13. BENEFITS OF ART PEDAGOGICAL TECHNOLOGIES IN THE PROCESS OF PRIMARY SCHOOL ADAPTATION

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Abstract: *The article deals with the problem of primary school adaptation. The innovative art technologies described by the author seem to create an optimal environment to make the process of adaptation n primary classes easier. This research highlights the benefits of art pedagogical technologies. It also suggests a framework for some art pedagogical activities. The author offers some methodological suggestions for teachers, who could help primary school learners to adapt to the new school environment.*
Key words: *art pedagogy, school adaptation, school environment, art pedagogical technologies*

1. Introduction

The man of the 21st century is required to be creative, to navigate the contradictory phenomena and to be able to adapt quickly to new situations. Against the backdrop of profound and important changes in today's life, the problem of primary school learners' adaptation is becoming more and more pressing. This is due to the delineation of the value orientations in society, the growing influence of mass media, computerization and excess of sources of information, massive migration of young population to work abroad, which leads to an increased level of divorces and single parent families, consequently, to a precarious attendance of pre-school institutions by children, complemented by the introduction of new curricular requirements, new contents, teaching and learning methods in primary education, which require a much greater adaptive effort. The total disturbance of socio-economic and cultural life has led to the corresponding consequences in schools. In this context, the researcher M. Neagoe mentions "the triad of 'skills - aptitudes – attitudes' is reversed nowadays, priority is being given first to attitudes and adaptive behavior, followed by skills and aptitudes. This order has to be reflected at the level of education systems, study plans and programs, as well as their content "(Neagoe, 2002,p.18).

2. Discussions

The phenomenon of adaptation is an "umbrella" concept, as it usually has extensive, highly abstract or concrete, heterogeneous meanings, but it is also a global issue that interests all sciences about the human beings. Through its vast sphere and content, adaptation relates to everything that is movement, action, life (Piaget, 1973, p.26). The common sense outlines several ways, in which the notion of 'adaptation' can be used: to transform, to meet certain requirements; to

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do something suitable for a particular use under certain circumstances; to make it fit; to accommodate; to learn; to get used to.

__The term "adaptation"__ derives from the Latin "arrangement, modification" and is used in the sense of "adapting organisms to living conditions"; "the interaction between the organism and the environment, aiming at maintaining the homeostasis, maintaining the biological and social activity of the organism, the continuation and improvement of the species" (Medvedev,1984, p. 3-16). The concept of adaptation was first used in science in the mid- eighteenth century by the German physicist *X. Aubert* and designated the process of accommodating the sensitivity of the hearing and vision organs, or the decrease of the sensitivity threshold in response to external stimuli (Simonova, 2006, p.23). The researcher Aurelia Coasan (1988) considers "given the fact that the school debut threshold has lowered, the analysis of school adaptation needs to be made from a new interdisciplinary, psycho-pedagogical, medico-social perspective, corresponding to the current state of scientific and technical revolution, and in agreement with the perspectives of economic and social evolution" (3, p.9). This is understandable due to the intense dynamics of social life, and in particular, to the changes made in the school system, especially in the recent decades.

The speediness, with which contemporary socio-cultural life evolves, requires an increasingly intense effort of those educated to adapt. Thus, today's learner, who is an active subject in the educational environment, is required to select and continuously assimilate information, to develop competences that will be transferred from one activity to another, possess the ability to take and evaluate decisions in a situation, display initiative and creativity, independent thinking and perseverance in overcoming obstacles, emotional stability and self-regulation abilities (Kulcsar, 1978, p.7). Under these circumstances, the lack or imbalance of adaptation capacity can cause, intensify or multiply different phenomena, such as: school failure, failure to adapt to school environment, resistance to education, school phobias, etc. The consequences of these phenomena cause an increase in the number of emotionally unstable children, children suffering from depression, restlessness, fear, self-confidence, anxiety.

