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Integrating teaching contents of teaching subjects My environment and English language for III grade of the nine-year primary education

Teachers who achieve qualitative teaching and learning should:

- *Always have clear and strongly focused learning goals;*
- *Use various teaching styles aiming to enable the usage of different learning styles;*
- *Motivate children to think, solve problems and be independent;*
- *Give a teaching frame which enables the child to understand the surrounding world.*

Research has been done in various countries in order to discover “the truth” about the best ways of learning effectively and many agree that there are some factors and conditions necessary if we want to help children to learn?

Most probably, we are more trying to define what is qualitative in teaching and learning than to teach qualitatively, thus complicating something basically very simple.

Integrating teaching contents of respective subjects can be one effective way for pupils to learn the teaching contents. This paper shows a way of integrating teaching contents of teaching subjects My environment and English language for III grade of the nine-year primary education. ICT tools are used while realizing the teaching contents so that children can successfully learn them, and in order to enable them to learn notions and develop ICT skills at an early age.

Key words: integration, teaching contents, environment, English language, ICT.

Introduction

During the last quarter of the 20th century all around the world people work on integrating teaching contents of different subjects (cross-curricular approach), integrating subjects, as well as connecting foreign language teaching with other teaching subjects. Joint teaching does not necessarily have to be related to the theme but also to bigger or smaller teaching units or wider teaching themes. Our attention in this paper is directed towards connecting teaching contents of ecological education and English as a foreign language (EFL), and advantages and disadvantages of such an approach to teaching.

Teaching EFL in this case refers more to the early learning of English and less to later learning. It is understood that any foreign language teaching should be adapted to language, cognitive, mental and emotional development of children.

Goal

Since we noticed a relatively large representation of environmental issues in the English language textbooks that are or were in use in the near past in primary and secondary schools on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia, S. Kirova, S. Stavreva-Veselinovska, (2004), we decided to try to connect some of the contents of ecological education and EFL teaching. In our previous scientific-research work we tried to practise this several times at the Pedagogical Faculty in Štip. We taught a number of hours where we integrated teaching contents of English language and environmental education. Since we had a deeper insight into the positive aspects of cross-curricular approach to these subjects and after our research, we participated in some scientific gatherings with papers associated with this issue, S. Kirova, S. Stavreva-Veselinovska, 2005.

“Ecologies” of learning

In the biological world with the field of ecology deals with the research of mutual relations of organisms, and the environment in which they live. Ecology is a holistic science, and one of its fundamental principles is mutual connectedness in complexity. No organism or environmental factor can be isolated and treated as if it exists outside ecological systems, because what happens to that organism affects the eco-system and vice versa. Relations in one ecology were never fixed, but are more self-organized and fluid, moving in response to constantly changing environmental factors. Healthy eco-system is one in which balance is maintained in spite of these changes. Maximum adaptability and flexibility is the key to the survival and the ability to develop. In the educational context the situation is similar: there is free cooperation between the participants in the educational process that also make up a fluid network, resulting in learning which follows the ecological model of nature.

For educators there are two important things, to know the "subject-object" that he/she educates and to know what the anticipated goal of education is. The first requirement comes from the limited sovereignty of the entity's education. The second requirement is imposed on educators for methodical-didactic reasons, in order to determine the directions of action, strategy, the choice of means and the creation of standards for quantification of the educational process. We must bear in mind that education is a productive activity, not a service to a third party. By producing and influencing the formation of a personality, an educator does not behave as a servant having ready-made recipes, but as a creator. He/she creates ambient space and influences the formation of psychophysical features of a young person. During the process of creating ambient space (not meaning satisfying optimal material conditions but preparing for work with those to be educated and their preparation for work during the lesson or in the field), the educator does not produce only the pupil but himself/herself as well. On the one hand, the educator widens the field of students' sovereignty, and on the other hand produces his/her own experiences, experiences and creatures, attempts and practical-theoretical knowledge. What teachers would need to facilitate the production process are two circumstances. First, *the natural development* of the child to an adolescent and a mature man, not dependent on teachers, provides a part of prerequisites for the adoption of increasingly complex knowledge, habits and abilities. Hence, the process of education is

per se ecological activity. (Milenko S. Stojnic, 2009.)

