The Impact of Macedonian Language Curricula on the Development of Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence in Students

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Abstract:
Background*: The idea that gifted and talented children require certain attention during classroom instruction has been recognized many years ago. Essentially the learning needs of all children at an early school age, regardless of their abilities, are one of the greatest challenges for teachers. According to the theory of multiple intelligences, people cannot be gifted in one field, rather they must have predispositions for multiple fields at the same time.*
Materials and Methods*: Gardner shifts the focus of identifying giftedness, from one aspect to a contextual approach that encompasses multiple categories. According to him, every child possesses all eight types of intelligence and after starting school, the child begins to favor one or several of them (Gardner, 1999). For each type of intelligence Gardner envisioned characteristics according to which the gifted person could be identified. Hence, verbal-linguistic intelligence is characterized by: speaking, telling, arguing, reading aloud, retelling, listening to the interlocutor, and writing. The subject of our research are the curricula for the subject Macedonian language from first to third grade and the working methods of the teacher.*
Results*: In this regard, the purpose of our research is to analyze the goals, the teaching methods and activities and the manner of assessment of the students' achievements within the Macedonian language curricula from first to third grade and their impact on the development of verbal-linguistic intelligence in students. The research is dominated by the descriptive method with all of its modalities, that is, analysis of the condition, comparison and generalization were performed*
Conclusion*: On the basis of the results, one can conclude how to effectively act in order to stimulate and develop the potentials of the students in this field.*
Key Word*: verbal-linguistic intelligence, curricula*

I. Introduction

The theory of multiple intelligences was introduced for the first time by Howard Gardner in his book "Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences" in 1983. He believes that intelligence, understood in a traditional way, does not explain the great diversity of human abilities. He considers that our culture defines intelligence too narrowly. In his opinion, intelligence is a complex set of abilities, beyond what is measured with traditional intelligence tests. Gardner defines intelligence as the ability to solve problems and create products that are valued in one or several cultural settings (Gardner, 1983). According to him, the theory of multiple intelligences suggests that people can improve in different types of intelligence.

Originally, Gardner defined seven types of intelligence, as follows:

1. Linguistic intelligence

This intelligence is manifested through the effective use of words, rich vocabulary, expressiveness in speech, effective manipulation of language (oral and written), use of words in solving practical problems, use of language as a means of remembering data.

2. Logical mathematical intelligence

It is manifested through successful use of numbers, good logical reasoning, easy perception of the logical structure and relationships, as well as the causal relationships, ability to detect a pattern, ability to categorize, classify, conclude, generalize, calculate and test hypotheses.

3. Spatial intelligence

It is manifested through accurate observation and navigation in space, ability to shape the space, sense of colors, lines and shapes, ability to manipulate and create mental images in order to solve problems, as well as ability to graphically present ideas. Gardner notes that spatial intelligence is also formed in blind children.

4. Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence
This intelligence is manifested through the use of mental abilities to coordinate body movements, ability to use the whole body when expressing thoughts and feelings, the ability to use the hand in making objects, as well as good coordination and balance.

5. Musical intelligence
It is manifested through an expressed sense of music, ability to distinguish the types of music, musical creativity, and musical expression. This ability includes recognizing and composing musical tones and melodies, sense of rhythm, dynamics and melody.

6. Interpersonal intelligence
It refers to the ability to perceive and distinguish moods, motivation and feelings of other people, ability for non-verbal expression and recognition of non-verbal cues.

7. Intrapersonal intelligence
It refers to the ability to know oneself and the possibilities to act in accordance with that, awareness of one's own moods, ideas, motives, temperament and desires, self-discipline, self-understanding, self-respect (Gardner, 1993).

It seems that the contemporary school requires a diverse approach that will offer a pluralism of ideas and teaching strategies that will lead students to higher levels of understanding and competencies.

Linguistic intelligence

Most people are born with the ability to learn their mother tongue, but not everyone uses it equally well. There are situations with an observable lack of control over words and insufficient development of linguistic intelligence within a certain context. This specifically makes linguistic intelligence important. Through linguistic intelligence we can perceive the possible and current extent of our understanding of what we are being told, both orally and through writing. This is especially important if one considers that the proper use of language allows us to get closer to our goals, therefore the excess or lack of linguistic intelligence affects our ability to manage problems, to implement projects or even maintain healthy relationships with people. (Triaglia, A., Regader, B., Garcia-Alen, J., 2018).

Teachers know the value of respecting individual differences in learning and expression. They implement a wide spectrum of teaching activities that enable students to learn and demonstrate their thinking in a variety of ways. Students can learn in different ways at a different speed and for different reasons. All students have different preferences in regard to all seven types of intelligence, which allows the use of different teaching techniques.

