeavor; laughter; feedback information by students on how do they feel in their class; students' natural behavior), and their professional qualities (a principle of gradual approach; out-of-classroom activities; learning by playing; limited assignments; different teaching approach to pupils; varying from common and well-established manner of teaching fine arts; desirable behavior; including pupils into teaching, motivation).

**Simultaneous artistic expression by both students and pupils**, 'they should do the same thing' conveys pupils' wish to include students into activities related to fine arts in a manner that students express themselves visually as well. Pupils see students as partners so they believe that the rule of the game should apply to all of them in the same manner. Pupils know that there are differences in visual expression of children and adults. However they do not perceive these differences as obstacles for including students into visual expression in the course of instruction. This suggestion is extremely valuable since it created an idea that all students who are present during teaching with the aim of observing a class, should participate actively in the process.

**Following the principle of gradual approach to teaching**, 'each time students come, we learn some more'. A pupil has conveyed a message that he likes learning about fine arts and comprehending them in continuity and concentric circles – from familiar to unfamiliar, from simple to complex.

**A pupil wants that a student spends whole school day with him**, he wants them to be together. It indicates inclination and pleasure of companionship among pupils and students.

**Out-of-classroom activities**, 'we want them to take us out for a walk' makes an interesting initiative for a change of environment in a function of quality of teaching and learning. We also achieve a more dynamic process.

**Pupils suggest that students in the course of instruction raise awareness of their desirable personal and professional qualities** and demonstrate their ability for musical, visual or acting endeavor, 'we want musicians to come more often', 'they should laugh more'. This is a way for pupils to suggest that they appreciate students' personal and professional qualities and their special inclinations since pupils see students as their role models and get encouraged for developing their own inclinations.

**Learning by playing**, 'I wish we could play first and work latter'. This statement tells that the pupil perceives playing and working as two separate activities. Fine arts activities taught by students imply „work“, and the pupil would like to introduce the game. There is a possibility that a pupil in addition to being unable to perceive a game as learning, does not perceive playing during fine arts activities as „a game“ so the use of a game in students' teaching is highly justified since it presents a powerful learning tool.

**To enable pupils to engage in fine arts activities as long as they are interested in them**, 'so that we can work longer'. This suggestion completely denies a traditional 45-minute instruction in fine arts. Its length is determined by children's needs.

**Different approach to pupils**, the so-called multi-level teaching, 'so that we can get more complex assignments'. This message tells us that the pupil's needs exceed the planned approach to pupils so it is justified to train students' sensitivity for needs of all the pupils in the class as an integral part of emotional literacy of future teachers.

**Varying from common and well-established manner of teaching fine arts**, 'more surprises', is a suggestion made by a pupil who tends to original approach to teaching. This suggestion conveys pupil's wish to avoid monotony, boredom and common teaching patterns.

**Suggestions for students to behave in a desirable manner** 'they should pay more attention to the discipline'. Pupils would like to make students more aware of the problem of conscious methodological guidance of pupils, and creating high-quality communication. In reference to this suggestion we could problematize a concept of discipline.

**They want to be a part of the motivation**, 'we want to be in their cool shows'. Pupils see themselves as students' partners. They are also aware of their possibilities thus requesting students

to get acquainted better with pupils' previous knowledge and experience during students' training. These can be demonstrated directly to the class by inclusion into the motivation.

**A need for students' feed-back information about students' feelings in their class** (since students keep asking them 'How are you?' so the pupils want partnership by asking counter-questions 'How are you feeling here?').

**Students' natural behavior**, 'in the course of teaching they should act naturally as if they were with friends because I think that children prefer it (fourth grade)'. Students act as a teacher or use an approach that is not appropriate for children's age. Children request spontaneous and natural behavior, they do not want a simulation, but real life. The message is: I have grown up and I want you to talk to me in an appropriate manner since I perceive you as a partner.

#### **Suggestions to teachers-mentors**

**Freedom to chose motives, techniques and fields of fine arts during a fine arts class**, 'to do what we want', 'to use wax crayons, water-color, maquette', 'we want them to let us do what we want'. A student's suggestion is directed to pupils' inclusion into the programming of the contents of a fine arts class.

**Change of environment**, 'I would like to change our classroom'. There is an idea to have a classroom-atelier or a classroom where pupils would be allowed to intervene (take their fine arts sets and material that should be available to pupils and not put away in boxes that are locked in the closets). We have asked ourselves whether pupils must always work in the classroom, especially if they want to change it.

**More frequent fine arts activities per week**, 'I wish we had more fine arts classes'. Specific teaching in grades 1-4 is ideal for complying with this need expressed by children. Fine arts activities may be separated or integrated with contents from other courses.

#### **Suggestions to the professor in fine arts methodology**

Pupils' major suggestion is focused towards high-quality training of future teachers. If they were allowed to do so pupils would chose a teacher that complies to their aforementioned criteria i.e. requests. Pupils perceive this quality of training students in the timing of instruction during a day,

frequency of students' visit from grade 1 to grade 4, and training students in various courses in the same class.

**Pupils want students to spend all the classes in one day with them**, they want them to be together. This suggestion is focused to students' methodological training in a day, instead of partial training focused at classes in fine arts.

**Frequency of students' visits**, 'I want students to come all the time', 'once we get to know them they should stay with us until the fourth grade'. By enabling students to participate in the instruction from grade 1 to grade 4, they learn about specific stages of pupils' development (physical, socio-emotional and cognitive aspects) at the age of 6,7,8,9,10 and 11.