Fast development of the Internet with its network of users who cooperate, as well as a number of tools to facilitate this cooperation provide educators with new opportunities to introduce those who learn into such an "ecology" of learning and to bring them in contact with other people who speak English in order to develop their communicative competence through authentic interaction.

What is ecological education?

If we start from the root of the word, ecological education could be generally defined as environmental, and even home education, formation of a personality in the direction of a good host. Our educated ecologist could be interpreted as host, local person, environmentalist, righteous resident of the ecosystem; the one who takes care of the house in the long run; economically takes care of the house and environment, has thorough knowledge of the environment and acts towards it in a lawful way, a resident of the local environment and ecosystem. He/she uses the scientific achievements of original (biological) ecology and technology in proportion with his/her power of acting, and the expanded knowledge in accordance with their interests. As early as in the period of preschool education children had a saying: "get to know your homeland so that you love it more". Staying on the foundation of ecological education, we can here notice two essential elements that determine it. On one side there is the pupil as the measure of everything, and on the other side is the environment as the area of his/her interest. (Milenko S. Stojnic, 2009).

United Nations list six aims of ecological education (UNESCO-UNEP 1976):

1. Awareness of ecological problems
2. Basic understanding of the environment and its problems, and the role of man in the environment.
3. Concern about ecological problems.
4. Skills for solving ecological problems
5. Ability to assess the proposed solutions of ecological problems
6. Taking part in solving ecological problems

Educational objectives determine the educational tasks. Analogue to this, different objectives dictate different tasks. From the pedagogical point of view, the goals and tasks have only one common denominator that was formulated by the French psychologist Giles Pajo. The ultimate goal is not "lessons", because they are by their nature partial and have little sense on their own. The ultimate meaning of educational contents is education, i.e. educated or formed person. Such a person is expected to continue being active as a self-conscious ecological being. In this context definite (concrete) educational goals of ecological education are formulated:

1. Acquisition and expansion of knowledge about natural and social phenomena, issues, rules and processes.
2. Acquisition and expansion of knowledge about the achievements of ecology and related sciences.
3. Acquisition and expansion of knowledge about dialectical connection between the acquired knowledge and survival of human kind.

4. Encouraging (exercising, shaping willpower) pupils to incorporate new knowledge into existing beliefs and transform habits in the direction of practical action in accordance with sustainable development.

5. The creation of preconditions (customizing) for self-education and scientific attitude towards the environment. (Milenko S. Stojnic, 2009)

“Ecological education is the learning process that increases the knowledge of people and their awareness of the environment and related challenges, developing the necessary skills and expertise to answer the challenges, nurse attitudes, motivation and commitment to make informed decisions, and take responsible actions” (UNESCO, Declaration of Tbilisi, 1978).

Ecological education is a lifelong process that deals with inter-relational components of the natural world and the one created by man, leading to responsible environmental management.

Advantages of shared processing of teaching contents

Shared processing of teaching contents has advantages both for the teaching of English language, and for the teaching of environmental education.

Positive effects in English language teaching are the following:

- It facilitates learning the meanings of new words

If some content is previously processed in mother tongue, then one of the most important goals of studying the new words in the English language is achieved, i.e. in the study of the meaning of these words. Learning some concepts in a class of environmental education, such as biotope, biocenosis, eco-system, etc. On the part of students will facilitate their understanding of these concepts in English

- Extends the duration of the students' concentration in class

Experiences from practice show that, when content is being re-processed, as in our case with environmental education and English language, facilitate the prolongation of concentration. Prolonged concentration of those who learn also means easier adoption of new concepts in both native and foreign language. If there is no concentration, activities that are taking place during lessons will be boring, uninteresting, and in the end everything will be useless.

