



Cross-Curricular Connection in Art in the 4th Grade of the 9-Year Elementary School

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Abstract

In the elementary school, a cross-curricular connection is more and more emphasised as a teaching method which enables easier knowledge transfer from one field to the other, and gives sense to pupils' abstract learning. Many teachers claim, though, that this kind of school learning sounds good, but is not feasible in practice, as the school system in the current form does not enable teachers to realise it. Contacts with the teachers who think in such a way and my personal experiences in class showed me that the reason for such a view on the cross-curricular connection lies in the fear of a bigger quantity of work that is demanded for that teaching format. The compulsory curricula for the elementary school are composed in such a way that they demand the transfer, a knowledge transfer from one subject to the other, but they are not composed in such a way that they would give teachers instructions on a silver plate on how to realise them. That is left to teachers, as they have autonomy, not to mention anything else, to decide how to teach pupils. And just due to this fear of a bigger quantity of work, the cross-curricular connection is left aside many times, or, if it is used, it is used inappropriately. The typical example of an inappropriate usage of the cross-curricular connection is found in Art class, when teachers often take a motif for creating a piece of art from other subjects, most frequently from Slovenian and Environmental Science, or, in the higher grades, from Social Science and Science and Craft. Many authors warn that such a way of motif application does not mean the cross-curricular connection, and even less the transfer, because, if a teacher announces the motif to students in such a way that she/he says that they will paint the ugly duckling, about which they read in Slovenian class, by applying brightening or darkening of the red colour, that is no cross-curricular connection, but just using something to reach the goal one set. In this case, it is for pupils to paint the motif in different light shades. Thus, the question is if it is possible, using the current curricula in the elementary school, to organise the cross-curricular connection that will be, actually, the reflection of what the cross-curricular connection in reality is. Through the paper, which presents the cross-curricular connection between Art and other subjects, we will see that it is possible. Such class format organisation does demand a lot of the teacher's time, energy, effort, etc., but it proves that, nonetheless, the current school system is the way it is, it is possible to plan class format that motivates pupils to learn and keeps a high level of their motivation through the whole learning process by applying different learning methods, such as co-operative learning, information searching from different sources, on the internet, creating a portfolio ... and in such a way, it enables the knowledge transfer from one field to the other, from the "supernatural" environment to the real life.