

The overall objective of this paper is to consider possible ways of incorporating “cross-subject topics” into the grammar school curriculum when teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL), in particular the third year of a four-year course (where a course spans more than four years this would be the equivalent).

1 New Concept of Czech Education

The first chapter enumerates the most important changes brought about by the new curricular reform. To name but a few: education should primarily focus on creating and developing “key skills”. The Curricular Framework for Grammar Schools (Rámcový vzdělávací program pro gymnázia) which is relevant for the purposes of this paper specifies the following key skills: Learning, Problem Solving, Communication, Social and Personal skills, Citizenship skills, and Entrepreneurial skills.

Another requirement stated in the Framework is the schools’ obligation to incorporate “cross-subject topics” into their own school curriculum (“školní vzdělávací program“). In the Framework five statutory cross-subject topics can be found: Personal and Social Education, Education of Thinking in European and Global Context, Multicultural Education, Environmental Education, and Media Education. The Framework also suggests various ways of incorporating these topics into the school curriculum. One of them is a “cross-curricular” approach – i.e. introducing these topics into other subjects such as Mathematics, Biology, Czech language, English language, etc. This approach is the focus of this paper. In this chapter we further look at causes that precipitated the above-mentioned changes. Finally, problems connected with the implementation of the current curricular reform are also addressed.

2 Cross-subject Topics

This chapter introduces cross-subject topics in more detail, paying attention not only to their thematic areas as specified in the Framework but in particular to the way they contribute to the development of learners.