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Categorization and Analysis of Student Errors in the Serbian Language Exam Classes²

Extended summary

Professional methodological practice is a compulsory subject at all teacher training faculties. It aims to connect complex theories of educational sciences (pedagogical and developmental psychology, didactics and teaching methods of a certain subject) with practical teaching. In other words, methodological practice requires the implementation of the acquired theoretical knowledge about the organization of all teaching factors (such as teaching strategies, methods, tools, forms of work, class typology, structure of lessons, modern forms of teaching, methodological actions, methodological apparatus) in the course of the concrete realization of school teaching. At Serbian Language studies at the Faculty of Philosophy in Niš students have the reflective model of professional practice, and one of its key elements is constant exercise, which provides students with answers to all questions about teaching practice. According to this model, students should work effectively during the semester – observe the lessons, talk with professors and mentors, and hold individual classes. Holding exam classes requires a special preparation, and it is an important task during studies. Although they are previously obliged to pass all pedagogical, psychological and methodological subjects, due to the great responsibility of the teaching profession and

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the emergence of the real teaching situations, students make characteristic mistakes during these classes, and forget all previously acquired theoretical knowledge. It is a real challenge for them, because every language class is a phenomenon in itself. Therefore, the subject of this paper is to point out the most common student mistakes during exam classes during the realization of the professional methodological practice of teaching Serbian Language at the Faculty of Philosophy in Niš. By analyzing the records and material from the exam classes provided by students of the Serbian Language and Literature from the Faculty of Philosophy in Niš during four academic years (from 2015/16 to 2018/19), we found and analyzed the typical beginners' mistakes and classified them into six categories: methodological mistakes during the classes, a lack of compliance with teaching principles, a lack of the required class structure, unskilled application of teaching forms and methods, unskilled application of teaching aids (and technical aids) and errors in behavior and communication. As there has been no research on this issue so far, this research can be a valuable material that provides instructions to students on what they should take into account when organizing and taking exams or state professional exam for working in schools. The results show the complexity of teaching theory (developmental and pedagogical psychology and didactics), which should be connected with a specific discipline (linguistics, literature, and art) during the methodological organization of the Serbian Language classes. The methodological literature offers proposals for the organization of grammar and language classes in general, but it cannot offer comprehensive solutions that can be applied in every class and which will guarantee the successful realization of classes. That is why we seek the solution for neutralizing the errors or keeping them to a minimum. Only a careful planning, the commitment to organizing exam classes, a creative approach to the problem, and intensive talks with professors and mentors could give positive results.

Keywords: teaching theory, methodological practice, most common mistakes, Serbian Language teaching, reflective practice.

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