- Reduces the tension and fear of foreign languages

As we previously mentioned, treatment of known content not only extends concentration, but significantly reduces the tension and fear of foreign languages. Garner and Macintyre define this fear as "fear" that we feel when we are asked to use words in English that we do not know well (cited in Mihaljević Djigunović 2002). This fear is manifested as a feeling of discomfort, tension and uncertainty that overwhelm us when we need to talk, read or write in English, or when we need to understand someone else who speaks English.

Positive effects in ecological education are:

- Increases the motivation of students

Connecting the newly acquired knowledge in practice and its application in everyday life has motivational character. When a child notices that using a newly acquired concept makes it easier to learn another subject, then the child will be more stimulated to learn. Motivation will be further emphasized when the child realizes that these concepts are not needed only by him, but also by other people who use the language different from his mother tongue.

- Facilitates access to foreign literature and various media aiming to extend knowledge. With the satellite television and the Internet, today's students need to know foreign languages even more than in the past so that they could use the abundance of professional literature that is not translated into their native language. For ecological education as a natural science, it is of special importance to timely exchange new information, which is much easier if you know a foreign language, especially English.

- Improves the image of yourself.

When students are good at one subject because of their previous knowledge of the content from another subject (in our case, environmental education and English language interaction), such students will get a better picture of themselves and their abilities as students.

A possibility is created for processing some contents of environmental education in English prior to their processing in mother tongue. Susan Halliwell (1992) explains this possibility for teaching some content of environmental education in English before it is taught in mother tongue. The topics in question are very visual and seek great activity.

Example of a practical lesson:

Teaching subject - Ecological education

Teaching unit: "Circulation of water in nature"

Teaching subject - English language teaching unit: "*Circulation of water in nature*"

Приказна за малиот дожд The Story Of The Little Rain Drop



Еден пролетен
ден малата
капка дожд
седеше на
сонцето за да
се исуши.
Нејзиното
име беше
Кејт. Набрзо
Кејт се најде
на земјата и
започна да
испарува во
воздухот.



One spring day a
little
rain drop was
sitting in
the sun to dry off.
Her name was
Kate. As
soon as Kate
started to
lay down on the
ground
she started to
evaporate
into the the air.

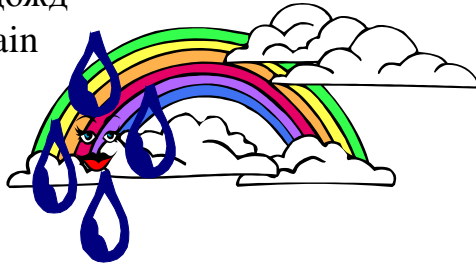
Капката дожд која сретна пријател The Rain Drop That Met A Friend

Then Kate notices that
she was a thin piece of
air up in the sky. As
she was flying she saw
a friend name Thunder.
He was her best friend.
She asked him where
were they going. He
told her if a cloud
come you have to go.
So I waved good bye
and jumped down.



Тогаш Кејт забележа
дека таа е тенко делче
на воздухот високо во
небото. Како што
леташе таа го
пресретна пријателот
наречен гром. Тој
беше нејзиниот
најдобар пријател. Таа
го запраша каде одат ?
Тој и одговори
доколку дојде облак ти
ќе мораш да одиш.
Затоа таа замавна за
збогум и скокна доле.

Паѓајки како дожд
Falling As Rain



Then she started to become rain. The rain was very clear and beautiful like a rainbow inside it. Kate was beginning to change into something strange. Kate was starting to change into water.

Тогаш таа стана дожд. Дождот беше многу јасен и убав како внатрешноста на виножитото. Кејт започна да се менува во нешто чудно. Кејт започна да се менува во вода.

