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(Review paper)

AN ACTIVE WITH CRITICAL THINKING STUDENT AND INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS - A NECESSITY IN MODERN HISTORY TEACHING

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Abstract: The paper analyses the need for a change in the teaching syllabus for the subject of history in aspect of introducing the contents that will be taught through external school activities. These contents should encourage teacher’s creativity and create a critical and historical thoughts in student’s mind as is the aim of modern history teaching.

Key words: history, homeland, active learning

The shared belief in the history circles for the potential of the history as a subject worldwide is that learning history is not just a window toward our past, but it is fun and applicable in our everyday life.

The introduction of new content gives the teacher greater creativity in the process of teaching, and it strengthens the critical thinking skills of the student who thinks outside the box during the learning process and becomes more creative. Modern history teaching is based on the idea of an active student who is able to construct his own knowledge that will serve him later in life. Therefore, the imperative in modern history teaching is to develop the historical thought among students so that they learn how to value different evidence and sources, and to interpret the historic data correctly, to construct hard historic arguments. In order to realize this type of a concept, we need to change the methods and the way of work in the process of history teaching.

One of the possibilities for changing the concept program in teaching is by the external school activities which enables a larger and variant place for research topics, such as research

and study on events and people through oral history by witnesses and participants in those events, then topics from homeland history, analysis in the museums and on different archaeological artefacts. The social contacts made during the data gathering of oral history about people or events that made history help the student develop his/her critical thinking skills. This means that an active student who learns from personal experience and through personal efforts is simultaneously gaining skills for learning through social communication; consequently, the student is a subject in the educational process and not an object, and the student suggests the content, participates in the creation of his educational needs. This type of teaching contains elements of entertainment.

In the school system in the developed countries, the above-mentioned teaching content in the history subject is already being applied and it isn't considered as a modern model, but as a real need.

The contemporary teaching of history that is organized outside the classroom and the school, a practical terrain teaching is based on interdisciplinary and multifunctionality with an approach toward team work, which enables to learn about the homeland history. It is a large support to the process of keeping the natural and cultural inheritance as well as the values of the civilizational aims.

The terrain style of learning history is welcomed in the attempts of changing the monotonous and classic style of teaching. The advantage of this type of teaching is the fact that historic contents contain elements that are abstract for the students. Some of the content that is studied is the social life in the past which is significantly different compared to present time and it is essential to taught the students of these past circumstances. Stories about the past and historic monuments are present in galleries, archives, museums or in open places. These elements can be also shown virtually with the help of modern technology, but we have to keep in mind that technology cannot replace the feeling, the smell and the touch through which the student can be in contact with the nature and the cultural inheritance.

The teaching done outside the classroom certainly advances the teaching process; it stimulates the creativity of both teachers and students, and it realizes the well-known motto: "Go, see" learn". This means that gaining quality knowledge is done by an observation and contact with the primary sources of history, which helps the development of student's critical thinking. Every student who is able to critically analyse the past, will be able to critically analyse the present.

The introduction of new content for visiting cultural monuments from national history elevates the student's feeling of love toward the homeland, and it endorses the saying "Learn about your homeland so that you love it more".

The gathering of information, testimonies, songs, legend and their interpretation encourages the research spirit among student to critically analyse and present the information and also to correlate it to the general information offered in the curriculum. An additional inspiration for the student's creativity is the real remains from the past. Having a real connection to these remains creates more realistic view about their value and importance.

In the curriculum for elementary education in our country, there is an elective subject "Research on the home land" that aims to enable the student to study the land's characteristics from different aspects, such as: cultural and historical inheritance, natural treasure and rarity, features of agriculture, features and possibilities of tourism, the places and objects for recreation and vacation, authentic cultural events, the development of the collaboration with the local community and the local media. The historical and cultural inheritance is presented only through one of the topics which isn't enough for the student to learn the homeland history and to form a complete view about the values of historic inheritance for a place in different time periods, and to also create his own opinion on history.

The changes in the history teaching curriculum, where the topics are structured chronologically with general history, history of the Balkan and the national history, should be done by adding lessons about the history of the homeland and by that to make the curriculum more appealing for the students.

Learning about homeland history will enable the students to experience the multiethnicity and the coexistence from the past through an active participation.

In accordance to the modern criteria for a complete education, it is unimaginable that a pupil or a history student knows more about nearby and distant countries than about the towns in the student's own country, his native town where he lives and grows as a person. These types of content should be added to the subject of history, and it will help the student to grow into a complete intellectual individual.

This gives us the right as teachers not to leave behind homeland history as an elective subject, because the student may not recognize the need for studying it and to consequently become intellectually handicapped and not receive a complete education.

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