

“Using Theatre Pedagogy to cultivate thinking in 4 to 12-year-old children”

ABSTRACT:

The aim of this thesis is to examine the way in which Theatre Pedagogy contributes to primary school children’s thinking as well as the extent to which this is attained. The research is conducted in the context of the Language lessons and examines the way in which inquiry drama enriches and enhances children’s thinking in relation to a certain set of thinking skills such as evaluating, establishing criteria, checking for reasonableness, judging according to circumstances, recognizing various angles, recognizing emotions during thinking over specific subjects of discussion. The research method adopted is Action Research. It is conducted with a group of 23, sixth grade students who take part in a program for cultivating thinking during which the researcher intervenes using inquiry drama techniques. We seek to answer three questions: a) is the integration of inquiry drama techniques in the program for cultivating thinking functional, and, if yes, in what ways and to what extent? b) which specific techniques reinforce the cultivation of the aforementioned thinking skills? c) how does the role of the educator changes when from starting as a discussion facilitator he becomes a drama teacher? The research tools we use are: a) the research diary, b) interviews to students, c) observation templates, d) questionnaires for reflection and e) student texts.

Key-words: Theatre Pedagogy, inquiry drama, thinking, primary school, action research