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Didactic Potential of Excursion Method

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Abstract

In the theoretical part of the article, there is a description of the excursion method and its stages. The article further describes experience with school leavers in relation to their future career and maps the main shortcomings. The research part of the article is dedicated to viewing of didactic potential of master studies students, the future teachers at 1st-5th grades.

Keywords: excursion, didactic methods, effective education, primary school

Introduction

Most of us probably had the opportunity to take part in an excursion, whether in the role of a teacher or a student or a pupil. Unfortunately, the results of such an excursion or trip, for example, have a controversial outcome. This article is intended to point to frequent mistakes in leadership and preparation of this teaching method.

An excursion is a group visit to an important or interesting place or facility that has a cognitive purpose. It is one of the organizational forms of teaching conducted outside the school environment, it is directly related to the content of the lesson: illustrates, complements, expands the pupil experience (Průcha, Mareš, Walterová, 2003).

If the excursion is to be meaningful, it must be prepared methodically. If the excursion does not have pedagogical significance, it is only a trip. Excursions should be based on the substance currently under discussion. If the current teaching is focused on the properties of metals, it is not wise to organize an excursion to the brewery. Before starting the excursion, it is also appropriate to start with the students or the pupils of a discussion on the topic of the excursion. During the excursion, students and pupils should process prepared tasks or, as the case may be, whole task sheets. After completing the excursion, the task should be

followed by checking the assigned tasks and evaluating the excursion. Of course, during the excursion, the teacher is also forced to solve the administrative preparation, such as the number of accompanying teachers, insurance, permits, tickets, discounts, transportation, visit conditions (clothing, footwear).

Types of excursions are divided into:

- **thematic excursions**, that are directly related to the topic being discussed and aim to bring students closer to the workplace, work organization or production process, all in a real working environment.

- **complex excursions** cover larger thematic units, as opposed to thematic excursion, aim to make pupils through the whole functioning of institutions - by interconnecting individual workplaces. This may include, for example, the operation of hospitals, hotels and manufacturing businesses.

- **comprehensive and cross-curricular excursions** relate to several subjects, mostly carried out after completion of the thematic units, therefore they are predominantly included at the end of the school year.

Method implementation process

The didactic efficiency of the excursion depends to a large extent on its thorough and thoughtful preparation. In the **preparatory phase**, the teacher clarifies the goals and tasks of the excursion and learns in advance of the venue. They also need to get acquainted with the field of excursion, read the appropriate literature, talk to experts, think about the excursion, give the pupils a preliminary overview of the excursion, highlight in advance the significant phenomena and processes that the pupils encounter (Průcha et al., 2003).

The actual excursion requires considerable demands on the methodical course of the teacher, a variety of methods are used (especially demonstration methods). Asking questions and explaining the teacher focuses the attention of the pupils so that they observe the essential phenomena and processes, leads them to their analysis, understanding the relationships, combining the visual material with the existing knowledge and experience (Průcha et al., 2003).

The final stage is the **phase of evaluation and use of the excursion**. It is most often done in the classroom, with active cooperation between teachers and pupils. They recall the newly acquired experience and knowledge that the pupils gained during the excursion. These findings and experiences are brought into context and evaluated. Pupils can also process additional materials (Nelešovská, Spáčilová, 2005).

From the point of view of didactic function, we can characterize the excursion as a preliminary one in which it is the accumulation of learning material, which is based on further teaching or motivation, and the final one, which leads to the consolidation, deepening and extension of acquired knowledge.

Excursion results are valuable learning materials not only for pupils but also for teachers who gain in-depth knowledge for their further pedagogical practice. The interest and inclusion of pupils in the excursion have a positive effect on the results. This effect is greater if the teacher does not only assign intermediate tasks but also tasks after the excursion, focusing on the further use of the acquired material.

The teacher should choose the excursion very cautiously, he should take into account the formation of the knowledge of the future consultant. Selects companies using new advanced technologies. He also takes into account moral issues, organizes excursions to businesses that are focused on producing value-added products or respecting social needs. The teacher should also consider the suitability of an excursion with controversial production (liqueurs, cigarette factories).

The problematic of school leavers practice

Excursions or tours bring the real working process to pupils, who had no or little experience before. We asked one person in the unnamed business chain. She outlined three basic problems concerning potential employees.

Unpredictability and independence, when overflows of information on the internet send graduates very often poorly and incompletely written CVs, do not communicate in the interview, do not know what they want, cannot present or ask questions. Often they are not able to fill the questionnaire correctly. With a higher level of education, this situation is improving. Good experience is with graduates who have already worked on brigades during their studies. They have an idea of work, the value of money, they have at least some working habits.

Exaggerated expectations are the opposite of what has been described above. They are graduates with excessive self-confidence and mostly unrealistic perceptions of wages. It is good to get information about the job you are interested in. The will to **work is manifested** by the growing number of graduates who are going to work, but only for a short time. They have no patience to learn, they are irresponsible, they do not care about their work, they do not actually work or want.

