Active Learning and Self-Determination for the Management of Differences in the Classroom

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ABSTRACT

The contexts of active learning, be they cooperative or flipped, are considered environments in which effective forms of learning are developed and students report greater satisfaction of basic psychological needs, intrinsic motivation, and interest in the subjects studied compared to the peers included in classes with traditional teaching methods. The aim of this study is to investigate whether there are differences between students with disabilities and without any pathology, included in active learning contexts, in the level of satisfaction of basic psychological needs, in the perception of skills, in the perception of the classroom climate and in the motivation to learn. 100 students (age: M = 16.99; DS = 1.808), 33 with disabilities and 67 students with typical development were involved. The results confirmed, in addition to the impact of individual factors in the motivation to study (psychological needs and perception of skills), a significant relationship also emerged with the classroom climate, with the teaching strategies of active learning and functional and self-determined levels of motivation to study.

KEYWORDS

Active Learning, Disability Learning Climate, Psychological Basic Needs, Self-Determination
INTRODUCTION

In the study of active technological skills, specifically flipped classroom and cooperative learning, as pedagogical models capable of producing effects on the self-determination of students with and without disabilities. This is a way of tackling all the obstacles to learning that can be faced by our children, so that they can be active subjects of their learning. This is a concept of media strategy, suitable to implement the construction of knowledge by the boys at the same time. This is, of course, a modification of the dynamics of the class, as well as of thinking by the student and the use of psychological processes such as attention, perception and executive skills, in particular, the perceptual categorization of concepts and thought, which develops neuropsychological architecture that needs mediated and highly supportive learning contexts to make itself explicit. In storytelling, the approach in the “flipped” classroom moves in particular with its model and its innovative strategies, and with its languages and relational modalities that ensure a process of information, thus fostering the development of everything in each subject. The flipped classroom, in particular, we repeat, favors greater personalization, as the students who live and work in an inverted class are activated according to their own rhythms, their times, and above all, reciprocity. In addition, as Ash (2012) points out, the term “flipping” refers to the idea of exchanging class work assignments, as well as leading students to act with greater responsibility in the direction of enhancing learning and its basic prerequisites. This is why this approach enters a space for reflection within inclusive education, enriching the educational-didactic practice of new strategic methods that combine the analogical level with the pragmatic one, forming a didactic mediation that is fundamental for developing processes of understanding, that is, mental operations as bases for the representational construction of knowledge. In fact, it is precisely within the space of the upside-down classroom with technological mediation that the subject will be stimulated to modify the schemes in his possession to envisage new operational possibilities to face the many inputs and tasks imposed by an emerging situation. In short, the goal is to make transactions between his system of preconceptions and his experience mediated by a whole series of strategies to which he is submitted to achieve significant goals in knowledge and at the same time to self-regulate his behavior.

In fact, until recently, the frontal lesson was considered the central element of the didactic activity, while today, in a school emptied of its traditional formative-cognitive function, the exposure phase of the contents has become less relevant than that of their sharing and interiorization. The working phase of active learning in the classroom with the students is no longer based on memorization and mechanically repetitive activities but on the active construction of knowledge through specific research methodologies, problem solving, and decision-making activities. The disciplinary contents are not, therefore, simply presented to the students but made to build through a process of rediscovery and reinvention that naturally is not spontaneous but guided by the teacher. Only after this phase does exposure to the contents become useful, even in traditional forms. Work at home also interacts with the activities carried out in the classroom. In fact, through in-depth studies and research on the topics of the lectures, the students connect the various acquired information, which will then compare with the teacher, experimenting with strategies to acquire increasingly refined and self-determined knowledge essential to ensure the consolidation of learning in the short-term and long-term (Fulton, 2012). Obviously, digital content, video lessons, or particular technological tools such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Skype could be adequately designed and used to facilitate collaborative learning in the flipped classroom. In fact, the inverted class model can enhance collaborative learning, through which students learn and build their knowledge through group interaction and are led by the teacher into deep learning activities.

The use of teaching strategies alternative to frontal teaching facilitates, therefore, the acquisition of autonomy and skills, basic and transversal, and indirectly contributes to increased motivation and self-esteem. However, it is true that, in some cases, the use of innovative didactics may be difficult, not functional or ineffective if the skills of the teacher and/or students are inadequate to the task
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