HOW TEACHERS CAN BENEFIT FROM THE REFUGEE ISSUE: A SUGGESTED CREATIVE PROGRAM FOR PUPILS

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Abstract:

It is estimated that the refugee phenomenon is a multimodal issue in a preschool and elementary class. The teachers have many complex problems to solve. There are teachers who have difficulties in order to getting over. However, the refugee phenomenon could be an issue for matching the common elements among pupils. According to the theoretical background analyzed below, the findings so far internationally and in Greece emphasize the importance of creativity in education and its outcomes. In Greece, in recent years, during the refugee flows and the integration of the refugee pupils into the classes, teachers and students are faced with challenges in order to overpass the difficulties. This paper aims to suggest a program for educators based on the cultivation of creativity and the means of expression in children from different cultural backgrounds. Diversity will be the point of convergence to enhance creativity, the stereotypical and repetitive are indices of low creativity, while the difference is a privilege that can be exploited by children with different recruits and this is the starting point for enhancing creativity.

Keywords: creative program, refugee issue, primary education, early childhood education

1. Introduction

This paper proposed a program for educators based on the cultivation of creativity and the means of expression in children from different cultural backgrounds. Diversity will be the point of convergence to enhance creativity, the stereotypical and repetitive are indices of low creativity, while the difference is a privilege that can be exploited by children with different recruits and this is the starting point for enhancing creativity. Teachers could benefit from the diversity and suggest creative program with a various choices from book and animation.

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2. Teachers and creative pedagogy

From a very early stage, it was argued that creativity is linked to education and that it can be the safest way for a student's successful learning path. The school environment, through the educational process, must encourage and support the unusual ideas that provide freedom of thought and choice to contribute to the creative performance and creative thinking of all students (Michalopoulou, 2011, 2014a, 2014b). Strengthening and promoting creativity should be the basic direction of organizing each training program (Guilford, 1950).

The importance of creativity is also recognized by the general purpose of education in Greece (L.1566 / 85, 167 A, paragraph 1, article 1), which states that education should "... *contribute to the all-round, harmonious and balanced development of intellectual and psychosomatic forces of the students so that they can develop into complete personalities and live creatively*.

According to the recent decision of the European Parliament (No 1350/2008 / EC), "*education and all education and training systems must take sufficient care to develop the key competences supporting creativity and innovation with a view to finding innovative and original solutions for personal, professional and social life, as well as for stimulating sensory sensitivity, emotional development, creative thinking and intuition in all children from the early stages of development pre-school care*".

Also, according to the conclusions of the European Council (2011) on the role of education and training in the implementation of the Europe 2020 (2011/C70/01), "*the education and training systems should provide the right mix of skills and to ensure adequate provision of science, mathematics and engineering to equip students with the basic skills, motivation and ability to learn and promote the development of transversal skills, including those that make it possible the use of modern digital technologies, to promote sustainable development and active citizenship, and to encourage creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship*".

There is a European determination to actively develop creativity. The European ambassadors 'Manifesto of the European Year of Creativity and Innovation' (European Commission, 2009) highlighted the need to incorporate creativity, culture and art into education in natural sciences as well as in others.

Also, the role of a democratic education in a framework of Human Rights is to offer equal opportunities for all children to develop their creative skills (Cropley, 2009; Pantazis, 2009**).**

According to Robinson (2001) and the study of the National Advisory Committee on Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE), creativity is defined as the process of producing an original work or idea that has value. A creative process is characterized by (a) imagination, (b) it is targeted, (c) leads to a prototype produced, which (d) has some value in relation to the original goal.

The creative environment plays a predominant role (Craft, 2000). Thus, education is the strongest, perhaps, instrument of mankind to respond to the demands and needs

of the era, with the new challenges of requiring an update of the role teachers are called upon to play (Jeffrey & Craft, 2001, Craft, 2002).

In order for teachers to adopt new roles (development of creativity and innovation), and to extend their vision, it is necessary to train them by using Internet applications that emphasize the content user-generated information exchange and collaborative effort alongside new ways of interacting and using a web as a platform for users to create content (Franklin & Van Harmelen, 2007).