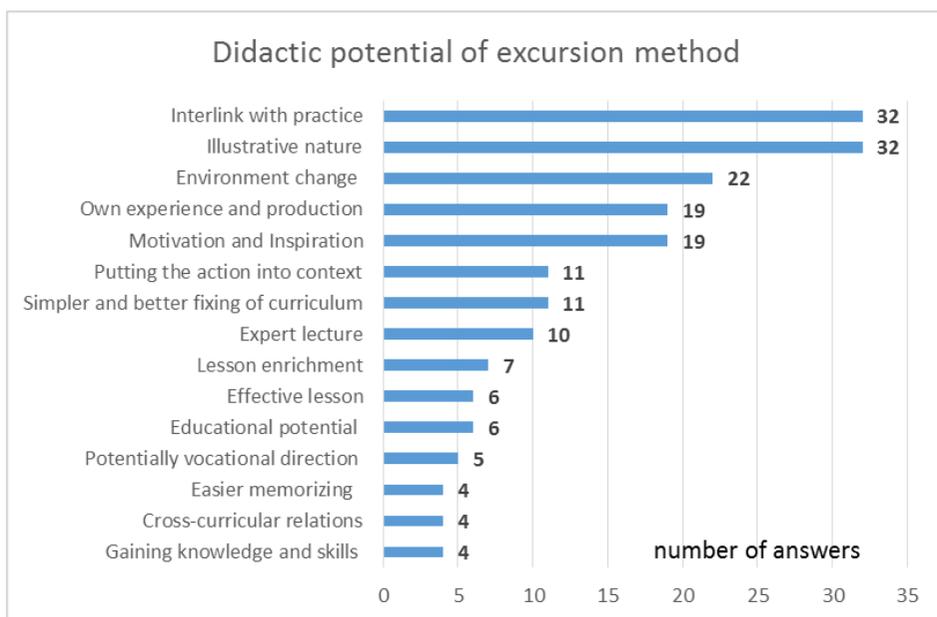
The growing number of young people with incomplete secondary education is alarming. In 2000, it was about 15% of the applicants with basic education, in 2017 about 40% of the applicants (nationwide data from the retail chain HR department).

Didactic potential of excursion method - the view of beginning teachers

Within the master studies, future teachers of the first grades were asked what potential they see just in this teaching method. The question was answered in a written form in total by 60 respondents, where 23 of them already practice the teaching activity. The research method was in a form of dialogue on the topic of

excursion in teaching, its strong and weak points. The dialogues were analyzed and the results were sorted into categories based on the given answers. The categories were divided on those with positive contribution or positive view of teachers and those with negative contribution, which represent some worries (Janíková, Vlčková, 2009).

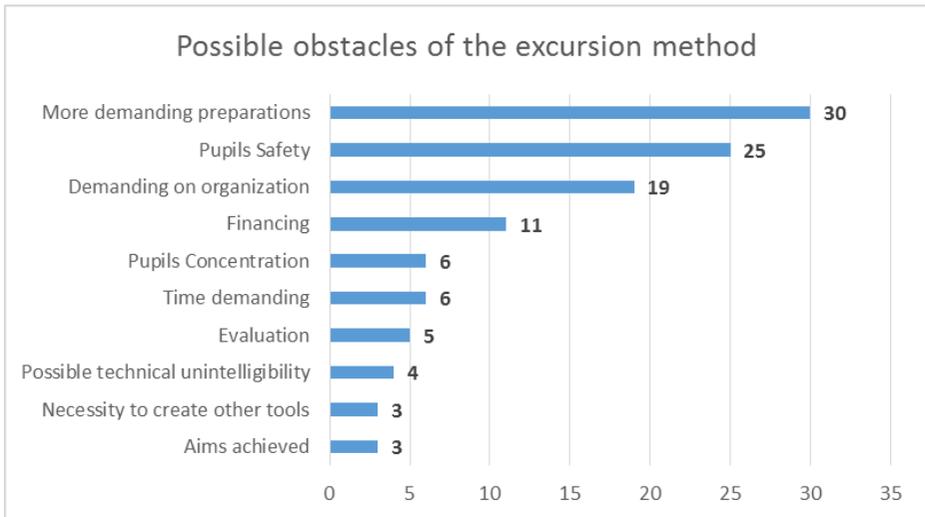
Based on the results the teachers are aware of the advantages of excursions. A dominant factor is the contribution in form of interlink with practice and significant share on illustrative nature of the lesson. Oddly, the teachers do not realize the potential of the method to develop the cross-curricular relations neither its educational potential - observation of the aims on the affective (educational) level and achievement of developing social and personnel competences, this is confirmed by the research of the authors PK. Astalin and Chauhan (2018) or Hole (2018).



Graph 1. Positives - number of responds in the individual categories, category overview

The categories were formed based on the research results. The categories are problematic for the implementation of excursion method from various approaches. The teachers worry especially about more demanding preparations (from the point of didactic view) as well as about more demanding preparation from the point of organization view, which is also related to pupils safety (the second most frequent point). The teachers are not afraid of not fulfilling the aims or problematic evaluation of the excursion results. Most fears are oriented on

technical-economical-logistic background of putting the activity in practice in a form of excursion or tour to the selected places.



Graph 2. Possible obstacles - number of responds in the individual categories, category overview

Conclusion

In view of these alarming information, it is necessary to address this problem. Existing teaching should link theory to practice, whether by incorporating consistent practices in companies, businesses or institutions, or just by way of excursion. Under the auspices of our university, a Methodological Guide for the 2nd level of the elementary school of human and labor education was created. It contains entirely unique learning materials for the second grade of elementary school. Also included is a project called C 1.1 Study or Work? What to do after primary school? The aim of the project is, in particular, to motivate pupils to choose a profession and to provide them with a realistic insight into the requirements of further education and the labor market. The project develops in particular the key competencies of the communication (expresses it orally, in writing and graphically, reads with understanding, formulates ideas and opinions), social and personal (creates self-image, contributes to discussion), teaching (motivation and motivation of others, critically evaluates results), information - seeks and classifies information) and civic competence (compliance with laws and social standards) (Astalin, Chauhan, 2018). This project also includes a variety of exciting activities, such as How much do you earn for a whole year, occupation and where to study, Excursion to a company for which I would like to work. Finally idea - Hole says *“the investigation shows that field excursion experiences*

can have an important impact on individuals' trajectories as cultivators of disciplinary knowing and can affect students' thinking about subsequent investigations, projects, and work”.

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