Pupils wish that V. Gortan Primary School **trains** students not only in the area of fine arts, but also in **other areas of methodology**, 'we want students to be more engaged in the Croatian language class, Mathematics, Science and Society, and less in the Fine Arts class'. Some pupils prefer other courses, in comparison to the fine arts course. Pupils are tired of having students only during the fine arts class. They show no dislike for the fine arts course but they want to experience students in other fields. They are curious to have students in the Croatian language class, what would happen there?

Since pupils have suggested that students should stay with them longer and have an insight into the whole teaching process, these suggestions should be accepted. We should design other forms of methodological training of students - future primary school teachers in grades 1-4.

### Suggestions to classmates

**Suggestions to classmates focused on desirable behavior**, 'we should behave'. A question arises: Why a child has concluded that pupils do not behave (is a pupil disturbed by the noise, are we dealing with a quiet and calm child who expects this type of behavior from his/her classmates, did somebody said that they had not behaved well?). 'Students should yell at us, if they don't, everybody will get louder'. Pupils' attitude is focused to desirable behavior, but the problem is that desirable behavior is based on the model of behavior that uses "yelling" to achieve "discipline".

## STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN THE INSTRUCTION

The last question addressed to the pupils was: Do you want students to come to your class next year?

91% out of 169 pupils who participated in the survey answered positively. 6% of the pupils were against training students in their class. 3% of the pupils either did not answer, or stated that only students with desirable personal and professional qualities may get trained in their class (see Chart 1).

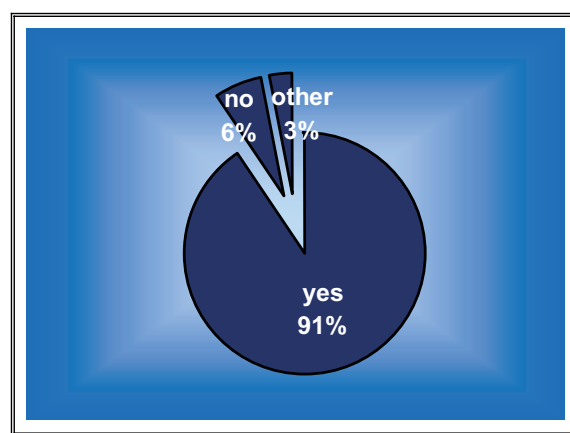


Chart 1: Students' presence

Pupils that answered that they wanted students teaching them the following year stated reasons for their positive answer. These reasons referred to students' personal and professional qualities.

We have observed consciousness about assisting students to pass their exam. In addition some pupils showed interest to become teachers when they grow up.

## VISUAL MESSAGES EXPRESSED BY FIRST GRADE PUPILS

Visual messages expressed by the first grade pupils, based on drawing their experience with students, resulted from the usage of following techniques: colored pencil sets, wax crayons and felt pens. Pupils' work shows various topics: situation in the class, in the yard, a happy face, and nature.

Picture no. 1 gives us information on the work carried out by pupils and a student in the classroom. The pupils used colored pencils and a pencil. The classroom has many windows,





Picture no 1: Graziella, first grade, students and pupils

abundant light and a brown door. Pupils are not sitting at desks lined one behind another – pupils are not facing the back of the classmate's head. Desks have been scattered in the classroom and pupils are sitting in pairs in front of each other. Pupils vary in size, while the classroom door, legs of the desks and some pupils have been shown in the space in the manner characteristic for a seven year old child: by overthrowing. A student has been placed among pupils, and faces of all the pupils are smiling indicating mutual joy and happiness. However, unlike the pupils, the student has not been colored, and this makes her different.

A student has shown a moment when the student teaches pupils (Picture no. 2) by using felt pens. The teacher has been placed close to the blackboard containing colored applications. A student is smiling and during her teaching she moves her hands standing between a desk and a chair and showing a mask. We can conclude that the student uses illustrative-demonstrative teaching methodology and stands in

order to be noticeable to all the pupils in the class. The motive is occasional. It deals with the Carnival, and the pupils' task is to make a mask. Letters indicate the contents of pupils' work.



Picture no 2: Petra, first grade, A student teaching pupils



Picture no. 3: Marko, first grade, My school as an eco-school

Marko's perception of the students has been integrated into the school as an institution that he has started to attend this year, and this is extremely important in his life. Marko likes attending school. It is "his" school. He is smiling and his affection for his school has been expressed by two hearts. He also emphasizes a specific quality about his school: an eco-school that raises awareness for the environment, plants and animals.

Nika selected a non-figurative illustration of her experience about students' teaching pupils. She used colored pencils in yellow, orange, red, pink, purple, light blue, dark blue and green

shades. It indicates a wide variety of experience about students. A mix of colors tells us about positive values and students' acceptance. She has confirmed it in the bottom of her drawing by stating: 'I felt great when students were teaching us.'

### CONCLUDING REMARKS

We have noticed that students are very constructive in expressing their position on what they liked and what they disliked about students. A careful decoding of their verbal, non-verbal, written or visual messages, give us answers



Picture no. 4: Nika S., first grade, Excellent feeling

about many methodological questions arising from working with pupils. A key to the quality of teaching pupils is exactly in the teacher's ability to perceive and try to understand pupils' needs, and uses them for designing future teaching strategy.

We can conclude from this overall review that it is not easy to become a teacher, to be more precise, a good teacher. Therefore, students are often confused or helpless in terms of expectations put before them. The official curricula and syllabi of their course of study do not allow them enough possibility to meet pupils (only in the seventh and last semester of the Fine Arts Methodology of the four-year course of study). In addition, teaching pupils is a process without set boundaries i.e. there is no an ideal teaching model – the point is in constant improvement. Aspiring to teaching quality requires constant reexamination thus determining future direction of our actions.

*Literature:*

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