# The Perception of Students and Teachers on the Efficiency of Interactive Teaching Strategies of Teaching/Learning/Evaluation in the Class. Comparative Study

## Tudor Loredana Sofia

*Abstract: The purpose of this study is to achieve a comparative analysis between the perception of educators and students (that is the future educators) in the Educational Sciences Faculty, primary and pre-school specialization over the efficiency of interactive teaching strategies, as a modern methodological orientation in the teaching technology. As research method we employ the questionnaire-based inquiry, having as research tools two questionnaires built on and validated according to specific methodological requirements. The panel of subjects is made up of 114 teachers in Arges County, as well as 86 students in the Educational Sciences Faculty*

*Key words: strategy, teaching strategy, interactive strategy, efficiency of teaching strategy .*

**INTRODUCTION**

The development of modern technologies opens new dimensions to the achievement of the educational activity – combining traditional strategies with interactive strategies. The traditional strategies are revigorated by the new techniques, developing them according to the new requirements.

Teaching strategy implies a theoretical approach in solving a training situation, to the extend that it creatively uses the pedagogical conception that is socially dominant at a given time and especially the educator's conception. It also implies a practical approach when taking the concrete option of efficiently combining methods, means and types of organizing the activity according to criteria (complementarity, compensation and mutual support), on one hand and traditional criteria – modern formal or nonformal, theoretical, practical, mododisciplinary, inter/transdisciplinary etc -  on the other hand.

The efficiency of the teaching activity resides as well in how the teacher succeeds in structuring and combining the teaching strategies within the circumstances of his work – human, material, time ones etc. -, on the extend to which he elaborates alternative solutions to the possibilities and optimal ways of combining the teaching strategies, based on the analysis of strengths and weaknesses of these possibilities. Building lessons on a solid, research-based foundation of effective strategies, adding appropriate technologies, and consistently applying those strategies should help ensure high-quality instruction that has the potential of maximizing student achievement.

The study will help us identify data regarding the way educators employ interactive teaching strategies in achieving the instructive activities in different subjects in the compulsory curricula and what are the effects on the cognitive and affective-motivational development of young students. Moreover, we will draw conclusions on the effects of using these strategies on the cognitive and affective-motivational development of Faculty students after achieving the teaching activities based on cooperation, in the pedagogical disciplines that they have completed in the first and second years of study.

**The purpose of the psycho-pedagogical investigation** we perform is to achieve a comparative analysis between the educators' and the students' perception from the Primary and Pre-School specialization on the efficiency of interactive teaching strategies, as a modern methodological orientation in the technology of teaching. To this purpose, we have established the following **objectives of the investigation**: identification of opinions from teachers in the pre-graduate system (school-teachers, educators) on the efficience of employing interactive teaching strategies in the cognitive and afective-emotional development of children; identification of first and second year students in the Educational Sciences Faculty on the role and efficiency of employing such strategies.

**The panel of subjects** is made up of 114 teachers in Arges County (93 women and 21 men, 72 from the urban residential environment and 42 from the rural one, having

different teaching experience – 34 the first teaching degree, 61 with the second teaching degree, 19 of them with the confirming examination), as well as 86 students in the Educational Sciences Faculty (34 first year students and 52 second year students).

**The Methodology of the Investigation**

We use the questionnaire-based inquiry for teachers and students as a research method, having as research tools two questionnaires built up and validated according to specific methodological requirements. The questionnaires have each of them three theoretical dimensions: the first pursues the educators' and students' defining of the class activity method (therefore, of the teaching strategy); the second aims at characterising how these strategies are employed in current, concrete activity and the third dimension views to identify the effects the employment of these strategies have on the cognitive and motivational-affective development of the students.

**Results**. For the first dimension of the questionnaire, that pursues the educators' and students' defining of the class activity method (therefore, of the teaching strategy), data may be analysed from two points of view.

The educators' perspective:

The teachers in the panel of subjects consider the teaching strategy being „the students' method of working together with their teachers, in order to obtain the expected results", which point of view greatly identifies with the pedagogical literature, but does not draw attention, because this category of subjects has a well fundamented pedagogical theoretical basis.

On the item „How would you characterise the activity you are performing (to what paradigm/educational theory does your teaching activity subscribe to?)" teachers respond they perform an action based activity – 28%, a communication based activity– 27 %, an activity based on achieving performance – 20 %, based on context, educational circumstances – 18 %, and based on information processing – 7 %.

The students' perspective:

Students assert the teaching strategy in various, more or less restrictive characterising elements, that is as „a method of class working" or „the sum of teaching means and methods", „the way teacher leads the teaching activity", „the way he carries on the class activity" etc.