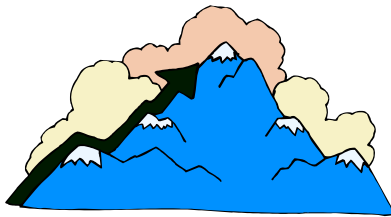
Слетување во реката Land in River



Кејт падна и слета во реката. Таа пловеше во реката уживајќи во убавиот ден.

Kate fell and landed in the river. She was floating in the river enjoying the beautiful day.

Повторно испарување Evaporate Again



Then she started to evaporate. When she reached the top of the clouds it got cold and condensed into a cloud. But it was so cold in the clouds that Kate turned to snow.

Тогаш таа почна повторно да испарува. Кога го достигна врвот на облаците стана ладно и таа кондензираше во облак. Но беше многу ладно во облаците така што Кејт се претвори во снег..

Претворајќи се во снег Turning to Snow



Then snow was beginning to fall into little pieces of crystals that made all of the children come out and have a wonderful time. This made Kate begin to melt into pieces of water.

Тогаш снегот започна да паѓа во мали парчиња од кристали што направи сите деца да излезат надвор и да уживаат во убавото време. Кејт започна да се топи во капки вода.

Пловејќи во една авантура Floating On An Adventure



Таа забележа дека пловеше кон реката. Како што пловеше таа забележа колку брзо се движи реката и колку голема станува. Ги слушна звуците на водопадот. Мислеше дека водопадите се забавни.

She notices she was floating into a stream. Soon as she was floating she started to notice how fast the stream was moving and how big it was getting. Soon she heard the sounds of a waterfall. Kate thought that the waterfall was fun.

Враќајќи се во океанот Floating On An Adventure



Кејт сеуште плови по реката. Реката ја однесе назад во океанот кога го виде нејзиниот стар пријател, господинот Сонце. Таа сепак имаше авантура која ќе ја памети до следниот пат.

She notices she was floating into a stream. Soon as she was floating she started to notice how fast the stream was moving and how big it was getting. Soon she heard the sounds of a waterfall. Kate thought that the waterfall was fun.

The students of the Pedagogical faculty in Stip realize their practical teaching in primary schools and kindergartens. They apply the knowledge they acquire in respective teaching subjects for realizing their practical teaching lessons. For example, they ask the pupils:

The Rain ☹️

What is it raining on?
 How is the little girl protected from the rain? What is she wearing/using?
 Are any of the insects and animals protected?
 How?

Read the story together. After reading ask students the following questions –
 What is rain good for?
 Why do we need rain?
 What might happen if it did not rain?
 What might happen to the plants and animals?

Show students pictures that are similar to the book. (blue sky with white clouds and a yellow sun, gray clouds with the sun partially hidden, gray clouds with no sun, rain, rain with sun peeking behind clouds, rainbow). Let students discuss what they see in each picture and place the pictures in order so that they show the sequence of the story; Shared Reading - reread and let students be your echo after each page.



Pass out either a colored sheet or a color word to each student. Have students find their partners by matching the colors and color words; each pair of students will be asked to read the story about the rain in Macedonian and English.

Talk about which of the colors in the story actually make up a rainbow. You may wish to read a book about rainbows such as *All the Colors of the Rainbow* (Rookie Read-About Science) by Allan Fowler. Brainstorm ways that the class could make their own rainbow (paint, color, etc.) Then ask if they think it is possible to plant a rainbow.

<i>Words</i>	<i>Actions</i>
I plant a little seed in the dark, dark ground.	<i>Bend down, dig hole, push seed into ground and cover with dirt.</i>
Out comes the yellow sun big and round.	<i>Hold arms up over head in a circle.</i>
Down comes the rain, soft and slow	<i>Hold arms out over head, with fingers moving. Move arms slowly down to the floor.</i>
Up comes the little seed.	<i>Squat down. Touch fingers to floor and come up slightly.</i>
grow, grow, GROW!	<i>Move body up as though you are the flower, until you are standing with arms up.</i>

Conclusion

Being educators of future educators of young generations we should have a serious approach to work with clear goals. This kind of teaching and cooperation between two teachers of different subjects purposefully reduces the processing speed and connects the teaching contents of both subjects, it unloads pupils because the knowledge acquired in one subject is positively used for acquiring new knowledge in another subject, which in turn facilitates permanent learning of certain concepts. Thus pupils' motivation is enhanced; they achieve higher aims, get higher marks that are the measure of their success in learning.

