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Educational Effects of Contextual Learning in Serbian Language Classes

Extended summary

This research demonstrates the results of the first experimental assessment of the educational outcomes of contextual learning in the traditional and innovative teaching systems (responsible teaching and different complexity levels teaching).

The ultimate aim of the experimental assessment is to determine whether the contextual learning in teaching process results in more favorable educational effects while being realistically assessed and whether it is possible to enhance the contextual learning and innovative teaching in our schools to overcome the limitations of mainly de-contextual learning based on the conservative didactic paradigm.

After the conducted statistical procedures we can conclude that, on average, students of the lower school grades had significantly higher educational achievements when contextual learning was applied and on the variables: *text comprehension* ($F(1, 284) = 70.10, p < .001, \eta^2 = .19$); *silent reading speed* ($L(1) = 35.74, p < .001$), while the benefit on the variable *culture of expression* ($F = 12.53, p < .001, \eta^2 = .04$) was less significant.

After the initial and final assessments, it was determined that the systematic exercises of the contextual learning compared to the dominating de-contextual learning exercises made a significant impact on the increase of educational achievements determined by the *reading*

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speed and text comprehension tests. No significant impact was detected on the students' speaking ability.

During the 2018/19 school year, the experiment was carried out with grade five students from three elementary schools within the field of Serbian language. Each of the three elementary schools had two experimental and two assessment classes. The experimental effectiveness of the didactically and methodologically founded new exercises of contextual learning and complementary teaching was assessed.

The method of an experiment with parallel groups was the key method applied in the research. The method of theoretical analysis and synthesis, as well as comparative method, were used in the preparation, implementation, and finalization of the project. The analysis and synthesis method was used to analyze theoretical questions of experimental factor, different attitudes and approaches to contextual learning in the classroom.

The obtained results provide more reliable starting points for more systematic and comprehensive pedagogical, psychological, didactical, and methodological research of contextual learning in the teaching process with the aim of providing a more solid basis for gaining functional knowledge, productive skills, and developing creative skills and prosocial behavior of students.

Keywords: contextual learning, de-contextual learning, responsible teaching, different complexity levels teaching, educational effects

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