On the item „How would you consider the teaching activity should be performed to achieve efficiency (to what paradigm/educational theory does your teaching activity subscribe to?)", students respond: communication based activity – 31 %, action based activity – 22%, activity based on context, educational circumstances - 21 %, an activity based on achieving performance – 14 %, based on information processing – 12 %.

Being asked „To what extend do you cosider as possible and useful using modern teaching strategies in the concrete teaching activity?", 44% of the educators reply it being possible and 88% of them consider it as a useful approach. To the same item, students assert that using modern teaching strategies in 73% possible and 95% useful.

For the second dimension of the questionnaire, aiming to characterise the way these strategies are employed in current activity, data may be analysed as well from the two perspectives.

Teachers' perspective:

Being asked to set a hierarchy of the importance granted to factors considered as meaningful in selecting interactive teaching strategies, on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 – the most important, 10 – the less important), teachers answer they choose such strategies according to: the objectives of the study matter – 18 %, available teaching means and materials– 15 %, the nature and specificity of the teaching contents – 14 %, the size of the students' group/class – 9 %, students' interests, preferences, abilities –      9 %, the level

of class homogeneity – 8 %, students' learning capability – 8 %, available school time – 8 %, the teacher's pedagogical concept – 6 %, the nature of the evaluation – 5 %.

When required to establish, according to importance granted and on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 – the most important, 10 – the less important), a hierarchy of interactive teaching strategies, teachers assess the folllowing characteristics: they ensure learning efficiency – 12 %, socialise students and favour getting peers to know each other in the classroom – 12 %, increase students' interest towards learning – 12 %, develop creative, lateral thinking and critical judgement – 11 %, they develop a spirit of class competence and cooperation – 11 %, provide a learning positive environment – 9 %, they develop students' responsibility – 9 %, eliminate teaching routine – 8 %, favourise teaching creativity, opening to novelty – 8 %, ensure a preparation for life – 8 %.

Another item of the questionnaire requires that teachers state the obstacles in using class interactive strategies. They assess on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 – the most important, 10 – the less important) that interactive strategies are hard to adjust to concrete class activity, according to the following factors: inadequate to teaching some matters from different curricula – 18 %, alteration of the teaching course comparing to the designed one– 15 %, because they frustrate more timid students – 14 %, difficulties in achieving the objectives of the syllabus – 9 %, difficulties in the adjustment to students' characteristics – 9 %, difficulties in adjusting teaching means – 8 %, difficulties in the evaluation – 8 %, they do not favour the inter- and transdisciplinary correlations - 8 %, difficulties in the structuring and the accesibility of the teaching contents – 6 %, they do not stimulate and motivate all categories of students – 5 %.

The students' perspective:

Being asked to set a hierarchy of the importance granted to factors considered as meaningful in selecting interactive teaching strategies, on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 – the most important, 10 – the less important), students answer they choose such strategies according to: the size of the students' group/class – 22 %, the objectives of the study matter – 20 %, the teacher's pedagogical concept – 12 %, students' interests, preferences, abilities –     11 %, available teaching means and materials– 10 %, the nature and specificity of the teaching contents – 8 %, the nature of the evaluation – 6 %, available school time – 6 %, students' learning capability – 3 %, the level of class homogeneity – 2 %.

When required to establish, according to importance granted and on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 – the most important, 10 – the less important), a hierarchy of interactive teaching strategies, students assess the folllowing characteristics: they ensure learning efficiency – 16%, eliminate teaching routine – 16 %, provide a learning positive environment – 14 %, favourise teaching creativity, opening to novelty – 10 %, increase students' interest towards learning – 9 %, socialise students and favour getting peers to know each other in the classroom – 8%, they develop a spirit of class competence and cooperation – 8 %, develop creative, lateral thinking and critical judgement – 7 %, they develop students' responsibility – 6 %, ensure a preparation for life – 6 %.

Another item of the questionnaire requires that students state the obstacles in using class interactive strategies. They assess on a scale from 1 to 10 (1 – the most important, 10 – the less important) that interactive strategies are hard to adjust to concrete class activity, according to the following factors: because they frustrate more timid students – 16 %, difficulties in the evaluation – 16 %,  difficulties in the adjustment to students' characteristics – 14 %, inadequate to teaching some matters from different curricula – 8 %, alteration of the teaching course comparing to the designed one– 6 %, difficulties in achieving the objectives of the syllabus – 8 %, difficulties in adjusting teaching means – 8 %, they do not favour the inter- and transdisciplinary correlations - 7 %, difficulties in the structuring and the accesibility of the teaching contents – 8 %, they do not stimulate and motivate all categories of students – 10 %.

On the last dimension of the questionnaire, aiming to identify the effects of employing these strategie son the cognitive and motivational – affective development of the students, teachers assess that, using modern interactive strategies, they might increase the students' motivation and interest towards learning: to a large extent (32 %), to a large enough extent (28 %), to a less in the opinion of 26 % of the subjects, to a very small extent (14 %).

