

Abstract

The thesis deals with the utilization of elements of creative drama (also known as drama education) in teaching English to younger school-age children. The aim is to determine whether the methods and techniques of drama education used will help children overcome shyness in speaking and lead to easier memorization of the curriculum, and especially to more frequent spontaneous verbal expression by the students.

I was interested in how pupils most commonly learn English language and whether any teacher uses elements of drama education. The survey revealed that the most common teaching method is Wattsenglish - watching a short video followed by workbook exercises. Lecturers stated that the students communicate only minimally during their lessons. None of the surveyed teachers utilize drama education.

The theoretical part of the thesis focuses on the concept of drama education, its content, principles, specific objectives and the role of the teacher. It briefly describes methods and techniques of creative drama, especially those suitable for teaching a foreign language. It also considers limitations for use in teaching English language in regular classrooms. For completeness in the theoretical part, I also present various methods of teaching foreign languages.

In the practical part I will attempt to propose an alternative to conventional teaching in the form of detailed lesson plans that incorporate elements of drama education. My goal is to immerse students in a fictional world, in a plot where they will feel the need to act and speak (in English). The practical part presents a methodological design of the lessons for working with first-grade elementary school students. I planned the lessons based on specific material that the class was supposed to cover during the research period. The topics include Monsters (parts of the body), Let's eat (food), and On Safari (animals). Several methods and techniques of drama education were used and tested in these topics, which could provide an answer to the research questions.

Keywords

English language, communication, drama education/creative drama, drama based activities, role-playing, 1st grade, 2nd grade.