

Bachelor Work Review

Name: Sarka Mihulkova

Title: Cultural aspects of Teaching English at Secondary School with Focus on Music

Miss Mihulkova has written her bachelor work on Cultural Aspects of Teaching English at secondary school with a focus on music education as a support for English language teaching. In the introduction she outlines the focus of her work in the theoretical and practical parts and why the theme not only interests her but feels is has importance in the current educational environment. She wishes to show throughout the work that English language teaching and culture, especially music in this case, are not only supportive of each other but also interconnected. In rare cases such as this the introduction not only brings the reader into the work but defines a sense of purpose of what the work means to propose. For Miss Mihulkova this work will be a proposition for current teachers as well as future teachers to incorporate culture and especially music into the classroom. The work will be used as a channel to bring education up to date as a multi-cultural discipline as with other multi-disciplinary subjects.

The next section defines the role of culture in TEFL. Here she gives a brief history of the most popular methods used in TEFL from the grammar translation method to the direct method. In this section she explains the development of these methods and how they will eventually be related to culture and her primary proposition making careful note of a Larsen-Freemen citation that language is inseparable from culture. She uses this to support her point, not simply to offer an extended introduction. The reader has no choice but to follow her point to its fruition based on these multi-level bases of support for her main thesis. She also mentions Suggestopedia which is closely linked to culture and music.

As a further basis of support for her thesis she uses the goals of Content and Language Integrated Learning(p. 10) which suggests a higher level of thinking accompanied by various levels of questioning promoting individual thought in the students and therefore in the classroom. For even further additional support, she cites the Framework Education Program(p.13) as a way of solidifying official goals for the future of education and language education including cultural education within the framework. With the strength of this background information, she then proceeds to what appears to be the heart of the thesis which is the role of Music in TEFL(p. 15). She uses multiple citations and various academic sources of information such as how music can enhance language skills as well as build an interest in cultural awareness with the students(p.20) to strengthen her thesis on an academic level supported by scholars to give proof to the fact that these views are not hers alone.

Following this, she offers ways that musical activities can be used in the English lesson not only as a main activity but can also be used to teach grammar, vocabulary or used as fillers or warm-ups in the classroom. In this section she wishes to show that music is a versatile tool which can be used in virtually any focus in the classroom. In this she wishes to show that it is not only supporting the FEP but practical and doable.

In the Practical Part she offers three interconnected lesson plans to show how these theoretical proposals can be put into practice using the theme of the Olympic Games as a current topic and should prove to be relevant to the students. Rather than offer three individual lessons, she offers three progressive lessons which are not only interconnected but a progressive build-up of skills so the students can see that they are inter-related and therefore offer a wider purpose rather than as simply something interesting and topical. In the index she includes a complete package of the activities both for the teachers as well as for the student as well as a well-thought out lesson plan composed in complete form for any teacher willing and able to be able to conduct. The fine detail of the lesson plan in the practical part shows that she has envisioned all three lessons in completeness and how they should not only move minute by minute but also interconnect and build up the students' communication skills. She also shows that the lessons have been tried and tested on actual students(35.36) rather than simply theoretically proposed. This shows that she has actually used the lesson and gauged the reaction of the students and therefore is prepared and ready to use.

Beyond what has already been said, the language is flawless and readable on several levels. It is clear that Miss Mihulkova has taken great care not only in her use of language but also made sure that the bachelor work has a purpose and clear progression from beginning to end backed up by scholarly support as well as her personal experience. I can offer the highest praise for her work for her sense of vision, enthusiasm and forward thinking, attention to detail and reader consideration as well as a necessary and practical educational wish towards combining musical and language education backed by multi-cultural activities. It is with all that in mind that I recommend a (1)vyborne for the final mark for this excellent proposal for the future of education.

Craig Morga M.A.
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