

The role of Drama-in-Education in personal and social development of persons studying technology at university level

Abstract

The dissertation thesis deals with application of the Drama-in-Education form in a curriculum of a technical university. The courses at the Faculty of Civil Engineering, Czech Technical University in Prague were aimed to help the personal and social development of the students. As such courses and the form were unusual in the study plans in the time of research, both the outcome and the students' perception of the courses are studied. In general, the work aims to verify whether the Drama-in-Education form is able to effectively help the personal and social development of technically oriented students in tertiary education.

The text consists of two parts. The theoretical part describes the historical and cultural context in which Drama-in-Education and also Personal and Social Education originated and were integrated into the educational process. It documents how complicated was the integration of Drama-in-Education into the Czech educational system.

The research section describes and analyzes compulsory elective courses that took place at the Faculty of Civil Engineering, Czech Technical University in Prague in 2011/12 and 2012/2013. The thesis seeks to answer the question how Drama-in-Education influences personal and social development of students of a technical university and which factors affect students' perception of this process. It also finds out whether these students can accept positively a course having the Drama-in-Education form.

This is mainly qualitative action research supplemented by some quantitative methods. The research methods used were the participant observations, questionnaires, students' reflection papers and students' diaries and their text analysis; semi-structured interviews and enumeration methods.

The analysis showed that the undergraduate students of the technical university did not generally have confidence in social science courses. Most of them had no experience with Drama-in-Education. Regarding the course, they were particularly interested in easiness, interactivity, fun-filled forms and communication skills training, according to their own statements. Only cca one third of them expected benefits to the development of one's own personality.

The results of the research showed that also cca one third of the monitored students felt subjective benefits in the area of socially personality development at the end of the course. Most

frequently, benefits has been achieved in the field of communication and the ability to establish social ties. The evaluation of the courses was mostly influenced by internal factors such as expectations from the course and experience with social science disciplines. At the elementary level of positive acceptance, two-thirds of students accepted the course positively. The most frequently cited reasons for satisfaction among students, who did not aspire to personality development, were compensation of otherwise rational learning process, a fun interactive learning form, and friendly relationships within the group.

Key words:

Drama-in-Education, Personal and Social Education, technical universities, experience pedagogy, personality development