INTERCONNECTION OF ENGLISH LESSONS AND TRAFFIC EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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Abstract: *The paper deals with the possibilities of traffic education in the use of English animated songs for teaching English to children and youth. Specifically, the analysis of the impact of animated songs „Stop! Look! Listen! Think!" and „Keep safe, stay alive!" to develop awareness of safe behaviour in the indirect traffic education. The animated song „Stop! Look! Listen! Think!" shows method of crossing the road to the site in place with no traffic signs. Animated song „Keep safe, stay alive!" deals with five basic rules for safety of pedestrians and passengers transport. In this paper, we also discussed the possibilities of using both the songs within e-learning teaching methods.*

Key words: *traffic, English, education, children, youth*

Introduction

Within the education of children and youth we continue to identify an ever greater space for integrating the traffic education into a range of different subjects. We are offered this space even by subjects apparently unrelated to traffic education, such as music or English, where it still can be naturally integrated. The main advantage of this kind of indirect traffic education consists in children not consciously learning how to cope with traffic situations, but solutions are in some way naturally produced on the background of the main subject. It is the ease of the traffic education "on the background" of different subjects that leads to model situations being perceived as natural, which in future facilitates the process of their intentional learning within a specific subject or course already focused on traffic education or some of its aspects.

Animism, anthropomorphism and arteficialism in children's thinking

Vágnerová (2000) says that involving imagination is probably the easiest way for preschool and young school age children of handling the pressure of reality, limitations of their own thinking and experience and has a relaxing and emotionally favourable

effect on them. These imaginary tendencies that we can observe in animism, anthropomorphism and arteficialism, represent one type of manifestations of learning egocentrism in children. Such interpretation makes it easier for children to explore the world that a child can understand better if they can attach qualities of living creatures or even human qualities to it. A model based on which a child finds explanations for various actions is their own activities, and a child believes that physical motion and transformations also follow some goals and are motivated in some way.

Animism in children's thinking

The concept of animism was taken over from anthropology and integrated into psychology by Jean Piaget. In anthropology, animism is associated with the earliest phases of religion, and it is based on the belief in personalized supernatural beings and forces, whose signs can be found in all objects and effects acting on man. By animism Piaget (2007) understands children's tendency to attribute personality traits and purposeful acting to inanimate objects. Animism is a manifestation of the development stage of children's thinking, where a child is not yet able to distinguish between animate and inanimate objects. A child believes within the animistic thinking that clouds move across the sky because man or God wants them to, or the clouds themselves want to.

Anthropomorphism in children's thinking

Nevers (1997) mentions on anthropomorphism that it can be observed most clearly in children up to 11 years of age, and it is displayed in relation to flowers as well as animals. Many children seem to be absolutely convinced that plants and animals "feel" things and may suffer or be happy in the same way as the child him/herself. They believe that trees bleed and leaves of trees are like the hair of humans. They believe that breaking off a tree branch is like cutting off a human arm or finger. They believe trees let their branches bend downwards, when they are unhappy.

Arteficialism in children's thinking

According to Lagmeier (1991) an arteficialist view of a child explains the outer world as simply being made by somebody. A child believes that someone put the moon and stars onto the sky, someone filled a pond with water, someone made the ice covering the pond surface overnight, and someone planted stones and mountains have grown from them.

Internalization of knowledge acquired about traffic situations

From the point of traffic education it is not important to just see different kinds of behaviour in usual or problematic traffic situations. Traffic education aims for internalization of and identification with such behaviour that minimizes the danger that may follow from various traffic situations. According to Nakonečný (2009), socialization of an individual moves toward creating of individual roles of which some are accepted by an individual as natural and others as more or less imposed on him. Internalization can only be considered in connection with an individual identifying with a role that he/she considers as natural.

Identification of children and youth with individuals behaving in compliance with the rules of safe behaviour in traffic situations

Within the forming of the relevant psychological aptitude in the process of internalization of social norms and various desirable elements of behaviour, including the transport-related behaviour, it is beneficial if an individual can identify with positive models in their surroundings. In case there are not enough real life situations available, where the desirable behaviour could be demonstrated, or not enough real-life positive models, they can be presented in an alternative way.

Slaměník (2008) presents two possible ways of identification. One is known as ´empathic identification´, determined by perceiving similarities between desirable and undesirable qualities in oneself and in the object of identification. The other one is defined as ´role model identification´, manifested either by a wish to resemble someone (idealistic identification) or by a wish to differ from someone to the greatest possible degree (counter-identification).

There may also be a conflicting identification, when an individual is in the state of empathic identification and at the same time in that of counter-identification. Such an individual then perceives in a conflicting identified object his own resemblance with both desirable and undesirable qualities, but at the same time wishes to differentiate himself from this object.

