IMPLEMENTATION OF INFORMAL E- LEARNING METHODS OF TEACHING AND TEACHING PROCESSES

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Abstract*: In this paper the concept of implementation of non-formal learning methods and principles of teaching are presented. It is also explained how these methods can be implemented within e-learning teaching materials. An overview of main characteristics of formal, non-formal and informal teaching methods is presented. The expected results of the implementation of non-formal methods, as well as possible ways of their realization are described. A stress has been set on the use of literary methods and on their possible incorporation in e-learning teaching materials. An example is given on how to use this literary method as a type of non-formal method of learning.*

Keywords: *e-learning, non-formal teaching methods*

I. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the process of education and personal development is considered as one of the basic elements of the society and it presents a milestone for further development and progress of the society. Having this in mind, in the last ten years some processes have been developed in order to improve the quality of education and to define standards which will guarantee that the knowledge and assessment of its quality will be unique in the whole Europe. The Bologna Declaration [1] and The Copenhagen Declaration [2] have given the starting point to achieve those strategic goals, so that the European economy can become the most dynamic world's economy based on knowledge.

One step forward to achieve the set goal is the stress on the concept of lifelong learning and the development of methods which will be implemented according to this concept. Starting from this premise, it has been developed the concept of lifelong learning realization. Focus is set on e-learning, actually on the distance learning over Internet. In this way, the technical advantages that had been brought into life are fully used and developed. Nevertheless, there are some other directions that lead to develop unconventional learning methods, not only from the aspect of technical and technological realization, but above all, from the pedagogical and methodological point of view. So called informal and non-formal types of learning have appeared as a good basis for transfering and obtaining knowledge and experiences by using various approaches, which are different from the conventional learning methods.

In this paper the non-formal teaching methods have been described and the influence of analyzed literary method is explained in more details. After the introduction, in the second chapter are presented basic differences among, formal, informal and non-formal learning. In the third chapter the issue of literary elements in informal types of e-learning is developed. In the fourth chapter an example on how to use the literary method in non-formal learning and method on how to present

teaching materials. In the conclusion are presented the impressions that can lead to some further investigations and developments in this field of learning is shown.

II.   METHODS OF LEARNING

Teaching methods are the ways of how teachers and students work and which help students to obtain knowledge and develop certain skills. Teaching methods can be classified into: practical, visual and verbal methods, taking into account communicational and informational criteria. Practical methods are realized by practical works of students being monitored by the teacher. Visual methods imply the implementation of different models, sketches and graphs, used as adequate teaching means by the teacher. They serve to show or demonstrate certain knowledge and skills, which the student should learn. Verbal methods include the activity of the teacher who presents the teaching materials orally or in a form of a conversation with students, in order to enhance their knowledge.

The methods described above are often blended in the learning process and they present a part of a formal type of education.

The second classification of methods used in learning processes is done according to a type of education which is being realized. There can be recognized: formal, non-formal and informal methods of learning, which result from the same type of education.

2.1. Formal education and learning

Formal education presents a system of education which is organized and run by the state or state institutions, no matter who was the establisher, a state or private parties. Knowledge and skills are obtained according to the plan and program previously defined and which is in a minor degree adapted to an individual. Knowledge is adopted gradually, regarding the age of person. Formal education changes very slow regarding to the society needs, and it is actually its main disadvantage. Formal education institutions are preparatory institutions (kindergartens), primary schools, secondary schools, colleges and universities, which organize, monitor, plan and develop everything under the authority of the appropriate Ministry. From this description of formal education the methods of formal learning are obtained. Formal learning is usually referred to the work in a classroom, where a teacher communicates with students. Students follow the teacher's lecture, get knowledge and deduct the conclusions on the basis of a lesson, which is presented by the teacher. The teacher's lecture has its strict structure and its lesson plan is clearly defined and not accessible to any change. The final goal of teaching process is numerical evaluation of obtained knowledge. At the end of a course the student gets a certificate.

2.2.   Non-formal education and learning

Opposite to the formal education institutions, there are educational institutions that are beyond the state educational system, state institutions and/or competent Ministry. Such educational institutions are considered as non-formal in the narrow meaning. In the wider meaning, all educational institutions, in which the teaching process is realized through teaching forms that are not conventional (formal), can be considered as non-formal. Forms of learning used in this type of education are not strictly defined. Very often, they imply teaching outside the classroom. Non-formal learning can be supported by an institution, which isn't formally an educational institution. The main objective of this type of learning is very often mastering the certain skills. Typical for non-formal education is the existence of voluntary attendance of students at courses and seminars. Course attendance usually does not depend of the age or pre-education level. Certification for the acquired knowledge and skills is mostly not obligatory in this type of learning.

Although this type of learning is different from the formal approach in many aspects, there are some touching points between non-formal and formal types of learning. The non-formal methods of learning can be observed as a complementary form of learning to formal education. The non-formal methods of learning can compensate the educational process in the aspects that are not comprised by the formal learning. Same as the formal types of education, the informal education has structured process of learning. This process within formal types of education is organized with clearly defined objectives, clearly defined time organization of lectures, so it represents an activity with the determined aim and goal. One of the key aspects of learning, within non-formal types of learning methods, is better motivation of students for their work, because it gives, very often, an emotional answer to an increased complacence of the studied area. In order to apply non-formal types of learning into the process of education, it is necessary to provide the appropriate creative approach to teaching materials, means for presenting that materials and means that help a student to participate into this educational process. The chosen approach must be adapted to the specified group and must be flexible enough to adjust to the individual needs. Also the appropriate cultural parameters of the environment, where this non-formal pattern of teaching materials should be realized, should be taken into account, so the students would feel relaxed and safe.