3. The refugee phenomenon in education

The refugee issue has many different root causes while varying variables have affected the appearance, growth and the rapid deterioration of the current historical conjuncture (Hatton, 2016). Greece has experienced rapid socio-demographic changes reflected in the social composition. Since 2015, the presence of many refugee groups with different ethnic backgrounds and together with the economic crisis, have created conditions that indicate the need to implement new education policies.

Also, in some cases, such as refugees and their children, increase the need for providing emergency education policies (Dijkshoorn, 2016). The approach of this policy in the light of Human Rights is the most appropriate based on international bibliography and research (Pantazis, 2015; Koutselini, 2011; Lansdown, 2002). On the concept of Human Rights stressed that education aims in cultivating the moral concept of human legal guarantees of freedom and human dignity. Regardless of age, ethnicity, and ancestry Human Rights apply to all people. For this and contain political, economic, social and individual rights through education refers to the social and political culture (Pantazis, 2009).

However, education for Human Rights is an ever-changing condition as conditions, political and cultural change constantly. Therefore, securing the rights to these changing political, social and cultural conditions are paramount and there should focus on solving problems related to maintaining rights to universal validity (Sounoglou & Sounoglou, 2017). The respect of rights regardless of their social and political rights needs to be accepted by all social groups (Pantazis, 2009).

4. Material and Methods

The aim of the education program is to propose to teachers creative activities for student from different cultural background.

The scenario takes into account students' interests and needs and below from this perspective, it is child-centered (Bruner, 1966). The activities are suitable for level of child development and takes into account past experiences and their knowledge (Piaget, 1964). It is based on the principles of behavioral theory and socio-cultural learning theories (Vygotsky, 1978).

There is a direct and active involvement of children in the learning process while at the same time they are encouraged not to be passive, to have practice and feedback.

The teaching scenario is based on the pre-existing knowledge of children and with specific software pushes them to interact with the environment and cognitive-socio-cognitive conflict, so that knowledge can be structured and communicated is constantly being restructured. Students' internal motivations are strengthened, and teacher is an animator, facilitator and guide to the endeavor for them to discover knowledge.

According to humanistic theories, learning is seen as a process social interaction. The person through working with other people develops skills that would otherwise be in the latency. Through small group activities children manage to reach the "*scaffolding method*" (help that was offered from a peer or older student) that is, what they could potentially do (Vygotsky, 1978). They go one step further, while older children, explaining and helping, they reach metacognition, that is, they understand how their knowledge was acquired.

5. Proposed approach for teacher on refugee phenomenon

There are many options in approaches to follow in order to select for the educational process. However, it is selected the narrative persuasion as an inquiry-based and effective approach for this theme. The conceptual approach Narrative persuasion includes how storytelling leads to the formation and / or changes in beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. That is, how it affects how we think about the world. How we evaluate the world and how we behave in the world (Bilandzic & Busselle, 2013). A psychological process carried out by telling stories (through literary texts, watching movies, stories) is the transport and identification. This is the transfer to the world of history. The viewer / reader as a 'traveler' is transported to another world; this is the world of history and he loses contact with his own world (Mayall, 2002). Thus 'lost' in the story and the 'sucks'. The identification is done with a sense of loss of identity of the viewer and the adoption of the hero's identity. He feels like a hero. He has essentially the viewpoint of the hero and the hero targets.

Cinema education obeys the same components of ability to access (physical and technical), cognitive recruitment and critical analysis, and the ability to create content, turning viewers into active and autonomous media users. Cinema education enables viewers to "*read behind the lines*", to decode the contexts from which the true meaning derives (Decoster & Vansieleghem, 2014). In other words, they learn "*to understand not only the explicit assumptions but also the inviolable ideological conventions that they bring to cinema*". Furthermore, the short works work like poems over literary texts: they contain bold, lucid speech and plurality, they are dense and multilayered, and therefore open to a variety of interpretations.