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Интергрирање на наставни содржини од Мојата околина и Англиски јазик за III
одделение за деветгодишно основно образование

Резиме

Еколошкото воспитание е доживотен процес кој се справува со интер-рационални компоненти од природниот свет и од оној креирај од страна на човекот, водејќи кон задолжителен менаџмент на природната средина.

Споделеното обработување на наставните содржини има предности како за учењето на англиски јазик така и за учење на образованието на природната средина.

Позитивни ефекти во учењето на англиски јазик се следниве:

- Го олеснува учењето на нови зборови и нивно значење

Ако некоја содржина е претходно обработена на мајчин јазик, тогаш е остварена една од најважните цели на учење на нови зборови во англискиот јазик, т.е. во изучувањето на значењето на овие зборови. Со учењето на некои концепти на час по еколошко воспитание, како што се биотоп, биоценоза, еко-систем итн., еден дел на студентите ќе го олеснат нивното разбирање на овие концепти на англиски јазик.

- Ја зголемува концентрацијата на студентите за време на час

Искусствата од пракса покажаа дека, кога содржината е повторно процесирана, како во нашиот случај со еколочкото воспитание и англискиот јазик, го олеснува пролонгирањето на концентрација. Пролонгираната концентрација на оние кои учат исто така значи и полесно усвојување на нови концепти како во мајчиниот така и во странскиот јазик. Ако нема концентрација, активностите кои се одвиваат за време на час ќе бидат досадни, неинтересни и на крајот сè ќе биде бескорисно.

- Ја редуцира тензијата и стравот од странски јазици

Како што претходно споменавме, третирањето на позната содржина не само што ја зголемува концентрацијата, туку и значајно ја намалува тензијата и стравот од странски јазици. Гарнер и Мејсинтајр го дефинираат овој страв како “ страв” кој го чувствуваме кога ни е кажано да користиме зборови на англиски кои добро не ги знаеме (наведено во Михајлович Џигунович 2002). Овој страв е манифестиран како чувство на неудобност, тензија и несигурност кои не надминуваат кога треба да збориме, читаме или пишуваме на англиски, или кога треба да разбереме некој друг кој зборува англиски.

Summary

Ecological education is a lifelong process that deals with inter-relational components of the natural world and the one created by man, leading to responsible environmental management.

Shared processing of teaching contents has advantages both for the teaching of English language, and for the teaching of environmental education.

Positive effects in English language teaching are the following:

- It facilitates learning the meanings of new words

If some content is previously processed in mother tongue, then one of the most important goals of studying the new words in the English language is achieved, i.e. in the study of the meaning of these words. Learning some concepts in a class of environmental education, such as biotope, biocenosis, eco-system, etc. On the part of students will facilitate their understanding of these concepts in English

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Experiences from practice show that, when content is being re-processed, as in our case with environmental education and English language, facilitate the prolongation of concentration. Prolonged concentration of those who learn also means easier adoption of new concepts in both native and foreign language. If there is no concentration, activities that are taking place during lessons will be boring, uninteresting, and in the end everything will be useless.

- Reduces the tension and fear of foreign languages

As we previously mentioned, treatment of known content not only extends concentration, but significantly reduces the tension and fear of foreign languages. Garner and Macintyre define this fear as "fear" that we feel when we are asked to use words in English that we do not know well. This fear is manifested as a feeling of discomfort, tension and uncertainty that overwhelm us when we need to talk, read or write in English, or when we need to understand someone else who speaks English.