Although in the last three decades, there has been a great deal of research on the adaptation of learners to different levels of schooling, involving different categories of subjects, carried out in the national academic environment, in Romania and Russia, yet the problem of learners' adaptation in primary classes remains shadowed by the domination of biological, psychological, social, medical research. In the process of schooling, learners of primary classes pass through an unusual complex of circumstances and factors, thus being forced to a new behavior, displaying self-control. Additionally, the emphasis and increase of pre-learning evaluation generates a school stress and, respectively, engages great biopsychosocial and even cultural efforts of the child. These issues are related to several contradictions between: a) the passive process of school adaptation, the extent, to which the learner manages to meet the requirements of the school program and at the same time to develop his / her personality; b) the

conditions and forms of organizing the learning activity in school, planning of extracurricular time and new requirements of the school system, which differ from the pre-school system, requiring more responsibilities; c) the quality of the results obtained in the school activity and the accommodation to the school group.

The elements of adaptation were developed in relation to the stages of schooling: adaptation of primary classes learners (A.Coasan, 1989), adaptation of preadolescents (L. Tausan, 1998), adaptation of preadolescents of different ethnic groups in Moldova (P. Borocina, 2005), impact of psychodynamics on psychosocial adaptation of adolescents (D. Murariu, 2016), psychological mechanisms of learners' adaptation to learning activity (M. Plesca, 1996), students' adaptation to the university environment, emphasizing the determinants (E. Tarna, 2014), the psychosocial adaptation of the first-year students (E. Puzur, 2016). Although we highly appreciate the results of researchers in the field of learners' adaptation to various social and institutional environments (3,8,10,11,12), we should also mention the imperfection of the correlation between the theory and the practice of school adaptation process. Lack of specific methods to research the adaptation process has created difficulties in studying the mechanisms and modalities of organizing and directing this process at the level of primary school learners' debut. Many researches have determined the general laws of the adaptation process, without making reference to particular features of the subject under investigation and the dynamics of the development of these particularities to the possibility of applying art in the context of school adaptation.

A parallel analysis of specialized literature (1,4,5,6) shows that the issue of efficiency of the educational process and its conditions, which promotes the art pedagogical technologies, is the subject of many publications both abroad and in our country. However, to date, there are still many gaps in the theory and practice of organizing the educational activities, which provide for learners' adaptation through art pedagogical technologies. The need to develop new approaches to the organization of the educational process focused on the art pedagogical elements is explained by several reasons, of which we will highlight the most important ones:

1. The theoretical and methodological basis of education has undergone significant changes in the recent years. The issue of developing effective educational technologies to enhance the creative and cultural potential of the younger generations remains to be of major importance. Several specialists in the field of education and educational practice claim that at the stage of educational reforms, the orientation towards the methods of art pedagogy and art therapy would be a solution for the existing school problems. Art pedagogy does not mean a simple summation of the meanings of the two concepts, it is a specific field of spiritual and practical activity, oriented towards valorizing the potential of art and creation in the educational process. Representatives of art-pedagogy suggest that in the case of self-control, which is the result of a special training, of the possibility to examine oneself and one's actions in the context of

inner dialogue, the child will become able to express his constructive potential to manifest himself socially an psychologically in the search for meaning of his existence. Moreover, there occurs a distortion of the true development trajectory and the innate spiritual energy resources are exhausted in the course of human maturation process (1, p.45).

Specific educational technologies, applied in art pedagogy are oriented towards the artistic and creative development of learners, towards the optimization of the learning process and intellectual activity. They contribute to preserving the unique, unrepeatable image of the child, summing up the intellectual and artistic perception of the world, providing a spiritualizing and inspiring direction of the educational process, opening the possibility to create better conditions to challenge, satisfy, further develop and shape the natural forces of children, thus favoring personality adaptation in the current social environment.

2. The practice of learners' education has dramatically changed in the recent decades. The socio-centric paradigm has been replaced by the humanistic orientation, which prioritizes the learner-centered approach. As a result, modern educational practice has been forced to change its orientation, to prioritize the formation and development of creative abilities and mental processes of the learners, the transfer and acquisition of knowledge, being on the second place, although not neglecting the significance of the latter. According to this paradigm, it is necessary to make significant adjustments of the diagnostic component - the impact of the educational activity, including the one that has an impact on the creative formation of children.