Identification means identification with an object of identification to which an individual relates himself in a highly positive way and wants to be like him. Identification involves an intentional effort of an individual to acquire the manners and behaviour of the model. This model may be a person from the social environment of the identified individual, but also a historical figure, a literary character and suchlike. Identification of an individual is inseparable from internalization of the motives and manners of his model.

Songs "Stop! Look! Listen! Think!" and "Keep safe stay alive"

The songs "Stop! Look! Listen! Think!" and "Keep safe stay alive" are primarily designed for English lessons. An animated version of both songs has been created by the British Council, a British international organization for cultural relationships and educational opportunities. Both songs focus on transport-related problems in an easy, natural way.

Solution of a model traffic situation in the song "Stop! Look! Listen! Think!

The song "Stop! Look! Listen! Think!" presents four characters: a boy, a superman, a girl and a dog. The boy and the girl are important with regard to easy empathic identification of a child. The Superman represent a leading figure followed by another three characters in the story, whereby he becomes a suitable object of idealistic identification. The last character is a friendly looking dog, who creates a somewhat relaxed atmosphere through the use of anthropomorphism in children's thinking, and makes the story more attractive. With regard to animism in children's thinking, younger children

can also idealistically identify with the dog character, whose behaviour in traffic is identical to that of the other characters. The element of idealistic identification is needed with regard to provoking interest of an individual to develop an intentional effort to acquire a behaviour model.

All four characters present a model acting and behaving which should precede and accompany the crossing of a road in places where there is no pedestrian crossing. The message includes several elements of behaviour and acting, that a child should internalize and identify with by means of identification.

Five rules concerning traffic situations in the song "Keep safe stay alive"

The animated song "Keep safe, stay alive!" presents five basic rules relating to the safety of pedestrians and persons using means of transport. In the process of acquiring English phrases pupils are given, in a suggestive manner, information about the following:

- They must pay attention to cars.
- They should make themselves clearly visible at dusk.
- Where there is a pavement, they should walk on the pavement, not on the carriageway.
- When going by car they should use seat belts.
- They can alert adults in their surroundings that they should behave carefully in traffic situations.

As for the individual rules presented, they can be related to some traffic-preventive events. These include, for example, some similar events presented by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Education, Art and Culture. Of the aforementioned traffic-preventive events, Stojan (2009) mentions the following: „Secure yourself – there is something to lose!", which supports using the seat belts, or „Make yourself visible", stressing the importance of using clothes and accessories with bright colour materials on them.

Use within e-learning and other teaching methods

The advantage of animated songs is their easy use in the e-learning applications. The advantage of their interconnection with English lessons consists, among other things, in the fact that the pupil must focus on the detail to understand the lyrics. If acquiring of the word "seat belt", for example, also includes, in addition to its meaning "bezpečnostní pásy" in Czech, a visual perception showing that seat belts must always be used in a car, a child then consciously concentrates on learning the foreign word while not paying attention to the accompanying circumstance, which after repeated exposition effects that they consider the given situation (e.g. using seat belts) as a matter of course. Another advantage among those relating to the use of animated songs in learning is mentioned by Hlaďo (2011): according to him, the teaching strategies and processes activating the pupil's learning processes and developing independence, imagination, logical thinking and creative abilities of a person, can be employed in the spirit of constructivist conception of teaching, using audiovisual technologies.

In conclusion

The competences gained within the traffic education blend, mainly due to their being linked to everyday reality of human life, with the competences acquired in some other subjects of the curriculum at the elementary and secondary schools, and in the games of preschool age children. This interdisciplinarity of the traffic education can be made the best possible use of when we are familiar with and take into account the specific aspects of children's and youth's thinking, and can utilize them when participating in the process of internalizing the rules of safe behaviour in traffic situations.

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PROPOJENÍ DOPRAVNÍ VÝCHOVY S VÝUKOU ANGLICKÉHO JAZYKA U DĚTÍ A MLÁDEŽE

Abstrakt: Příspěvek se zabývá možnostmi dopravní výchovy při využití anglických animovaných písní určených k výuce anglického jazyka u dětí a mládeže. Konkrétně se jedná o rozbor vlivu animovaných písní „Stop! Look! Listen! Think!" a „Keep safe, stay alive!" na rozvoj povědomí o bezpečném chování v rámci nepřímé dopravní výchovy. V animované písni „Stop! Look! Listen! Think!" je zachycen způsob přecházení vozovky na místě bez dopravního značení. Animovaná píseň „Keep safe, stay alive!" se zabývá pěti základními pravidly týkajícími se bezpečnosti chodců a osob cestujících dopravními prostředky. V příspěvku se věnujeme také možnostem využití obou animovaných písní v rámci e-learningových metod výuky.

Klíčová slova: doprava, anglický jazyk, výchova, děti, mládež