To the same item, students assess that, using modern interactive strategies, they might increase the students' motivation and interest towards learning: to a large extent (52 %), to a large enough extent (32 %), to a very small extent (16 %).

Being asked „To what measure do you consider that, employing modern interactive strategies the students' cognitive capacities could enrich?", teachers respond that to a large extent (14 %), to a large enough extent (18 %), average extent (28 %), less extent (20 %) and to a very small extent (20 %).

To the same item, students respond that to a large extent (54 %), average extent (28 %), less extent (10 %) and to a very small extent (8 %).

Both teachers and students assess that a growth in the students' involvement and shown interest towards teaching activity is linked to the employed teaching strategies. Therefore, teachers, the first category of subjects, affirm that the growth in the students' involvement and shown interest towards learning is connected to the following factors: the combination of individual activity with learning through cooperation and competition – 23 % %, use of modern means and techniques – 22 %, a modern, interactive manner of work, with group differentiated tasks – 20 %, use of student differentiated tasks – 12 %, stimulation of learning through experience and practise – 9 %, inducement of creativity and independence in the aork with the students – 5 %, rigurous leading of students' activity– 3 %, employment of common tasks, the same for the entire class – 2 %, a traditional manner of working, with traditional teaching methods and means – 2 %, an ordered, well structured and organised manner of working, coordinated by the teacher – 2 %.

Students consider these factors: %, use of modern means and techniques – 15 %, well structured and organised manner of working, coordinated by the teacher – 14 %, a modern, interactive manner of work, with group differentiated tasks – 13 %, rigurous leading of students' activity– 13 %, inducement of creativity and independence in the aork with the students – 12 %, the combination of individual activity with learning through cooperation and competition – 10 %, use of student differentiated tasks – 10 %, stimulation of learning through experience and practise – 9 %, employment of common tasks, the same for the entire class – 2 %, a traditional manner of working, with traditional teaching methods and means – 2 %.

**CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE WORK**

By comparatively analysing the answers in the two categories of investigated subjects, the importance of the interactive teaching strategies in obtaining teaching efficiency comes into light. When analysing every item, we notice there aren't significant variations in what concerns the answers, still, some of them may be highlighted. Thus, teachers appreciate in making a teaching strategy efficient not only the theoretical elements, but the concrete, practical actions as well (the teaching objectives, means and materials, the teaching contents), whereas students stress on the theoretical ones (class characteristics, school schedule, educational concept).

At the same time, in evaluating obstacles that may occur in predominantly using these strategies, teachers prove external elements (characteristics of the teaching objectives, specificity of teaching projection), while students stress on the impact of internal elements (students' characteristics).

Regarding the importance conferred to teaching strategies in students' cognitive, affective-emotional development, the views are similar, all subjects stating positively they role, but from different angles. Thus, teachers appreciate that teaching efficiency is determined by a combination of individual activities with teaching by cooperation and

competition, by an interactive, modern manner of working, in groups of activities and differentiated working tasks, whereas students assess an ordered, well structured and organized manner of working, coordinated by the teacher, as well as employing modern means and techniques.

The trends of updating and improving the teaching strategies subscribe to increasing the interactive-creative feature of the teaching process, to applying methods of a pronounced forming character, developing active-creative teaching, to valueing new training technologies (e-learning) or some technologies linked to developing multiple intel (expert system, drill and practice strategies etc). Within the multitude of training methods, procedures and techniques permanently developing, the issue that emerges is of an efficient, contextual combination of individual strategies with the cooperational, group learning and interdependent work strategies.

**REFERENCES**

[1] Cerghit, I."Teaching Strategy – a Means of Optimally Combining Teaching Methods and Means", in: Pedagogy Lecture (coord. I. Cerghit, L. Vlăsceanu, TUB, 1988).

[2] Cerghit, I."Alternative and Complementary Training Systems. Structures, Styles and Strategies", Bucharest, Aramis Publishing House, 2002

[3] Cerghit, I.; Neacşu, I.; Negreț-Dobridor, I.; Pânişoară, I.O. "Pedagogical Lectures", Iaşi, Polirom Publishing House, 2001

[4] Oprea, C. L. "Interactive Teaching Strategies", Bucharest, EDP Publishing House, 2007

[5] Păun, E.; Potolea, D. (coord.). "Pedagogy. Theoretical Fundaments and Applicative Steps", Iaşi, Polirom Publishing House, 2002

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Assistant Lecturer TUDOR SOFIA LOREDANA, PhD Student, Faculty of Educational Sciences, University of Piteşti, Phone 0040745662196, e-mail: tudor_lori@yahoo.com

**Докладът е рецензиран.**