Due to the significant individual differences between students, teachers should use a wide range of teaching techniques. For example, teaching techniques that are typical of linguistic intelligence include: storytelling, brainstorming, recording a voice on a computer, keeping a diary, etc. For this reason, Howard Gardner requests teachers to be open to new ways of thinking and learning. It is recommended that they should learn or convey the message in a new way that they were not used to while they were students or have not learned about this way during their professional development. They should include assessment methods that promote different types of intelligence. In addition, teachers must work in a way that enables them to help students and strengthen their weaker fields of intelligence (Gardner, 1993).

According to the theory, all seven types of intelligence are needed for productive functioning in the society. Within this paper we will focus on linguistic intelligence by analyzing the Macedonian language curricula from first to third grade.

II. Material And Methods
Analysis of the curricula within the first cycle of primary education

If we start from the generally accepted definition of intelligence as an ability to find solutions to new problems in the most efficient way, we come to the conclusion that it can be improved by adopting certain habits and skills. Linguistic intelligence is no exception. This means that we can influence on our performances within language intelligence, we can try to adapt as good as possible to new situations in which the skillful use of words is useful. (Miladinovic, A., 2017).

Within this frameworks, the analysis of the teaching objectives that are represented in the curricula for first, second and third grade, shows us which components of linguistic competence are represented.

The component of effective use of words is represented in the realization of the following goals: to use speech in establishing new contacts and in mutual understanding, to become familiar with the basic speech elements (voice, word and sentence), to be encouraged towards proper articulation of verbal speech, to be

encouraged to discover the meaning of new words, as well as their use, to be able to read and write correctly, to use the correct order of words in the sentence, to recognize the word groups: nouns, adjectives, cardinal and ordinal numbers and verbs, and to distinguish them as types of words.

The enrichment of the vocabulary is enabled through the realization of the following goals: to be introduced to the folk and artistic literature from one's own and other cultures, to enrich the vocabulary with new words, through practical application of the adopted vocabulary to contribute to better cultural expression and development of cultural awareness.

The expressiveness in speech is achieved through the realization of the following goals: to encourage synchronized use of verbal and non-verbal expression, to enable the use of language in the expression of emotions, experiences and thoughts, to become familiar with the world of artistic and folk literature, to learn the needs and values of written speech in order to encourage the need of cultural expression, to become familiar with structured oral and written expression and creativity, to become capable to read and retell, orally and in writing, literary works of the artistic and folk literature that is age-appropriate.

The efficient language manipulation (oral and written) is considered to be achieved through the realization of the following goals: to encourage speech creativity, to introduce the use of language and media aimed at maintenance and use of the national, cultural and linguistic tradition, to encourage the development of graphomotorics by adopting the printed and handwritten Cyrillic letters, to be trained to use the elementary grammatical and orthographic norms in reading and writing, to be trained to use a computer for the purposes of the subject (digitalization in teaching), to be trained to read and write text in printed and handwritten Latin letters, to be trained to retell orally and in writing in literary language, to be trained to participate in conversation through active involvement and independent expression of his/her own experiences, feelings and facts, to be trained to apply ICT for the purpose of the subject.

Through speech creativity, to encourage them to think critically, this refers to an appropriate selection of words for a specific context and appropriate resolution of practical problems.

The component of language use as a means of remembering data is realized through the following goals: to encourage active listening, to perceive differences in the spoken expression in other languages, to refer to the basic requirements for text analysis, to be encouraged to follow content from different media and to convey brief information about them, this refers to language use as a means of remembering data.

These goals are realized through the following fields of the curriculum: listening and speaking, initial reading and writing (Cyrillic and Latin), language (grammar), reading literature and books, expression and creation, media culture.

Although a sharp line cannot be drawn between the individual components, the presence of all components within the goals provided for the realization of Macedonian language instruction from first to third grade is satisfactory, with the exception of the component of using words in solving practical problems.

Teaching methods and activities

Of the activities that are being applied in the first grade focused on the development of linguistic intelligence, we can point out the following: activities for self-expression where students talk about their feelings and desires and talk about the feelings and desires of others, activities in which the student puts himself/herself in someone else's role according to his/her own directed choice, speech games, description of objects and phenomena from the immediate environment, telling, retelling of a text, addition, speech creativity on a given topic, research.

The most important activities in second grade include the following: composing sentences according to a series of images, exercises for reading words and texts from different sources, exercises and game activities for perceiving and composing interrogative and exclamatory sentences in oral and written form according to the manner of expression and according to the punctuation marks, retelling of a read text in one's own words, exercises for introducing silent reading and understanding of the read text, visits of theatrical and puppet shows and conversation about them.

In the third grade, aimed at developing linguistic intelligence, the following activities are applied: exercises for recognizing and distinguishing fables, fairy tales, short stories and drama texts, exercises for recognizing and distinguishing the main from the supporting characters, exercises for recitation song, exercises for reporting according to a given chronological plan, exercises for written description of an object, a creature, a character, exercises for free composition of essays according to an image, given words, after beginning was given, and by changing the end, exercises for writing greetings, invitations and postcards, reading and playing roles according to a drama text, narration of impressions from a theater play that the person attended, exercises for using the information from the press, the internet, and a discussion about their contents.