3. Every year, the theoretical, methodological and practical arsenal of pedagogical interaction is widened for the purpose of developing the child's personality, which enables the improvement of research tools to optimize the educational process, oriented towards a spiritual sphere. In particular, if previous education methods were based mainly on "logical intelligence," there is now a wide range of art pedagogical technologies to encourage the emotional intelligence of children. Art pedagogical technologies represent a totality of forms, methods and means of different genres of art, oriented towards the development of creative potential of child's personality in the educational process. The implementation of art pedagogical technologies allows to focus the pedagogical actions on the activation of child's natural passions and to guide this process towards a full development of forces and abilities, identifying and approving the personality of the learner, including through the sphere of spiritual and creative life.

In the research that we initiated, we used different genres of art, art pedagogical technologies that can encourage the educational process and create an optimal environment for school adaptation, self-realization and personal development. All this has been achieved by encouraging the challenge, development, structuring of a unitary integrative complex of positive qualities, capacities and emotions; placing the hidden knowledge, representations and experience in the "bright field" of consciousness; developing one's hidden

creative potential; improving the learner's vision of oneself and the social environment of existence; situational modeling; stimulating and exercising different behavioral patterns in children, acting through music, dancing, watching movies, cartoons, drawing, etc. To facilitate learners' school adaptation, we practiced a diverse variety of art-pedagogical technologies, such as:

Role play – learners take roles in various school situations. Role play is seen as an active learning method, based on modeling of situations and social roles that come to solve school problems. It helps children gain an emotional experience by interacting with other colleagues in personal and school situations, to make connections between their behavior and its consequences, based on the analysis of their experiences and the experiences of communicating with partners; take the risk of experiencing new patterns of behavior in similar situations. For example, the role plays: "I am a student", "My school bag" "How is the palm of my neighbor", "Funny fears" and so on.

Collage, self-made collage helps fly the children's imagination, and is a way of involving learners in the search for information, synthesizing and presenting it in a pleasant and attractive form (using natural materials, magazine pictures, books, photos, buttons, woolen yarn, paper, cloth of all kinds and various textures).

Fantasy is the use of imagistic potential and we have merged it with drawing and physical movement.

Drawing by various expressive and metaphoric means has helped us to *identify* children's adaptation problems, and help them to express their inner state and to stimulate non-verbal communication (Ex: "Happy little men": "We are a family" etc.). Drawing is always a way of describing feelings that cannot be uttered. Colors, pencils, chalk can stimulate children to tell what has happened, to reveal scenes of their life that they cannot express in words.

Modeling is an exercise that provides children with a tactile experience, as well as a kinesthetic one. Clay, plasticine, paste (made of flour and water) modeling is a way, through which children tell their stories both through molded figurines and through words, the verbal expressions accompanying the modeling process.

Dance and creative movement is a way of expressing, communicating the experiences that make the children feel safe, lessening their anxiety. It is a method by which we help the children to regain their own bodies, to know their bodies better and to feel comfortable. Absorbed by the dance, children can display all their feelings and leave their resentments free. These work methods are based on regular movements and children's desire to interact with peers and adults.

Fairy tales and stories – making up stories is an important experience in the process of young learners' adaptation to school. They are unique as artistic and literary form and are perfectly understood by children. Every child will extract different meanings from fairy tales, according to his/her needs, interests,

desires, expectations at that time (ex. The story "We're preparing the school bag", "School rules", etc.)

Music and music improvisation (melotherapy) is used as a means of expressing (instead of speaking) and communicating, which is indicated in treating hidden aggression, affective difficulties and certain blockages in learners. It can fulfill the following goals: achieve relaxation, relief, stimulate all the positive elements of the individual, provoke emotional reactions that can be exploited in the process of learners' adaptation, stimulate imagination and creativity, stimulate motor and sensory functions diminished for various reasons.

Film viewing (cinema education) is one of the forms of creative educational technologies, which is oriented towards an integrative approach of the child - adult relationship. It outlines the interaction process, revealing new ways of social interaction (Fiofanova, 2008, p 56). Due to cinema-technologies, it is possible to create a "living" field of life interaction, in which educational actors will find answers to various questions. Cinematographic art is a bridge between characters, the imaginary world and the real world, a binder that can form a foundation in the process of human knowledge, intercourse, education, and personal development.

3. Conclusions

The use of art pedagogical technologies in the process of primary school learners' adaptation promotes creation of a favorable socio-psychological environment, in which learners are directed to master and control their anxieties and school fears by relieving the tensions, caused by the new status of a "schoolchild" due to the stimulation of expressiveness and creativity.

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