6. Proposed books and animation

The book by Alexandra Diaz, *"The Only Road"* is a novel that would be great for a whole class read aloud or middle school literature circle book. In the story, 12-year-old Jaime travels from Guatemala to the US to escape gang violence. It is inspired by true events and connects with current events.

6.1 Proposed films on the refugee issue
1. *"The Red Pencil"* by Andrea Davis Pinkney tells the story of a Sudanese refugee who leaves her village after experiencing the horror of Janjaweed attackers. During her stay at a refugee camp, she starts to become pessimistic until a red pencil starts to open her up to possibility and hope.
2. *"Carly, A Refugee's Story"*, UNCHR. Carly is forced to flee her home and leave everything behind. All alone, she sets out to find help in other lands. She encounters the Stone-eaters, Smoky-crows, and Silk-tails. But none of them will help her because she is "*strange and different from them*", where will Carly find the safety and warmth of a new family.
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oF1HGfg2bSo
3. *"Unfairy Tales: Malak and the boat"*, UNICEF. UNICEF's *"Unfairy Tales"* animated series is meant to bring attention to the youngest victims of the Syrian refugee crisis. The videos chronicle real children's journeys from Syria by juxtaposing stunning animation with raw narrations of the terrible events wrought by the crisis. These stories help us to recognize the harrowing journeys that these children have been through and hope to encourage a sense of acceptance and assistance from those whose paths they cross.
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UMjSZaMY2Y

7. Activities for children

- We will complete half-finished texts. We will play with the phrases of a text or a poem and cultivate our imagination and creativity. Regardless of the level of the team we start our action by presenting a quote from books. We give photocopies of texts (poems, fairy tales, short stories, novel excerpts, etc.) depending on grade level. Our goal is to rewrite words or phrases on the missing page piece. Either individually or in pairs or groups.
- Each or every group announces the text they have compiled, and we can optionally view the original text to compare the outcome of our work with that of the author. We collect the texts and create a teamwork.
- We give the children to browse a book of poems. They choose some poems and read them aloud. They also read the biography of the author. Then they proceed with the following activity: they separate words or phrases from the poems and create their own poem.

- We give them a small illustrated book to read. They are divided into five groups. After reading it each team undertakes to turn it into a comic book. On an A4 paper divided into four they choose the drawings they will make and then draw the known bubbles but without words. The teams then switch between the papers and put together the words they think that the images represent and they will discuss.
- We read an illustrated story or we see an animation. We are discussing its plot and action. They refer to the emotions and characters of the heroes. We find proportions in everyday life. If we want and there is time we can paint the emotions of our heroes. We can also talk about the backdrop of history (space and time) and how important these two elements are for the evolution of events (analogous activities: painting locations or changing locations, time of events, etc.).
- In each story, sound effects will be recorded (throwing rice on a metallic object for rain, speaking in a cassette producing echo, crumpling a plastic bag producing a sound of fire, etc.).
- Part or all of the story will be dramatized and the outcome of each story will be discussed.
- Groups will try to create another cover from a specific book of their choice.
- Reproduce the story and play role-playing games in groups with the heroes of the movie or the book.
- Make films with students using the camera (sequence of static images), camcorder and other materials (eg plasticine, everyday objects).

8. Conclusion

The role of creativity in teachers and pupils is linked to other skills. Each educator will be able to form a differentiated and balanced program, consisting of activities to cultivate creativity, aiming at empowering themselves as well as students. The proposed activities can be a tool for educational innovations, social and economic development if supported and reinforced by existing structures.

The social importance of this program lies in the fact that there is a greater need for social support through education should have the vulnerable social groups. Strengthening these groups to provide equal opportunities can be realized by promoting creative programs (Ewing & Gibson, 2015) in the context of human rights, because it takes into account the different cultural backgrounds and different needs. Moreover, this it is urgent to support teachers to enhance their skills, they have better yield, so better results in education (Sounoglou & Michalopoulou, 2016). Finally, benefiting the vulnerable student audience enhance the skills for the next stages of their life.

About the Author(s)
Marina Sounoglou is a PostDoc Researcher at University of Thessaly. Her research interests focus on early childhood education curricula, Human Rights, cultural diversity

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