In regard to the methods and techniques of work, in the period from first to third grade, all interactive, current and modern methods and techniques are applied, with an emphasis on the method of play, the method of

problem solving and the method of research, as the most appropriate for the specifics of learning in students of this age.

If we accept Gardner's view that each student has a unique set of seven intelligences and that some types of intelligence are more developed than others in each student, the conclusion is clear, that a particular teaching technique will work successfully for only one specific group of students. That is why it is good for the teacher to dispose of a wide range of teaching techniques that he/she will change during the course of the year and thus will ensure that at least temporarily each student will work according to the technique that best suits his/her abilities.

In this context, Armstrong (Armstrong, 1994) presents 35 teaching techniques, 5 for each of the intelligences that are general enough to be applied at any educational level with an appropriate modification. Their implementation is simple because it does not require any specific technical equipment of the school. The following 5 techniques that emphasize language intelligence are more acceptable to a wider range of participants. These include: storytelling, brainstorming, audio recording, writing diaries, publications. We believe that there is an opportunity for some of them to adjust to the capacities of students from an early age in order to enable each student to learn in a way that suits him/her best.

Manner of assessment of students' achievements
The changes in the teaching practice also require a change in the way the process and the learning outcomes are evaluated. The philosophy of assessment based on multiple intelligences during assessment puts much more emphasis on the students' understanding of the teaching material.
Within the period from first to third grade in the Macedonian language instruction, the following types of assessment are realized:
- Diagnostic check and assessment
  At the beginning of the school year, the teacher performs diagnostic check and assessment in order to recognize the situation as it is, aimed at quality planning and implementation of future activities. Pre-knowledge in the broadest sense of the word is discerned, as well as the socializing aspects of development, emotional development and physical development.
- Formative assessment
  In regard to the formative assessment, it is recommended to prepare and maintain a portfolio of students, which includes: Collection of indicators (children's works, creations, statements) for each student separately; Current (formative) pre-prepared evaluation lists for each student, which are being prepared after each of the student's specific activities, which is specific (positive or negative) or case studies in which the teacher notes the factual situation; Instruments that refer to each field of the curriculum individually. In these instruments, the teacher enters information about the student's achievements in relation to all developmental aspects that are encouraged by the Macedonian language curriculum (cognitive-intellectual, socio-emotional, social and psychomotor aspect).
- Micro-summative assessment
  At the end of the second quarter, based on the knowledge of the formative assessment, the micro-summative assessment is realized.
- Summative assessment
  Based on the overall data obtained from the monitoring and formative assessment, the teacher ascertains (describes) the developmental status of each student separately within each field of the curriculum.
  This combination of different types of assessment allows students to explain their knowledge in their own way.

In this way, students are given an opportunity to value and nurture individual differences, strong progress in thinking, problem solving and memory, development of self-confidence and a positive self-image, preparation for life, work and lifelong learning, as well as to perceive differences between students considering the ways of learning.
With this way of evaluation, teachers create work in a positive teaching environment and are oriented towards the needs and the opportunities of the students.

III.   Conclusions and recommendations

What is intelligence? How to measure it? Who is intelligent? One who perfectly reproduces knowledge or one who is skilled in transcribing and is socially adaptable. More than a hundred years after the emergence of the first intelligence tests, Howard Gardner considers that our culture defines intelligence too narrowly. He also believes that people possess a complex set of abilities beyond what is measured by the traditional intelligence quotient (Triaglia, A., Regader, B., Garcia-Alen, J., 2018).

The organization of teaching (instruction) according to Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, individualizes teaching and allows each student to be successful.

Enabling students to independently perceive their possibilities within linguistic intelligence, organization of teaching with different activities and contents, thematic planning, arrangement of the classroom that will sensitize all senses, all of these enable support of linguistic intelligence.

Despite the fact that Macedonian language curricula from first to third grade offer a serious basis for the development of linguistic intelligence within the teaching process, methods and techniques that encourage its development can be implemented.

Teachers can help their students improve and enhance their linguistic intelligence through:

- Writing i.e. keeping a diary. Students can be encouraged to write about topics they are interested in. In this way they will not be bored, and they can significantly contribute to improving their verbal skills and expressing their experiences and feelings.
- Learning few new words each week.
- Creating a magazine or a website dedicated to something that interests them.
- Writing letters to family, friends.
- Playing word games such as crossword puzzles and the like.
- Reading books, magazines, newspapers and even jokes.

Moreover, students should learn to appreciate the value of a good dialogue, to make good choices of what they read, to become familiar with the lyrical forms of the language. Namely, the contact with the lyrical forms of expression can make the students see the language as a creative game.

Practice shows that creative teachers always find ways to increase the quality of teaching.

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