

Fairy-tales for developing socio-emotional skills, Ethnotolerance

Program Overview

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Program name

Fairy-tales for developing socio-emotional skills, Ethnotolerance

Country of Origin

Bulgaria

Implementation level of the program

Regional level.

Bilingual children; Roma community;

Association "Ethnotolerance", with the support of Trust for Social Achievement Foundation, implemented the methodology for Bulgarian language teaching in bilingual settings and the methodology of fairy-tale therapy, along with the adapted Romani fairy-tales, with the aim to stimulate the language skills and socio-emotional development of bilingual children in Sliven Plovdiv region, Bulgaria.

Type of Program

Evidence-based intervention.

Description

The methodology combines elements of the language learning method, elaborated by Margarita Georgieva, focused on Bulgarian language teaching in bilingual settings, and fairy-tale therapy, developed Prof. Igor Vachkov, along with use of adapted Romani fairy tales by Yosif Nunev, to stimulate the language skills and socio-emotional development of first and second grade children with a focus on bilingual children, primarily Roma.

The approach is based on thematic and/or situational approach to the text, whereby the socio-emotional experience of the children is used for expanding self-awareness and social awareness skills, as well as communicative skills through familiar contexts and situations from everyday life. Methodologically, the project depends strongly on visualization. Working sheets are constructed for the teachers and tutorial sheets for the teachers. This allows for an individualized approach to each child, commensurable to their development and cognitive abilities.

Additionally, from language acquisition point of view, the focus is placed on development and improvement of skills for comprehension and recreation of oral text, which allows children to develop skills for self-expression, dialogic communication, in real, realistic and imaginative communication situations.

Materials include adaptations of selected Romani fairy tales.

The activities are planned for two hours per week.

Age Range

3-7 years

Age Range Information

7-8

Group Size

Up to 25 children in a group.

SEL Skills Targeted

Social awareness, Self-awareness

Sequenced Activities

When testing the technology, the teachers, after preliminary preparation, received within the project and on the basis of the didactic materials developed by the expert team, focus the activities around the following topics:

Preparation of the educational space;

Control of emotions during classes;

Pre-communicative language training;

Formation of social and emotional skills;

Formation of skills for spatial orientation;

Working with the text of a familiar tale (at the word level);

Work with the text of a familiar tale (at the level of characters);

Working with the text of a familiar tale (dialogue);

Scenarios for real communicative situations with a view to mastering thematic vocabulary (words and expressions) in Bulgarian;

Formation of speech skills and enrichment of the active vocabulary of students in Bulgarian;

Communicative language development of students.

Methodologically, it is relied primarily on visualization and the use of innovative techniques for quality assessment and self-assessment of student work.

Active Learning

The emphasis of the method is the development and improvement of the skills for perception and creation of an oral text, aimed at dialogical communication. The method of therapy through fairy-tales and constructing texts, allowed the students to create dialogues based on a sample of communicative situations from the fairy-tale text according to the same model using the mother tongue and a gradual transition to Bulgarian language.

Outcomes / Results

The program was subjected to evaluation in the period 2019-2020 with the method of comparing baseline to endline results of children from 5 participating schools with 100 children in intervention group, and a control group of 50 children, not included in the intervention. Results were analyzed in end-2020.

Results demonstrate the positive effect of the intervention on literacy and on communication skills of children (Totseva, 2020).

Strengths and Weaknesses

The strengths reported are:

increasing the motivation of teachers working with first-graders-Roma from vulnerable communities to diversify the process of education and upbringing with the use of innovative models and interactive methods and techniques;

change of the educational environment with the inclusion of visualization and equipment, which creates favorable preconditions for conducting context-based training;

increased interest of students in learning the Bulgarian language in the conditions of play activities and the use of new didactic materials and resources;

improved test results for the baseline level compared to those of the entry level;

increased self-confidence in children that they can read and speak Bulgarian;

Additional Information

<https://socialachievement.org/en/what-we-do/funded-projects/ELC/innovative-approaches-to-the-development-of-language-and-socio-emotional-skills-for-disadvantaged-children/>

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