2.2..Informal learning

Informal learning is a type of learning which comes out of every day's life. It is connected with job activities, activities in private life and with those activities that an individual does in its free time. Skills adopted in the family, life surrounding, Getting information from media, such as television, radio and internet can be considered as informal forms of learning. This form of learning has no structure. The learning process in often spontaneous, without clearly defined goals and it doesn't provide a certificate at the end of the learning process. Accidental learning is also considered to be a form of informal learning. It is a form of learning which is not planned at all. It is often unconscious, it's a result of other activities. Those terms "non-formal learning" and "informal learning" are often treated as synonyms. Although they are "on the other side" of formal learning, those terms non-formal and informal learning could be and should be distinguished.

The given forms of education and learning bring with them some adequate methods of learning, which are used to hand over knowledge and skills to students. Those applied methods of learning are not exclusively connected with just one form of learning. Certain methods also can be found in formal, non-formal and informal types of learning.

2.3. Types of learning in lifelong learning process

Informal and non-formal education have a key role in the process of lifelong learning. Lifelong learning is defined as a learning activity which lasts all life long with the goal to enhance knowledge, skills and abilities within personal perspective, civil, society and job perspective. Lifelong learning is mostly connected with complementary learning processes and education, after obtaining formal education (in secondary school, college or university). Described learning processes are connected with courses, seminars and e-learning courses. If those types of learning are realized through formal methods, students feel certain uneasiness and reluctance, because this additional activity is experienced as an obligation and return into the system of formal education.

Very often there is the attitude that non-formal and informal types of learning cannot provide appropriate quality of education which is expected, as when the formal methods of learning are implemented. This attitude should be taken with reserve, having in mind that the formal types of learning are often considered as rigid and students find them even repressive, while non-formal and informal types of learning have positive influence on students' inner motivation, stimulating them to take an active part in the process of learning. Non-formal learning methods are more easily accepted

because they are experienced as interesting activity and fun, not as an obligation. Already given explanations show how important is to introduce new informal methods in learning process.

III. LITERARY ELEMENTS IN incorporated in (FUNCTION) OF INFORMAL TYPES OF LEARNING

Putting the stress on teaching materials, various used styles for writing a lesson can be observed as types of non-formal learning.

Most often the text of a lesson is written in a formal language and then is adapted to the majority of population and is suitable to be followed by the majority of students. Implementation of some literary stories into e-lessons represents the type of non-formal learning, which can be implemented in the process of e-learning. The rigid formal style of presenting teaching materials can be transformed into a more dynamic literary story. The story has to contain elements of a teaching unit that a lesson should provide. Regardless the fact the lessons are presented in a form of a literary story, they should also provide systematic approach to teaching process, so that it is presented in a logical order, and not ad hock. The lesson structure and learning process should be clearly defined. Only lessons that are organized in this way, are submitted to systematic quality check and can control the maintenance of quality. Besides presenting the teaching materials in the form of a literary story, it is also recommended that the author put some questions in that text, which are the most often dilemmas among students in the field they are dealing with. On the basis of teacher's previous experiences, the text should also outline the most frequent mistakes made by students.

This kind of lesson presentation demands an extra creativity of a teacher, as well as some literary skills, which will be used in transfering the knowledge. The style of writing and chosen topics should be in accordance with the age of students, depending on the purpose of material usage. The text should be written in a dynamic rhythm, to keep a continuous attention of reader. Cultural surrounding in which the action take place in order to represent teaching materials, should be familiar to the reader/student.

The use of non-formal writing style should change the approach to the text which is being read. It is expected that a student won't approach this text as a classical lesson from a textbook, which is to be read and learnt, but as a popular literary text. It is expected that this content will enlarge the interest of reader and in that way to contribute to its inner motivation. This approach should change attitude of students toward learning. Since learning is most effective when an individual is ready to learn, actually when person wants to learn something, it is expected that non-formal approach to lessons shown through the literary content will intensify inner motivation to follow it.

A certain number of students can reject this kind of lesson presentations and they may have a negative attitude towards them. Reason for this attitude may lie in the fact that some students have a fear of new ways of learning and are accustomed to the conventional types of learning. Also, some of them are not interested in literary contents so they can be unsatisfied by this learning method.

IV. EXAMPLES OF USING LITERARY METHODS AS A TYPE OF NON-FORMAL LEARNING

Following Figure 1, presents a part of a lesson, in which are explained some features of a software program Adobe Photoshop that uses literary non-formal method of learning. In the figure are defined terms such as Photoshop, Creative Suite and the principle how Photoshop works.

Figure 1. An example of using Literary method as a type of informal learning

V. CONCLUSIONS

Non-formal types of education are becoming more and more important, especially within the Lifelong learning projects, which are assigned, before all, for more mature population. Since the most effective learning is the one initiated by a student himself, who wants to improve his knowledge and skills, those non-formal methods become more important in the education process. Non-formal methods of learning stimulate more inner motivation of an individual to study harder compared with formal methods of learning and this fact gives the strength and importance to non-formal methods of learning itself.

A vast number of methods should be tested and implemented, and then presented with some additional information about the achieved success. Since the creativity plays a crucial part in these non-formal methods, limits of those non-formal method types in education are set off and present a field of the education process, which will be more investigated in the future to achieve relevant results.

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